





Tracts of the Anglican Fathers.

No. VI.

OF SACRAMENTS ;
AND CHIEFLY CONCERNING
THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

A TRACT,

WRITTEN BY THE REVEREND AND LEARNED PRIEST

ALEXANDER NOWEL,

DEAN OF S. PAUL'S.

Reprinted from Nowel's celebrated "Catechism," 4to. A.D. 1570.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE question concerning the Sacraments—their nature and efficacy—is one, perhaps, of the *most* important in the controversies of the present day. The Fourth Part of Dean NOWEL'S Catechism, which (with the exception of the concluding remarks on the right use of Ecclesiastical Discipline), we here reprint, will shew abundantly that the doctrine of the Reformation, touching the Divine Mysteries, was the same in Elizabeth's reign as in the sixth Edward's. Nowel's Catechism was "approved and allowed" by the Convocation of 1562, which "agreed upon" the "Articles;" and at which Archbishop PARKER (who was chief of the Commissioners appointed to revise the Liturgy) presided. The following reprint is made from Norton's Translation, (which was sanctioned by Nowel, and dedicated to the Episcopal Bench,) 4to. 1570.

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OXFORD,
The Feast of S. Andrew.

OF SACRAMENTS.

[*The Master—The Scholar.*]

Ma. Now, having ended our treating of the Law of God, of the Creed, or Christian confession, and also of prayer and of thanksgiving, it resteth last of all to speak of the Sacraments and Divine Mysteries, which alway have prayer and thanksgiving joined unto them. Tell me therefore what is a Sacrament?

Scho. It is an outward testifying of GOD's good will and bountifulness towards us through CHRIST, by a visible sign representing an invisible and spiritual grace, by which the promises of GOD, touching forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation given through CHRIST, are, as it were, sealed, and the truth of them is more certainly confirmed in our hearts.

Ma. Of how many parts consisteth a Sacrament?

Scho. Of two parts, the outward element or visible sign, and invisible grace.

Ma. Why would GOD so have us to use outward signs?

Scho. Surely we are not endued with mind and understanding so heavenly and divine, that the graces of God do appear clearly of themselves to us as it were to angels:¹ by this mean therefore GOD hath provided for our weakness, that we which

¹ See a similar passage in Jewel's *Treatise of the Sacraments. Tracts of the Anglican Fathers*, p. 70.

are earthly and blind should in outward elements and figures, as it were in certain glasses, behold the heavenly graces which otherwise we were not able to see. And greatly for our behoof it is that God's promises should be presented to our senses, that they may be confirmed to our minds without doubting.

Ma. But is it not a manifest proof of infidelity in us not to give sure faith to God's promises, unless we be underpropped with such helps?

Scho. Surely we are endued with slender and unperfect faith so long as we are in this world, and yet we cease not to be faithful. For the remnants of distrust which alway stick in our flesh, do shew the weakness of our faith, but yet do not utterly quench it. These remnants of distrust, though we cannot altogether shake off, yet we must with continual increasing even to the end of our life travail towards perfection of faith, in which endeavour the use of Sacraments doth much further us.

Ma. Is there any other cause why the LORD would have the use of external signs practised?

Scho. The LORD did furthermore ordain His Mysteries to this end, that they should be certain marks and tokens of our profession, whereby we should, as it were, bear witness of our faith before men, and should plainly shew that we are partakers of God's benefits with the rest of the godly, and that we have all one concord and consent of Religion with them, and should openly testify that we are not ashamed of the name of Christians, and to be called the disciples of CHRIST.

Ma. What thinkest thou then of them that think they may spare the Divine Mysteries, as things not of so great necessity?

Scho. First, they cannot fail this so godly and due a duty without most heinous offence against GOD the FATHER, and our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, and also against His Church. For what were that else than indirectly to deny CHRIST? And he that vouchsafeth not to profess himself a Christian, is not worthy to be counted in the number of Christians. Again, they that would

refuse the use of Sacraments, as if they had no need of them, I think were worthy to be condemned, not only of most high presumption, but also of unkind wickedness against God, forasmuch as they do despise not only the helps of their own weakness, but also God Himself, the Author of them,—refuse His grace, and (as much as in them lieth) *extinguish* His SPIRIT.

Ma. Thou conceivest well the right understanding concerning the visible signs and outward use of the Sacraments. But whereas, secondly, as thou givest to Sacraments the strength and efficacy to seal and confirm God's promises in our hearts, thou seemest to assign to them the proper offices of the HOLY GHOST.

Scho. To lighten and give bright clearness to men's minds and souls, and to make their consciences quiet and in security, as they be indeed, so ought they to be accounted the proper work of the HOLY GHOST alone, and to be imputed to Him, and this praise not to be transferred to any other. But this is no impediment but that God may give to His Mysteries the second place¹ in quieting and stablishing our minds and consciences, but yet so that nothing be abated from the virtue of HIS SPIRIT: wherefore we must determine that the outward element hath neither of itself nor in itself inclosed the force and efficacy of the Sacrament, but that the same wholly floweth from the SPIRIT of God, as out of a spring-head, and is *BY the Divine Mysteries which are ordained by the LORD for this end CONVEYED unto us.*

Ma. How many Sacraments hath GOD ordained in His Church?

Scho. Two.²

Ma. Which be they?

Scho. Baptism and the Holy Supper, which are commonly used among all the Faithful. For by the one we are *born again*, and by the other we are *nourished to everlasting life.*

¹ Which may be taken as equally true of the Absolution and other Sacramental rites of the Church. So in the English Liturgy, the Priest after Absolution given, adds, "Wherefore let us beseech Him to grant us true repentance, and His HOLY SPIRIT," &c.

² See Note I.

Ma. Then tell me first what thou thinkest of BAPTISM?

Scho. Whereas by nature we are the children of wrath, that is, strangers from THE CHURCH, which is GOD'S Household, Baptism is, as it were, *a certain entry*, by which we are received into the Church, whereof we also receive a most substantial testimony, that we are now in the number of the Household, and also of the children of GOD; yea, and that we are joined and grafted into the Body of CHRIST, and become His members, and do grow into one Body with Him.

Ma. Thou saidst before that a Sacrament consisteth of two parts, the outward sign and inward grace. What is the outward sign in Baptism?

Scho. Water, wherein the person baptized is dipped or sprinkled with it, IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Ma. What is the secret and spiritual grace?

Scho. It is of two sorts: that is, forgiveness of sins, and regeneration, both of which in the same outward sign have their full and express resemblance.

Ma. How so?

Scho. First, as the uncleannesses of the body are washed away with water, so the spots of the soul are washed away by forgiveness of sins. Secondly, the beginning of regeneration, that is, the mortifying of our nature, is expressed by dipping in the water, or by sprinkling of it. Finally, when we by and by rise up again out of the water, under which we be for a short time, the new life, which is the other part, and the end of our regeneration, is thereby represented.

Ma. Thou seemest to make the water but a certain figure of divine things.

Scho. It is a figure indeed, but *not empty*¹ or deceitful, but such as hath the truth of the things themselves joined and knit

¹ This language exactly agrees with Bishop HOOPER'S. See *Tracts of the Anglican Fathers*, p. 15, Note.

unto it. For as in Baptism, God truly delivereth us forgiveness of sins and newness of life, so do we certainly receive them. For God forbid that we should think that God mocketh and deceiveth us with vain figures.

Ma. Do we not then obtain forgiveness of sins by the outward washing or sprinkling of water ?

Scho. No. For only CHRIST hath with His blood washed and clean washed away the spots of our souls. This honour, therefore, it is unlawful to give to the outward element. But the HOLY GHOST, as it were, sprinkling our consciences with that Holy Blood, wiping away all the spots of sin, maketh us clean before God. Of this cleansing of our sins we have a *seal*¹ and pledge in the Sacrament.

Ma. But whence have we regeneration ?

Scho. None other ways but from the death and resurrection of CHRIST. For by the force of CHRIST'S death, our old man is, after a certain manner, crucified and mortified, and the corruptness of our nature is, as it were, buried, that it no more live and be strong in us. And by the beneficial mean of His resurrection He giveth us grace to be newly formed unto a new life, to obey the righteousness of God.

Ma. Do all generally, and without difference, receive this grace ?

Scho. The only faithful receive this fruit ; but the unbelieving, in refusing the promises offered them by God, *shut up the entry*² against themselves, and go away empty. *Yet do they not thereby make that the Sacraments lose their force and nature.*

Ma. Tell me then briefly in what things the use of Baptism consisteth ?

1 "The promises of forgiveness of sin and our adoption to be the sons of God, by the HOLY GHOST, are [in Holy Baptism] visibly signed and *sealed*."—Art. xxvii. See Dr. Pusey's *Scriptural Views of Holy Baptism*, pp. 37-39, and 213-216, Note.

2 This is precisely the doctrine of our English Divines at a later period. It has been pretended, however, that the notion that the Sacraments have an efficacy of their own, i. e. that they convey grace wherever there are no *impediments* in the individual, was originated by the "High-Church divines of Charles's days!"

Scho. In faith and repentance. For first we must with assured confidence hold it determined in our hearts, that we are cleansed by the blood of CHRIST from all filthiness of sin, and so be acceptable to GOD, and that His SPIRIT dwelleth within us. And then we must continually, with all our power and endeavour, travail in mortifying our flesh, and obeying the righteousness of GOD, and must by godly life declare to all men that we have in Baptism, as it were, put on CHRIST, and have His SPIRIT given us.

Ma. Sith [since] infants cannot by age perform those things thou speakest of, why are they baptized ?

Scho. That faith and repentance go before Baptism, is required *only* in persons so grown in years, that by age they are capable of both. But to infants, the promise made to the Church by CHRIST, in whose Faith they are baptized, shall for the present time be sufficient ; and then afterward, when they are grown to years, they must needs themselves acknowledge the truth of the Baptism, and have the force thereof to be lively in their souls, and to be represented in their life and behaviour.

Ma. How shall we know that infants ought not to be kept from Baptism ?

Scho. Seeing GOD, which never swerveth from truth, nor in anything strayeth from the right way, did not exclude infants in the Jewish Church from Circumcision, neither ought our infants to be put back from Baptism.

Ma. Thinkest thou these so like that they both have one cause and order ?

Scho. Altogether, for as Moses and all the Prophets do testify that circumcision was a sign of repentance, so doth S. Paul teach that it was a Sacrament of faith. Yet the Jews' children, being not yet by age capable of faith and repentance, were nevertheless circumcised, by which visible sign GOD shewed Himself in the Old Testament to be the Father of young children, and of the seed of His people. Now sith it is certain that

the grace of GOD is both MORE PLENTIFULLY POURED 1 and more clearly declared in the Gospel by CHRIST, than at that time it was in the Old Testament by Moses, it were a great indignity if the same grace should now be thought to be either obscurer, or in any part abated.

Ma. Go on forward.

Scho. Sith it is certain that our infants have the force, and, as it were, the substance of Baptism common with us, they have wrong done them if the sign, which is inferior to the truth itself, should be denied them; and the same, which greatly availeth to testifying of the mercy of GOD and confirming His promises, being taken away, Christians should be defrauded of a singular comfort, which they that were in old time enjoyed, and so should our infants be more hardly dealt with in the New Testament, under CHRIST, than was dealt with the Jews' infants in the Old Testament under Moses. Therefore most great reason it is that by Baptism, *as by the print of a seal*, it be assured to our infants that they be heirs of GOD's grace, and of the salvation promised to the seed of the faithful.

Ma. Is there any more that thou wilt say of this matter?

Scho. Sith the LORD CHRIST calleth infants unto Him, and commandeth that no man forbid them to come, embraceth them when they come to Him,² and testifieth that to them the kingdom of Heaven belongeth, whom GOD voutsafed to be in the Heavenly Palace, it seemeth a great wrong that men should forbid them the first entry and door thereof, and after a certain manner to shut them out of the Christian Commonweal.

Ma. It is so. But whereas thou didst say before, that

1 See Dr. Pusey's *Scriptural Views of Holy Baptism*, pp. 135-138.

2 "Ye perceiue how by His outward gesture and deed He declared His good will to them; for He embraced them in His arms, He laid His hands upon them, and blessed them. Doubt ye not, therefore, but earnestly believe, that He will likewise favourably receive this present Infant; that he will embrace him with the arms of His mercy; that He will give unto him the blessing of eternal life, and make him partaker of His everlasting kingdom."—*Office for the Public Baptism of Infants; Th Exhortation.*

children after they were grown more in years, ought to acknowledge the truth of their Baptism, I would thou shouldst now speak somewhat more plain thereof.

Scho. Parents and schoolmasters did in old time diligently instruct their children, as soon as by age they were able to perceive and understand, in the first principles of Christian Religion, that they might suck in godliness almost together with the nurse's milk, and straightways after their cradle, might be nourished with the tender food of virtue towards that blessed life. For the which purpose also little short books, which we name Catechisms, were written, wherein the same, or very like matters as we now are in hand with, were entreated upon. And after that the children seemed to be sufficiently trained in the principles of our Religion, they brought and offered them unto the Bishop.

Ma. For what purpose did they so ?

Scho. That children might after Baptism do the same which such as were elder, who were also called *catechumini*, that is, scholars of Religion, did in old time before, or rather at Baptism itself. For the Bishop did require and the children did render reason and account of their Religion and Faith ; and such children as the Bishop judged to have sufficiently profited in the understanding of Religion, he allowed, and laying his hands upon them, and blessing them, let them depart. This allowance and blessing of the Bishop our men do call CONFIRMATION.

Ma. But there was another Confirmation used of late ?

Scho. Instead of this most profitable and ancient Confirmation, they conveyed a device of their own, that is, that the Bishop should not examine children whether they were skilled in the precepts of Religion or no, but that they should anoint¹ young

¹ It will be observed that the primitive use of Unction is not here condemned, but merely the Romish abuse of it. Like Jewel, and the elder Reformers, Nowel duly revered " the Primitive Church " and " the best and *most ancient* expositors." He was, therefore, doubtless aware " that within a very few years after the Apostles, the Holy Fathers used to apply *Oil* and *Balm* to those that were confirmed, as an

infants yet unable to speak, much less to give any account of their Faith; adjoining also other ceremonies unknown unto the Holy Scripture and the Primitive Church. This invention of theirs they would needs have to be a Sacrament, and accounted it in manner equal in dignity with Baptism; yea, some of them preferred it also before Baptism. By all means they would that this their Confirmation should be taken for a certain supplying of Baptism, that it should thereby be finished and brought to perfection, as though Baptism else were imperfect, and as though children who in Baptism had put upon them CHRIST with His benefits, without their Confirmation were but half Christians; than which injury no greater could be done against the Divine Sacrament, and against GOD Himself, and CHRIST our SAVIOUR, the Author and Founder of the Holy Sacrament of Baptism.

Ma. It were to be wished, therefore, that the ancient manner and usage of examining children were restored again.

Scho. Very much to be wished, surely. For so should parents be brought to the satisfying of their duty in the godly bringing up of their children, which they now for the most part do leave undone, and quite reject from them; which part of their duty, if parents or schoolmasters would at this time take in hand, do, and thoroughly perform, there would be a marvellous consent and agreement in Religion and Faith, which is now in miserable sort torn asunder; surely all should not either be so shadowed and overwhelmed with the darkness of ignorance, or with dissensions¹ of divers and contrary opinions be so disturbed, dissolved, and dissipated, as it is at this day: the more pity it is, and most to be sorrowed of all good men for so miserable a case.

Ma. It is very true that thou sayest. Now teil me the order of the LORD'S SUPPER.

Scho. It is even the same which the LORD CHRIST did insti-

external sign of the inward unction of the HOLY SPIRIT, and to represent the Baptism of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost with fire."—*See Wheatley on the Common Prayer*, p. 401. Edit. 1825.

¹ See Note II.

tute who in the same night that He was betrayed, TOOK BREAD, AND WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS, HE BRAKE IT, AND GAVE IT TO HIS DISCIPLES, SAYING, TAKE EAT, THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU ; DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. LIKEWISE, AFTER SUPPER HE TOOK THE CUP, AND WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS, HE GAVE IT TO THEM, SAYING, DRINK YE ALL OF THIS ; FOR THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, WHICH IS SHED FOR YOU AND FOR MANY, FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS. DO THIS AS OFT AS YE SHALL DRINK IT, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. FOR SO OFT AS YE SHALL EAT THIS BREAD, AND DRINK OF THIS CUP, YE SHALL SHEW THE LORD'S DEATH TILL HE COME. This is the form and order of the Lord's Supper which we ought to hold, and holily to keep, till He come.

Ma. For what use ?

Scho. To celebrate and retain continually a thankful resemblance of the LORD's death, and of that most singular benefit which we have received thereby ; and that as in Baptism we were once born again, so with the LORD's Supper we be always fed and sustained to spiritual and everlasting life.

Ma. Thou sayest then that it is enough to be once baptized, as to be once born, but thou affirmest that the LORD's Supper, like as food, must be often used ?

Scho. Yea forsooth, Master.

Ma. Dost thou say that there are two parts in this Sacrament also, as in Baptism ?

Scho. Yea. The one part Bread and Wine, the outward signs which are seen with our eyes, handled with our hands, and felt with our taste ; the other part, CHRIST Himself, with whom our souls, as with their proper food, are inwardly nourished.

Ma. And dost thou say that all ought alike to receive both parts of the Sacrament ?

Scho. Yea, verily, Master. For sith the LORD hath expressly so commanded, it were a most high offence in any part to abridge His commandment.

Ma. Why should the LORD have here two signs to be used ?

Scho. First, He severally gave the signs both of his Body and Blood, that it might be the more plain express image of His death which He suffered ; His body being torn, His side pierced, and all His blood shed, and that the memory thereof so printed in our hearts should stick the deeper. And, moreover, that the LORD might so provide for and help our weakness, and thereby manifestly declare, that as the bread for nourishment of our bodies, so His Body hath most singular force and efficacy spiritually to feed our souls : and as with wine men's hearts are cheered, and their strength confirmed ; so with his Blood our souls are relieved and refreshed ; that certainly assuring ourselves that He is not only our meat, but also our drink, we do not anywhere else but in Him alone seek any part of our spiritual nourishment and eternal life.

Ma. Is there then not an only figure, but the truth itself, of the benefits that thou hast rehearsed, delivered in the Supper ?

Scho. What else ? For sith CHRIST is the Truth itself, it is no doubt but that the thing which he testifieth in words, and representeth in signs, He performeth also in deed, and delivereth unto us ; and that He as surely maketh them that believe in Him, partakers of His Body and Blood, as they surely know that they have received the Bread and Wine with their mouth and stomach.

Ma. Sith we be in the earth, and CHRIST's Body in heaven, how can that be that thou sayest ?

Scho. We must lift our souls and hearts from earth, and raise them up by faith to heaven, where CHRIST is.

Ma. Sayest thou then the mean to receive the Body and Blood of CHRIST standeth upon faith ?

Scho. Yea. For when we believe that CHRIST died to deliver us from death, and that He rose again to procure us life, we are partakers of the redemption purchased by His death, and of His life, and all other His good things ; and with the same conjoining

wherewith the head and members are knit together, he coupleth us to Himself by secret and marvellous virtue of His SPIRIT, even so that we be members of His Body, and be of His Flesh and bones, and do grow into one Body with Him.

Ma. Dost thou then, that this conjoining may be made, imagine the Bread and Wine to be *changed into the substance* of the Flesh and Blood of CHRIST?

Scho. There is no need to invent any such change. For both the Holy Scripture, *and the best and most ancient expositors*, do teach that by Baptism we are likewise the members of CHRIST, and are of His flesh and bones, and do grow into one Body with Him, when yet there is no such change made in the water.¹

Ma. Go on.

Scho. In both the Sacraments, the substances of the outward things [are] not changed, but the word of God and heavenly grace coming to them, there is such efficacy, that as by Baptism we are once regenerate in CHRIST, and are first, as it were, joined and grafted into His Body; so, when we rightly receive the LORD'S Supper, with the very divine nourishment of His Body and Blood, most full of health and immortality, given to us by the work of the HOLY GHOST, and received of us by faith, as the mouth of our soul, we are continually fed and substained to eternal life, growing together in them both into one Body with CHRIST.

Ma. Then CHRIST doth also otherwise than by His Supper only, give Himself unto us, and knitteth us to Himself with most strait conjoining?

Scho. CHRIST did then principally give Himself to us, to be the Author of our salvation, when He gave Himself to death for us, that we should not perish with deserved death. By the Gospel also He giveth Himself to the Faithful, and plainly teacheth that He is that lively Bread that came down from Heaven to nourish their souls that believed in Him. And also in Baptism

¹ See Note III.

as is before said, CHRIST gave Himself to us effectually, for that *He then made us Christians.*

Ma. And sayest thou that there be no less strait bands of conjoining in the Supper?

Scho. In the LORD'S SUPPER, both that communicating which I spake of, is confirmed unto us, and is also increased, for that each man is both by the words and Mysteries of God, ascertained that the same belongeth to himself, and that CHRIST is by a certain peculiar manner given to him, that he may most fully, and with most near conjunction enjoy Him, inasmuch that not only our souls are nourished with His Holy Body and Blood as with their proper food, but also our *bodies*,¹ for that they partake of the Sacrament of eternal life, have, as it were by a pledge given them, a certain hope assured them of resurrection and immortality, that at length CHRIST abiding in us, may obtain not only Everlasting life, but also the glory which His Father gave Him. In a sum I say thus: as I imagine not any *gross* joining, so I affirm that same SECRET and MARVELLOUS communicating of CHRIST'S Body in His Supper to be most near and straight, most assured, most true, and altogether MOST HIGH AND PERFECT.²

Ma. Of this thou hast said of the LORD'S Supper, meseems I may gather, that the same was not ordained to this end, that CHRIST'S Body should be offered in sacrifice to GOD the FATHER for sins.

Scho. It is not so offered.³ For He, when He did institute His supper, commanded us to eat His Body, not to offer it. As for the prerogative of offering for sins, it pertaineth to CHRIST alone, as to Him which is the Eternal Priest, which also when He died upon the cross, once made that only and everlasting Sacrifice for our salvation, and fully performed the same for ever.

1 "The Body of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.....preserve thy *body* and soul unto everlasting life."—"The Blood of our LORD JESUS CHRIST preserve thy *body* and soul unto everlasting life"—*Office for the Holy Communion.*

2 See Note IV.

3 See Note V.

For us there is nothing left to do, but to take the use and benefit of that eternal sacrifice bequeathed to us by the LORD Himself, which we chiefly do in the LORD'S Supper.

Ma. Then I perceive the Holy Supper evadeth us to the death of CHRIST and to His Sacrifice once done upon the cross, by which alone GOD is appeased toward us ?

Scho. It is most true. For by Bread and Wine, the sign is assured unto us, that as the Body of CHRIST was once offered a Sacrifice for us to reconcile us to favour with GOD, and his blood once to wash away the spots of our sins, so now also both are given shed to the Faithful, that we surely know that the reconciliation of favour pertaineth to us, and may take and receive the fruit of redemption purchased by His death.

Ma. Are then the only Faithful fed with His Body and blood ?

Scho. They only. For to whom he communicateth His Body, to them, (as I said,) He communicateth also everlasting life.

Ma. Why dost thou not grant that the Body and Blood of CHRIST are included in the Bread and Cup, or that the Bread and Wine are changed into the substence of his Body and Blood ?

Scho. Because that were to bring in doubt the truth of CHRIST'S Body, to do dishonour to CHRIST Himself, and to fill them with abhorring that receive the Sacrament, if we should imagine His Body either to be enclosed in so narrow a room, or to be in many places at once, or His flesh to be chewed in our mouth with our teeth, and to be bitten small and eaten as other meat.¹

Ma. Why then is the communicating of the Sacrament damnable to the wicked, if there be no such change made ?

Scho. Because they come to the Holy and Divine Mysteries

¹ We are not of course bound to receive all the *reasoning* here, though we may hold to the conclusion.

with hypocrisy and counterfeiting, and do wickedly profane them, to the great injury and dishonour of the LORD Himself that ordained them.

Ma. Declare then what is our duty that we may rightly come to the LORD's Supper.

Scho. Even the same that we are taught in the Holy Scriptures, namely, to examine ourselves, whether we be true members of CHRIST.

Ma. By what marks and tokens shall we manifestly find it ?

Scho. First, if we heartily repent us of our sins, which drove CHRIST to death, whose Mysteries are now delivered us : next, if we stay ourselves and rest upon a sure hope of GOD's mercy through CHRIST, with a thankful remembrance of our redemption purchased by His death. Moreover, if we conceive an earnest mind and determined purpose to lead our life godlily hereafter. Finally, if seeing in the LORD's Supper is contained also a tokening of friendship and love among men, we bear brotherly love to our neighbours, that is, to all men, without any evil will or hatred.

Ma. Is any man able fully and perfectly to perform all these things that thou speakest of ?

Scho. Full perfection in all points, wherein nothing may be lacking, cannot be found in man so long as he abideth in this world. Yet ought not the imperfection that holdeth us keep us back from coming to the LORD's Supper, which the LORD willeth to be a help to our imperfection and weakness ? Yea, if we were perfect, there should be no more need of any use of the LORD's Supper among us. But hereto these things that I have spoken of do tend, that every man bring with him to the Supper, repentance, faith, and charity, so near as possibly may be, sincere and unfeigned.

Ma. But when thou saidest afore that the Sacraments avail to confirmation of faith, how dost thou now say that we must bring faith to them ?

Scho. These sayings do not disagree. For there must be faith begun in us, to the nourishing and strengthening whereof the LORD hath ordained the Sacraments, which bring great effectual helps to the confirming, and as it were, sealing the promises of GOD in our hearts.

Ma. There remaineth yet for thee to tell to whom the ministration of the Sacraments properly belongeth.

Scho. Sith the duties and offices of feeding the LORD's Flock with GOD's Word, and the ministering of Sacraments, are most nearly joined together, there is no doubt that the ministration thereof properly belongeth to them to whom the office of public teaching is committed. For as the LORD Himself at His Supper, exercising the office of the public Minister, did set forth His example to be followed, so did He commit the offices of baptizing and teaching *peculiarly* to the Apostles.

NOTES.

I.

“ You shall hear how many Sacraments there be, that were instituted by our SAVIOUR CHRIST, and are to be continued, and received of every Christian in due time and order, and for such purpose as our SAVIOUR CHRIST willed them to be received. And as for the number of them, if they should be considered according to the exact signification of a Sacrament, namely, for the visible signs, expressly commanded in the New Testament, whereunto is annexed the promise of free forgiveness of our sin and of our holiness and joining in CHRIST: there be but *two*, namely, BAPTISM and the SUPPER OF THE LORD. For although Absolution hath the promise of forgiveness of sin, yet by the express word of the New Testament, it hath not this promise annexed and tied to the visible sign, which is imposition of hands. For this visible sign, (I mean laying on of hands,) is not expressly commanded in the New Testament to be used in Absolution, as the visible signs in Baptism and the LORD'S Supper are: and therefore Absolution is no *such* Sacrament as Baptism and the Communion are. And though the Ordering of Ministers hath His visible sign and promise, yet it lacks the promise of remission of sin, as all *other* Sacraments besides do. Therefore neither it, nor any other Sacrament else, be such Sacraments as Baptism and the Communion are.”—*Of Common Prayer and Sacraments. Second Book of Homilies. Edit. 1587.* See also the last *Tracts of Anglican Fathers.* Note, p. 73.

II.

Of the *authors* of the “dissensions,” which Nowel so laments, he, in another part of his Catechism, writes thus strongly:—

“They that seditiously stir up discord in the Church of God, and make division and strife in it, and trouble it with sects, have all hope of safety by forgiveness of sins cut off from them, till they be reconciled and return to agreement and favour with the Church.”—P. 47. Edit. 1570.

With reference to the same parties, Nowel's contemporary, EDWIN SANDYS (one of the Revisers of the Liturgy, and afterwards Archbishop of York), thus expresses himself:—

“They which are saved must be sanctified *in truth*: they which are of the truth must be consummate and made perfect *in one*. They are

no better than soul murderers, be they never so painful in their teaching, that teach such doctrines as do either poison the Church with heresy, or dismember and rend it asunder with schism. Of Heretics, S. Paul, forewarning the Church of Ephesus, saith, 'I know that after my departure there will be *ravening wolves* enter in among you, not sparing the flock.' Of Schismatics he writeth in most earnest manner, as well to the Church of Corinth, as of Rome. To the one, '*I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, that ye all say one thing, and that there be no schisms among you.*' To the other, '*Mark them diligently who cause divisions.*' These serve not the SAVIOUR, they serve the destroyer of the world."—*Sermons*, pp. 197, 198. Edit. 1616.

III.

This was a favourite argument with the Reformers; thus Bishop RIDLEY observes:—

"Now, on the other side, if after the truth shall be truly tried out, it is found that the substance of bread is the material substance of the Sacrament, *although for the change of the use, office, and dignity of the bread, the bread indeed, sacramentally, is CHANGED into the Body of CHRIST, as the water in Baptism is sacramentally changed into the fountain of regeneration*, and yet the material substance thereof remaineth all one as was before," &c.—*Enchiridion*, vol. i. p. 72.

Again:

"There is no need to hold the dogma of Transubstantiation in order to believe that CHRIST is imparted in the Eucharist, because He is equally imparted in Baptism, and yet no one contends that the water is transubstantiated"—"As the body is nourished by the Bread and Wine at the Communion, and the soul by grace and spirit with the Body of CHRIST; even so in Baptism, the body is washed with the visible water, and the soul cleansed from all filth by the invisible HOLY GHOST, and yet *the water ceaseth not to be water*, but keepeth the nature of water still. In like sort in the Sacrament of the LORD'S Supper, the Bread ceaseth not to be bread."—*Wordsworth's Life of Ridley*, vol. iii. p. 238.

CRANMER, in one of his latest works, writes:

"I mean that He [CHRIST] is PRESENT in the ministration and receiving of that Holy Supper according to His own institution and ordinance, *like as in Baptism, CHRIST and the HOLY GHOST be not in the water or font, but be given in the ministration, or to them that be truly baptized in the water.*"—*Answer to Gardiner*, p. 172.

WARDLORD SAYS:

“As therefore in Baptism is given to us the HOLY GHOST and pardon of our sins, which lie not lurking in the water; so in the LORD'S Supper is given unto us the Communion of CHRIST'S Body and Blood, without transubstantiation, or including the same in the bread. By Baptism the old man is put off, the new man is put on, yea CHRIST is put on *without transubstantiating the water*. And even so it is in the LORD'S Supper.”—*Sermon on the Lord's Supper, quoted in Wordsworth's Life of Latimer, iii. 236.*

The above quotations are taken from the notes to Dr. W. F. Hook's truly valuable *Visitation Sermon*.

IV.

“Thus much we must be sure to hold, that in the Supper of the LORD there is no vain ceremony, no bare sign, no untrue figure of a thing absent: but (as the Scripture saith), the Table of the LORD, the Bread and Cup of the LORD, the memory of CHRIST, the annunciation of His death, yea, the communion of the Body and Blood of the LORD, in a marvellous incorporation, which by the operation of the HOLY GHOST (the very bond of our conjunction with CHRIST), is through faith wrought in the souls of the Faithful, whereby not only their souls live to eternal life, but they surely trust to win to their bodies a resurrection to immortality. The true understanding of this fruition and union, which is the Body and the Head betwixt the true believers and CHRIST, the ancient Catholic Fathers, both perceiving themselves, and commending to their people, were not afraid to call this Supper, some of them, the salve of immortality and sovereign preservative against death; other, a Deifical Communion; other, the sweet dainties of our SAVIOUR, the pledge of eternal health, the defence of faith, the hope of the resurrection; other, the food of immortality, the healthful grace, and the conservatory of everlasting life. All which sayings both of the Holy Scripture and godly men, truly attributed unto this celestial Banquet and Feast, if we would often call unto mind, O, how would they inflame our hearts to desire a participation of these Mysteries, and oftentimes for to covet after this Bread, continually to thirst for this food? not as specially regarding the terrene and earthly creatures which remain; but always holding fast and cleaving by faith to the Rock whence we may suck the sweetness of everlasting salvation.”—*The First Part of the Sermon concerning the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of CHRIST. Second Book of Homilies.*

“Doth any man doubt but that even from the flesh of CHRIST our very bodies do receive that life which will make them glorious at the latter day, and for which are already accounted parts of His Blessed Body?

Our corruptible bodies could never live the life they shall live, were it not that here they are joined with His Body that is incorruptible, and that His is in ours as a cause of immortality, a cause by removing through the death and merit of His own flesh that which hindered the life of ours. CHRIST is therefore both as GOD and man, that true vine whereof we both spiritually and corporally are branches. The mixture of His bodily substance with ours is a thing which the ancient Fathers disclaim. Yet the mixture of His flesh with ours they speak of, to signify what our very bodies through mystical conjunction receive from that vital efficacy which we know to be His; and from bodily mixtures they borrow divers similitudes rather to declare the truth, than the manner of coherence between His sacred and the sanctified bodies of saints."—HOOKER'S *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book v. c. lvi. 10. *Edit. Keble.*

“Let it be sufficient for me presenting myself at the LORD'S Table to know what there I receive from Him, without searching or inquiring of the manner how CHRIST performeth His promise; let disputes and questions, enemies to piety, abatements of true devotion, and hitherto in this cause but over patiently heard, let them take their rest; let curious and sharp-witted men beat their heads about what questions themselves will, the very letter of the word of CHRIST giveth plain security that *these Mysteries do as nails fasten us to His very Cross, that by them we draw out, as touching efficacy, force and virtue, even the blood of His gored side, in the wounds of our REDEEMER we there dip our tongues, we are dyed red both within and without*, our hunger is satisfied, and our thirst for ever quenched; they are things wonderful which he seeleth, great which he seeth, and unheard-of which he uttereth, whose soul is possessed of this Paschal Lamb, and made joyful in the strength of this new wine, this Bread hath in it more than the substance which our eyes behold, this Cup hallowed with solemn benedictions availeth to the endless life and welfare of soul and body, in that it serveth as well for a medicine to heal our infirmities and purge our sins, as for a Sacrifice of thanksgiving; with touching it sanctifieth, it enlighteneth with belief, it truly conformeth us unto the image of JESUS CHRIST; what these elements are in themselves it skilleth not, it is enough that to me which take them, they are the Body and Blood of CHRIST, His promise in witness hereof sufficeth, His word He knoweth which way to accomplish; why should any cogitation possess the mind of a faithful communicant but this, O my GOD Thou art true, O my soul, thou art happy!"—*Ibid*, book v. c. lxxvii. 12. See also NEWMAN'S *Parochial Sermons*, vol. i. pp. 317-319. 2nd Edit.

“The Eucharist is not a bare sign or figure only.....These Holy Mysteries received in due manner, do instrumentally both make us partakers of that Body and Blood which were given for the life of the world, and besides, also impart unto us, even in true and *real* though mystical manner the very Person of our LORD Himself, whole, perfect, and entire.”—*Eccles. Pol.* v. c. lxvii. 8.

v.

Observe the cautious expression “*so offered.*” The remainder of the sentence more fully explains what it is which is denied concerning the Sacrifice, and what also ought to be maintained. It is denied that the *prerogative* of offering for sins pertains to any, save to CHRIST alone; but it adds, that is *left* for us to do, is to “take the use and benefit of that eternal Sacrifice” “in the LORD’S Supper,” and further—that the “Holy Supper” “sendeth us to the Sacrifice once done on the Cross, by which alone GOD is appeased toward us.” The Reformers had no thought of denying the Catholic doctrine of a *Commemorative* Sacrifice in the Eucharist. It is fully set forth in Edward’s first Service Book, of which even as late as in his *Defence of the Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament, &c.*, CRANMER says, “Thanks be to the eternal GOD, the manner of the Holy Communion, which is now set forth within this realm, is agreeable with the institution of CHRIST, with *S. Paul*, and the old primitive and Apostolic Church, with the right faith of the Sacrifice of CHRIST upon the Cross for our redemption, and with the true doctrine of our salvation, justification, and remission of all our sins by that only Sacrifice.” B. v. c. ult. p. 463. Ed. *Jenkyns*.

In a passage cited by BURNET, (*History of the Reformation*, vol. iv. p. 274, Records, *Edit. Nares*), CRANMER also says :

“The Oblation and Sacrifice of CHRIST in the Mass is not so called because CHRIST indeed is there offered and sacrificed by the priest and people, (for that was done but once by Himself upon the cross;) but it is so called because it is a *memory or representation* of that very true Sacrifice and immolation.”

And RIDLEY observes :

“The Representation of CHRIST’S death and passion, said and done in the Mass, is called the Sacrifice, Oblation, or Immolation of CHRIST : *Non Rei veritate*, (as learned men do write) *sed significandi Mysterio.*”

JEWEL, (Dean Nowel’s contemporary) in his answer to Harding, writes :

“ You will say, ye offer not up CHRIST really unto God His Father. No, M. Harding, neither we nor you can *so* offer Him: nor did CHRIST ever give you commission to make *such* Sacrifice. And this is it, where-with you so foully beguile the simple—CHRIST offereth and presenteth us unto His Father. For by Him we have access to the throne of grace? But no creature is able to offer Him. CHRIST JESUS upon His cross was a Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedeck. ‘*As for our part,*’ S. Augustine saith, ‘CHRIST hath given us to celebrate in His Church, an image or token of that Sacrifice for the *remembrance* of His passion.’ Again he saith, after CHRIST’s ascension into heaven, the flesh and blood of this sacrifice is continued by a *Sacrament of remembrance*? Eusebius saith, ‘We burn a Sacrifice unto GOD, the *remembrance* of that great Sacrifice upon the Cross, and CHRIST commanded us to *offer a remembrance of his death*, instead of a Sacrifice. It were an infinite labour to report all that may be said.” Pp. 130, 131. Edit. 1609.

Again, in his reply to Harding’s answer, Jewel observes :

“ Chrysostom showeth in what sense other ancient Fathers used this word, *Sacrifice*, and also utterly overthroweth M. Harding’s whole purpose touching the same. For, as he saith, ‘we offer up the same Sacrifice that CHRIST offered,’ so in most plain wise, and by sundry words, he removeth all doubt, and declareth in what sort and meaning we offer it. He saith not, as M. Harding saith, ‘We offer up the SON of GOD unto His Father, and that verily and indeed,’ but contrariwise thus he saith, ‘We offer indeed, but in *remembrance* of His death. This Sacrifice is an example of that Sacrifice. This that we do, is done in remembrance of that that was done. We offer up the same that CHRIST offered: or rather, *we work the remembrance of that Sacrifice.*’ *THUS we offer up CHRIST*, that is to say, an example, a COMMEMORATION, a remembrance of that death of CHRIST. THIS KIND OF SACRIFICE WAS NEVER DENIED. P. 424. I.

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Tracts of the Anglican Fathers.

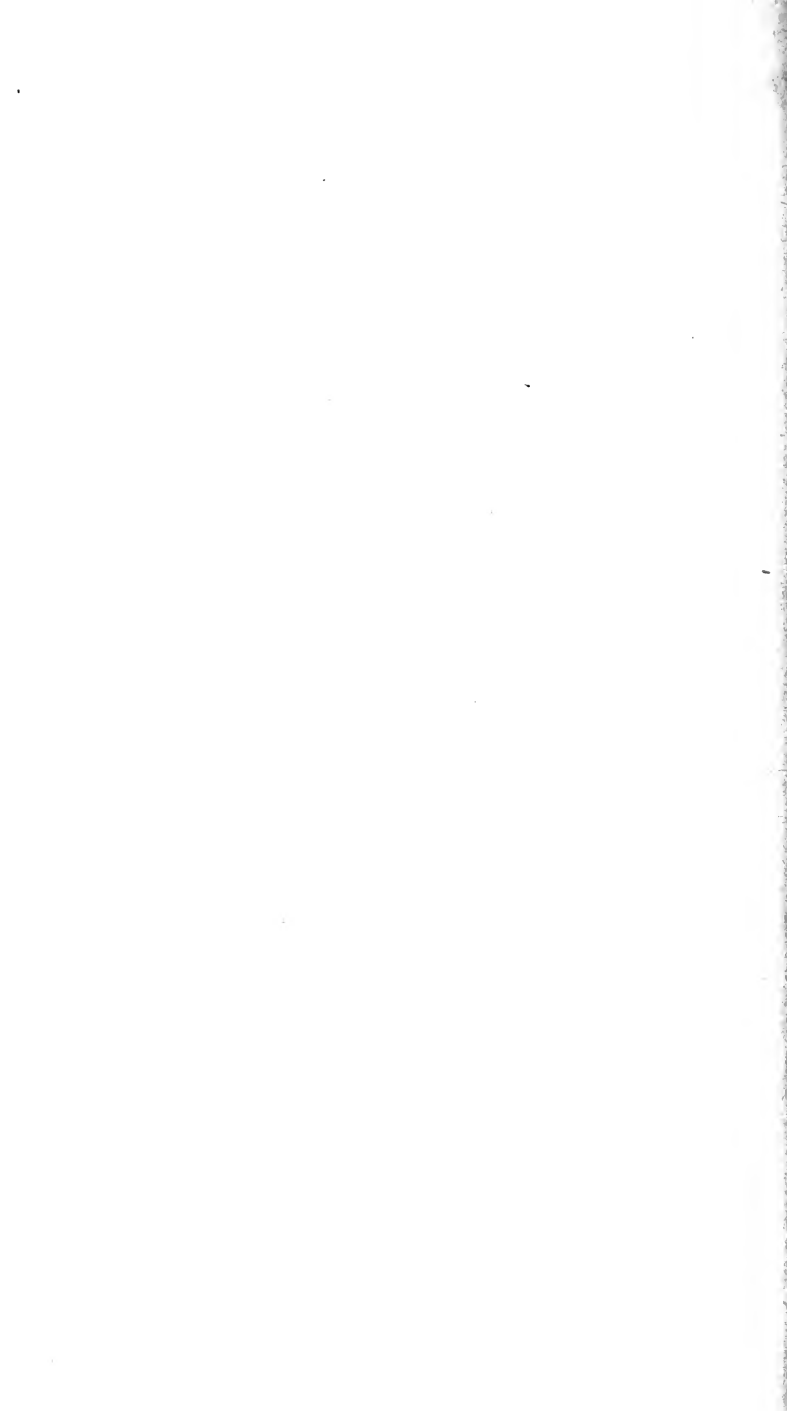
PART III.

ANDREWS
AND
BANCROFT.

“ Ask for the Old Paths.”

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PREFACE.

WE have taken a Sermon of Bishop ANDREWS and a Sermon of Archbishop BANCROFT to form Part III. of these Tracts, and illustrate the doctrine of the English Church during their time; and some notes from Bishop BILSON are added at p. 218. We scarcely anticipate that any Churchman will, on hearing the venerated name of ANDREWS, dispute his claim to be placed among the highest of the Reformed Anglican Fathers; though some, we apprehend, will be startled at many of the positions which they will find him here defending as English orthodoxy in his days. [See pp. 129, 130, 131.] Probably no Prelate of our Church, either before or after him, has ever been more acknowledged as a doctor, or more revered as a saint. And no one, we think, will be likely to attribute to any personal partialities our selection of BANCROFT as the other authoritative spokesman of English Divinity during the times immediately preceding and following the Hampton Court Conference—the THIRD Revision of our Formularies. Of the spirit and tone, and some personal sentiments of that Prelate, we profess to be no admirers; but we only adduce his evidence, so far as he may justly be deemed to speak the sentiments of the CHURCH.—After the first day's meeting of the Conference, BANCROFT (then Bishop of London) was deputed by WHITGIFT, the Primate, to represent the sentiments of the Hierarchy and the Church, in conjunction with Bishop BILSON. It has happened, and not without reason, that BANCROFT has

been less quoted and less read, by posterity, than BILSON, the successful opponent at the Conference of the learned Puritan, Dr. REYNOLDS, who yielded to him the ground of *antiquity*, claimed by the English Church at that time. But BANCROFT, however inferior in some respects to his co-adjutor, cannot be overlooked in an examination of the CHURCH sentiments, during his episcopate, and, eventually his primacy :¹ more especially when we recollect the concurrence of the Clergy generally in his fierce opposition to Puritanism. The Sermon of the Bishop which we here reprint was preached at the request of WHITGIFT the Metropolitan, for the express purpose of vindicating the episcopacy against the schismatical efforts of the Puritans in and out of Parliament. And it is said to have had considerable effect in moderating the tone of the Presbyterians during that session. It is, altogether, a remarkable document: a singular illustration both of the religious and political state of the times. But, apart from all the peculiarities of the man or the age, whether of style or argument, it is impossible to avoid recognizing the broad characteristics of the old Anglican Divinity, so strongly marked. The general language of appeal to Antiquity and the "Fathers" used throughout—the maintaining of the CHURCH authority—the condemnation of schism (pp. 153, 154, &c.)—the upholding of a middle path between Roman superstitious Tradition and Puritan latitude of private judgment (pp. 167, 170)—these, and many others, are the outlines of a Catholic Theology, such as our first Reformers had preserved through the worst times.

¹ Whitgift died in the month after the Hampton Court Conference, and Bancroft was raised to the see of Canterbury.

We have in these Tracts very carefully and professedly abstained from expressing reliance on *any* individual Prelates or Reformers. On the judgment of the Catholic Church we do place reliance the most implicit; and to the judgment of that part of it existing in this realm we owe the obedience of children; and we value the writings of our Fathers in the faith so far only as they express the Catholic teaching of the Church of CHRIST. True it is, that the sentiments of men high in authority are not always the sentiments of the great body of the CHURCH. True it is, that every man of high station, intellect, or learning, will be likely to have some private opinions more or less peculiar to himself. But the CHURCH'S abiding doctrine is ever clearly discernible from these variations of thought, from which it seems divinely protected by an unseen grace. None, we repeat, would deprecate more earnestly than we should, any thing like an appeal to the judgment of CRANMER, or PARKER, or GRINDAL; we make our appeal to a tribunal to which they were all in a large measure obliged to submit. We appeal to a system happily too strong for the personal opinions or prejudices of any or all of the leading Reformers, at different times. We appeal to a system which withstood, at one time, the laxity of a CRANMER, the modified Calvinism of a GRINDAL, and the semi-Erastianism of a BANCROFT. We make our appeal to the Catholic CHURCH of England. The willingness of the great body of the English Clergy to reform abuses and corruptions, both of doctrine and discipline, is evidenced by their joining in the reforms set on foot by HENRY and EDWARD. And, on the other hand, the steadiness of their

repugnance to the doctrine and discipline of Geneva, saved the Church from that permanent impress of Continental Protestantism which so many of her Prelates had themselves received, and would gladly have imparted. Prove then, for example, ever so clearly, that the sentiments of the *Catechismus* of 1548 were not the sentiments of CRANMER, but elsewhere contradicted by him, in his own avowed writings—and you only strengthen the argument we urge, by shewing that, at all events, the *Catechismus* was the only version of Reformed doctrine which the discerning Archbishop thought the great body of the Church would admit. And a similar illustration may be used respecting the doctrine of the Church at a later period.—*Why* were not greater concessions made to Puritan prejudices, on matters of discipline and doctrine, during the primacies of PARKER and GRINDAL? ... Archbishop PARKER seems to have had, originally, some sympathies with the foreign system, and GRINDAL had even refused to wear the surplice and the cap. ... The main obstacle to Puritan success was, that the great BODY of the CLERGY had never been to Geneva. They were thoroughly English, and thoroughly Catholic in feeling. And the comparatively small Puritan minority, though often favoured at Lambeth—and strong at the Royal Council-table—could never suppress the voice of the CHURCH of ENGLAND.—What, again, hindered the incorporation of that tremendous list of dogmas, the “Lambeth Articles,” among the Articles of the Church of England? What but the felt impossibility of reconciling to such a step the great body of the English Church, notwithstanding the

sentiments of the Archbishop, the Primate of all England, —with his University to support him ?

Nor is it unlikely that this “old Catholic leaven” in the Church acted as a strong check on the Erastian policy of the State ; and emboldened even GRINDAL to remind the Queen that Church questions were spiritual matters, “depending not on her will, but on the will of GOD.” And so also at the Hampton Conferences ; notwithstanding the courtliness of the Bishops and others, the CHURCH surrendered no *principle*, either to King JAMES or the Puritans. Doubtless we ought to recognize, in this, the Divine over-ruling hand ; but we may also mark the outward means employed to accomplish the end. Catholic truth was preserved to England by the faithful ministrations of the great body of the Clergy—a body too large to be set at nought by the State, and too strong to be coerced into novelties of doctrine.

A true expression of the doctrines of the CHURCH, at any time, is best obtained by her decisions in Synod : but when in troubled times this is denied—when the State, by an act of practical Infidelity, refuses to allow the Church to exercise the power of spiritual Self-Government, first given by her great LORD and MASTER, the Church’s sentiments may in a measure be known by what is *unattempted* or *unaccomplished*. Or, if the State, by a refinement in persecution, should permit two or three Ecclesiastics or others to assume powers which belong only to the whole CHURCH in Convocation, it would be hard, in such a case, to impute to the CHURCH the deeds of her oppressors. Remonstrance, if required, and passive resis-

tance, whether successful or not, would in that case, more truly speak the Church's sentiments. Consequently, it is not to the few Church Divines, at the Hampton Court Conference, that we should of necessity (*"a parte ante"*) defer, were it not that *their* sentiments acquired an *"ex post facto"* validity. There was no demur to their representation at the Conference of the Church's doctrine; and BANCROFT, her chief representative, immediately afterwards, was raised to the Primacy—a promotion which would seem to have been wholly impossible had his known severity against Puritanism been distasteful to any large portion of the Ecclesiastical body.

On the whole, it will scarcely be questioned by any that the Puritans gained nothing at Hampton Court. The doctrine of the CHURCH, whatever it had been, was not lowered *there*. Of the practical Theology of this era we can need no better or more instructive specimen than the Sermon of holy Bishop ANDREWS, here reprinted. The Faith "once delivered to the saints," as received by the Elizabethan Reformers, was transmitted to the divines of King JAMES. Indeed, the Sacramental teaching of the Church became, practically, elevated and fixed, at the Conference, by the suppression of the irregularities of lay-baptism, and the addition of that part of the Catechism which concerns the Sacraments and declares them to be the channels of divine grace: This was done by OVERALL, a member of the Conference, and afterwards Bishop of Norwich.

I.

Tracts of the Anglican Fathers.

No. VII.

OF REMISSION OF SINS

IN THE CHURCH;

AND CHIEFLY CONCERNING ABSOLUTIONS:

A SERMON,

PREACHED BY THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

LAUNCELOT ANDREWS,

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

Reprinted from his "Sermons." Folio. A.D. 1635.

ADVERTISEMENT.

ON the accession of James I. (1603), another attempt was made to revise the English Liturgy; made not by the Church, but by a party in the Church. The Hampton Court Conference was held in the following year; and must be regarded as the beginning, rather than the settlement, of the Puritan questions there mooted. The most eminent Church Divine of this era, beyond all question, is ANDREWS. A bishopric had twice been offered him in the previous reign; and he had, on the noblest ground, declined to accept a sacred dignity which was to be only held on unworthy conditions. He was the first Translator of the Bible appointed at this Conference, which consisted of all parties in the Church. He was made Bishop of Chichester and Lord Almoner in the following year.

This Sermon, preached at Whitehall, on the first Sunday after Easter, March 30, 1600, declares what were then taken to be sound Church of England views on the doctrine of Absolution: that they were not merely speculative notions, accidentally, or for once, defended in a time of controversy, may be seen in the Note at the end of this Tract.

B.

CAMBRIDGE,
Feast of the Annunciation.

A SERMON OF ABSOLUTION.

“WHOSOEVER SINS YE REMIT, THEY ARE REMITTED UNTO THEM; AND WHOSOEVER SINS YE RETAIN, THEY ARE RETAINED.”—*S. John* xx. 23.

THEY be the words of our SAVIOUR CHRIST to His Apostles: a part of the first words which He spake to them at His Epiphany, or first apparition after He rose from the dead. And they contain a commission by Him granted to the Apostles, which is the sum or contents of this verse.

Which commission is His first largess after His rising again. For at His first appearing to them, it pleased Him not to come empty, but with a blessing, and to bestow on them, and on the world by them, as the first-fruits of His Resurrection, this Commission—a part of that Commission, which the sinful world most of all stood in need of—for Remission of sins.

To the granting whereof, He proceedeth, not without some solemnity or circumstance, well worthy to be remembered.

For first (v. 21) He saith, “As My Father sent ME, so I send You;”—which is their *Authorizing*, or giving them their *Credentials*.

Secondly (v. 22) He doth “breathe upon them,” and with-

all inspireth them with the HOLY GHOST;—which is their *Enabling* or furnishing thereto.

And, having so authorized and enabled them, now in this verse here He giveth them their Commission;—and thereby doth perfectly inaugurate them into this part of their office.

A Commission is nothing else but the imparting of a Power, which, before, they had not. First, therefore, HE imparteth to them a *Power*—a Power over *sins*; over sins, either for the *remitting*, or the *retaining* of them, as the persons shall be qualified.

And after, to this power He addeth a promise (as the lawyers term it) of Ratihibition [ratification], that He will ratify and make it good, that His power shall accompany this power, and the lawful use of it in His Church for ever.

And very agreeably is this power now bestowed by Him, upon His resurrection. Not so conveniently before His death; because, till then, He had not “made His soul an offering for sin;” nor, till then, He had not shed His blood, without which there is no remission of sins. Therefore it was promised before, but not given till now.¹ Not before He was risen then. And again, no longer than till He was risen—not till He was ascended. First, to show that the Remission of sins is the undivided and immediate effect of His death. Secondly, to show how much the world needed it, for which cause He would not withhold it, no, not so much as one day, (for this was done on the very day of His resurrection). Thirdly, but especially, to set forth His great love and tender care over us, in this, that as soon as He had accomplished His own resurrection, even presently upon it, He sets in hand with ours, and beginneth the first part of it the very first day of His rising.

The Scripture maketh mention of a first and second death; and from them two, of a first and second resurrection. Both

¹ Because it was convenient there should be [His—CHRIST'S] solutio, before there were [man's] absolutio.

expressly set down in one verse—"Happy is he that hath his part in the first resurrection; for over such the second death hath no power." Understanding by the first, the death of the soul by sin, and the rising thence to the life of grace [in Bap-ism, see post, p. 129]: by the second, the death of the body by corruption, and the rising thence to the life of glory.

CHRIST truly is the SAVIOUR of the whole man, both soul and body, from the first and second death. But beginneth first with the first, that is, with sin, the death of the soul, and the rising from it. So is the method of divinity prescribed by Himself—First, to cleanse that which is within (the soul), then that which is without (the body). And so is the method of physic, first to cure the cause, and then the disease. Now, the cause, or as the Apostle calleth it, "the sting of death is sin." Therefore, first to remove sin, and then death afterwards. For the cure of sin being performed, the other will follow of its own accord. As S. John telleth us, "He that hath his part in the first resurrection," shall not fail of it in the second. The first resurrection then from sin is it which our SAVIOUR CHRIST here goeth about, whereto there is no less power required than a divine power. For, look, what power is necessary to raise the dead body out of the dust; the very same, every way, is requisite to raise the dead soul out of sin. For which cause the "Remission of sins" is an article of faith, no less than the "Resurrection of the body." For, in very deed, a Resurrection it is; and so it is termed no less than that.

To the service and ministry of which divine work, a Commission is here granted to the Apostles. And first, They have here their Sending from GOD the FATHER; their Inspiring from GOD the HOLY GHOST; their COMMISSION from GOD the SON: that being thus "Sent from the FATHER"—"by the Power of the HOLY GHOST"—"in the Person of CHRIST," they may perform the Office, or, as the Apostle calleth it, the

embassage, of reconciling sinners unto GOD, to which they are appointed. And so much for the sum and dependence of this Scripture.

The points of special observation are three:—First, the Power that is granted. Second, the matter or subject whereon the power is to be exercised. Third, the promise of ratifying the exercise of that power.

I. The power itself; in which cometh first to be treated—

(1). What is meant by “remitting and retaining.”

(2). After, in *general*, that there is a power to remit and retain; but *first*, “to remit,” and *after*, “to retain.”

(3). Then, in *particular*, of that power, as it is set down in both words, “Ye shall remit,” and “They are remitted.”

II. The matter or subject; which is also two ways to be considered, either,

(1). As it is Sin in itself, which is the matter at large; or

(2). As it is the sin of some Persons (for it is not “what soever sins,” but “whosoever;” which is the immediate or proper matter of this power.

III. The ratifying or promise of concurrence, to assure the conscience of the sinner of the certainty and efficacy of the Church’s act—that what the Apostles do “in the Person of CHRIST,” by the instinct of the HOLY GHOST, He that “sent them” will certainly make good and effectual from heaven.

And of these three in order.

The terms of “remitting” and “retaining,” may be taken many ways. To the end, then, that we may the more clearly conceive that which shall be said, it will be expedient that first of all we understand in what sense especially, and according to what resemblance, those terms are to be taken. This may we best do out of our SAVIOUR CHRIST’S OWN Commission. For, this of the Apostles is nothing else but a branch out of His, which He Himself (as man) had here “upon earth.” For,

as man, He Himself was "sent," and was "anointed with the SPIRIT," and proceeded by Commission. His Commission we find Luke iv., which He Himself read in the Synagogue at Nazareth, at his first entering on it: which is originally recorded, Isaiah 61. Wherein, among others, this power is one "to (preach, ἀφῆσιν that is) Remission, (as it is turned here, or *deliverance*," as it is turned there—but the word is one in both places), and that respectively "to captives;" and (as it followeth in that place of Isaiah) "to them that are *bound*, the opening of the prison."

Which very term (of "captives," or "such as are in prison"), doth open unto us with what reference or respect this term of "remitting," or letting go, is to be conceived. And as it was in His, so must it be understood here in *this*; since this is but derived from that of CHRIST.

The mind of the HOLY GHOST, then, as in other places by diverse other resemblances, so in this here is to compare the sinner's case to the estate of a person imprisoned. And, indeed, whoso well weigheth the place, it cannot well be taken otherwise. For not only here, but elsewhere where this power is expressed, it seemeth ever to be with reference, as it were, to parties committed. The very term of "the keys," wherein it was promised, and wherein it is most usually delivered—the terms of "opening" and "shutting," seem to have relation, as it were to the prison gate. The terms of "binding" and "loosing," as it were to the fetters or bonds. And these here, of letting forth, or still detaining, all and every of them, seem to have an evident relation to a prisoner's estate; as if sin were a prison, and the case of sinners like theirs that are shut up.

Verily, as sin at the first in committing seemeth sweet, so that men cannot be got to "spit it out," saith Job, but "hold it close under their tongues," till they have "swallowed it down," ch. xx. 12; but after it is committed, the sinner findeth then

that it is "an evil thing and a bitter to have forsaken the LORD," saith the prophet; that it turneth to a bitter and choleric matter, of which there breedeth a "worm which never leaveth gnawing;" even so doth sin at the first also seem a matter of liberty. For a liberty it is, not to be restrained; not to be, as the Apostle speaketh, committed to Moses to be kept and "shut up under the law;" not to be forbidden *any fruit* (under which very term the serpent did persuade it). But when it was done and past, then shall a man feel a pinching or straightness in his soul, termed by the Apostle "anguish,"² Rom. ii. 9, which properly signifieth the pain which they suffer that are shut up in a narrow room or some place of little ease.

So speaketh Solomon of sin. "His own wickedness shall attack the sinner, and he shall be holden or pinioned with the cords of his own sin," Prov. v. 22. So S. Peter to Simon Magus "I perceive thou art (to express the former resemblance) in the gall of *bitterness*, and (to express the latter) in the *bond* of iniquity." And S. Paul, that sinners, instead of having Moses to their keeper, become the "devil's captives," and are of him holden and "taken at his will" and pleasure. Truly some have felt as much as I spake of, and have in pregnant terms complained of it. "I am so fast in prison (saith David), that I cannot get out." And "Bring my soul out of prison and I will praise Thee." And "I will run the way of Thy commandments when thou shalt set my heart at liberty." Peradventure, all feel not this presently; as soon as they have sinned; nor (it may be) a good while after. So GOD told Cain at the beginning, his "sin shall lie at the door;" that is, while he kept within he should not be troubled with it, perhaps; but at his coming forth it should certainly attack him. But saith Moses, let every one that sinneth be sure that his

“sin at last will find him out;” for he shall no sooner be under arrest of any trouble, sickness, cross, or calamity, but he shall be shut into his “anguish,” (as a “narrow place”), and feel it presently. As the brethren of Joseph for very many years after they had of envy, and without all pity, sold him to be a bondservant, seemed at liberty; no sooner fell they into danger and displeasure in a strange country, but it came to mind, and they were served with it straightway. Even as in Job, it is said, “The sins of our youth” shall let us go up and down quietly all our youth-time, but when we come to years we shall feel them pinch us “in our very bones.” Ch. xx. 11.

Yea, though many, even then when they feel this straightness in their soul, make means to put it away for the time, and seem merry and light enough (as many times prisoners be in the goal, till the very day of the assizes come), yet when it is come to that, that “the Judge standeth before the door,” when the terror of death cometh, and with it “a fearful expectation of judgment,” then certainly, then without all doubt, the “anguish” S. Paul speaketh of shall be “upon every soul of every one that doeth evil.” Then there is no man never so wicked that with his good will would die in his sins, but would have them released while he is yet in the way! Then we seek help at such Scriptures as this, and call for the Persons to whom this Commission belongeth. And Those whom we have gone by seven years together, and never said a word to about it, then we are content to speak with, when the counsel and direction they give, we are scarce able to receive, and much less to put in practice! As if all our life time we believed the *permission* of sins—as if that were the article of our faith, all our life long—and the article of “*Remission* of sins” never till the point of death!

And this may serve shortly to set forth unto us this prison of the soul, which if any conceive not, by that which hath been said, I must say with the prophet to them; that sure

there is such a thing, and that at their latter end (I wish *before*, but sure then) they shall very plainly understand that such a thing there is.

But now, they that have either felt or believed that such an imprisonment there is, will be glad to hear that there is a Power whereby they may be enlarged. And this very tidings in general, that there is a Remission, that men may have deliverance from these fetters, this prison, this straightness or anguish of the soul, must needs be very acceptable and welcome tidings to them. For which very point (even that there is a Remission) what thanks are we eternally bound to render unto GOD! For I tell you, the Angels never found the like. "For the Angels which kept not their first estate, hath He reserved in everlasting chains of darkness to the judgment of the Great Day." Their chains everlasting, their imprisonment perpetual! No Commission to be sued for them!—no remission for them! But with man it is not so. To him "deliverance"; to him, "loosing of the chains"; to him "opening of the prison" is promised. For his sins a Commission is granted out; his sins have a remission. This is a high and special privilege of our nature, to be had by us in an everlasting thankful remembrance. So that no man needeth now abruptly to say with those in Jeremiah (ch. ii. 25.), "we are desperate now,"—we shall never be forgiven, let us now do what we list. No, but as it is said in Ezra: "Though we have grievously sinned, yet there is hope" for all that (ch. x. 2.); and as in Ezekiel, that we may so use the matter that "our sins shall not be our destruction." Which very point is both an especial stay of our hope, and a principal means of manifesting unto us the great goodness of GOD.

Which goodness of GOD as it doth shew forth itself in this, first (that such a power there is), so doth it secondly, and no less in the order that (when both acts are mentioned, as well retaining, as remitting) He placeth the power of remitting

first. Which very sorting of them in that order doth plainly shew unto us whereunto GOD of His goodness is most inclinable; and which of them it is, that is the principal in His intent. That to remit is more proper to Him, and that He is more ready to it, and that it is first—first in His purpose, first in His grant, and that to the other He cometh but secondarily, but by occasion, when the former cannot take place. For, of remitting sin, He taketh the ground from Himself, and not from any other; and therefore that more naturally: but of retaining it, the cause is ministered from *us*—even from our hardness, and heart that cannot repent. And as Himself doth use this power, so giveth He it to them, “to edification, and not to destruction.” I say, not first or principally to destruction; nor of any save only of the wilful impenitent sinner. Thus much of the remitting and retaining in general, and of their place and order. Now of the power itself in particular.

Of this power there is here in my text twice mention—One in “Ye shall remit”—and again, in “They are remitted,” which two words [phrases] do plainly lead us to two acts; of which two acts, by good consequence, are inferred two powers. Which two powers, though they be concurrent to one end, yet are they distinct in themselves. Distinct in person, for “Ye shall remit” is the second person, and meant of the Apostles’, and “They are remitted” is the third person, and meant of GOD Himself. And as distinct in person, so distinct in place, for the one is exercised in earth, which is the Apostles’; the other in heaven, which is GOD’s. “Whatsoever Thou shalt loose *on earth* shall be loosed *in heaven*.”

Now where two powers are, and one of them in GOD, the other must needs be subordinate, and derived from it. For two beginnings there are not. Therefore none other from whence it can proceed but from GOD, and from the power in Him alone.

Of these two then, “They are remitted,” though latter in

place, yet indeed is by nature and order first, and from it doth proceed the other, "Ye remit," which howsoever in the sentence it stand before it, yet without all question it is derived from it, and after it. So that thus the case stands between them. That which is GOD's power is the primitive or original: that which is the Apostles' power is merely derived. that in GOD sovereign: this in the Apostles' dependent. In Him only, absolute: in them, delegate. In Him imperial: in them ministerial.

The power of remitting sin is originally in GOD, and in GOD alone. And in CHRIST our SAVIOUR, by means of the union of the GODHEAD and manhood into One Person, by virtue whereof "the SON OF MAN hath power to forgive sins upon earth." This power being thus solely invested in GOD, He might without wrong to any have retained and kept to Himself, and without means of word or Sacrament, and without ministers, either Apostles or others, have exercised immediately by Himself from heaven. But we should then have said of the remission of sins, saith S. Paul, "who shall go up to heaven for it, and fetch it thence?" for which cause (saith he) "the righteousness of faith speaketh thus; Say not so in thy heart—the word shall be near thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, and this is the word of faith which *we* preach."

Partly this, that there should be no such difficulty to shake our faith, as once to imagine to fetch CHRIST from heaven for the remission of our sins. Partly also, because CHRIST (to whom alone this Commission was originally granted) having "ordained Himself a body," would work by bodily things, and having taken the nature of a man upon Him, would honour the nature He had so taken. For these causes that which was His and His alone, He vouchsafed to impart; and out of His commission to grant a commission, and thereby to associate them to Himself (it is His own word by the Prophet), and to make them "workers together with Him" (as

the Apostle speaketh) to the work of salvation, both of themselves and others.

From GOD then it is derived; *from* GOD—and *to* men. To men, and not to Angels. And this I take to be a second prerogative of our nature. That an Angel must give order to Cornelius to “send to Joppa for one Simon, to speak words to him, by which he and his household should be saved”; but the Angel must not be the doer of it. That not to Angels, but to men, is committed this office or embassy of reconciliation. And, that which is yet more to “sinful men,” for so is the truth, and so themselves confess it: S. Peter, “Go from me, LORD, for I am a sinful man;” S. James, “In many things we offend all” (putting himself in the number); and (lest *we* should think it to be but their modesty,) S. John speaketh plainly, “If we say we have no sin” (what then? not we are proud, and there is no humility in us, but) “we are liars, and there is no *truth* in us.”

And this is that which is wonderful in this point, that S. Paul, who confesseth himself a sinner, and a “chief sinner,” the same, concerning another sinner, (the incestuous Corinthian), “I FORGIVE IT HIM,” saith he, “in the Person of CHRIST.”

Now if we ask to what men? the text is plain. They to whom CHRIST said this, “Ye shall remit,” were the Apostles. In the Apostles (that we may come nearer yet) we find three capacities, as we may term them. 1. As Christians in general; 2. As preachers, priests, or ministers—more special; 3. As those twelve persons whom, in strict propriety of speech, we term *the* Apostles. Some things that CHRIST spake to them He spake to them as representing the whole company of Christians; as His “Watch ye.” Some things to them not as Christians, but as preachers or priests; as His “Go preach the Gospel,” and His “Do this,” (Luke xxii. 19.) which no man thinketh all Christians may do.³ And some things to them-

³ Do not many nominal Churchmen *now* seem to think what “no man thought,”

selves personally ; as that He had appointed them “ witnesses of His miracles and resurrection, which cannot be applied but to them, and them in person. It remaineth, we enquire, in which of these three capacities CHRIST imparteth to them this Commission.

Not as to Apostles properly. That is, this was no personal privilege to be in them and to die with them, that they should only execute it for a time, and none ever after them. GOD forbid we should so think it! For, this power being more than needful for the world (as in the beginning it was said), it was not to be either personal or for a time. Otherwise those persons dying, and those times determining, they in the ages following (as we now in this) that should light into this prison or captivity of sin, how could they or we receive any benefit by it? Of nature it is said by the heathen philosopher, that it doth neither “abound in superfluities, nor be deficient in necessaries” GOD forbid, but we should ascribe as much to GOD at the least ; that neither He would ordain a power superfluous or more than needed, or else, it being needful, would appropriate it unto one age, and leave all other destitute of it! And not, either, as all writers, both new and old, take it, *continue it successively* to the world’s end? And as not proper to the Apostles persons, so neither common to all Christians in general, nor in the persons of all Christians conveyed to them. Which thing, the very circumstances of the text do evince. For He “sent” them first ; and after, “inspired” them ; and, *after both these*, gave them the Commission. Now all Christians are not so “sent,” nor all the Christians inspired with the “grace or gift” of the SPIRIT that they were here. Consequently, it was not intended to the whole society of Christians. Yea, I add, that for as much as these two (*both these two*) must go before it. The “sending” and gift of the SPIRIT, that though GOD inspire some lay-

in holy Bishop Andrew’s days?—“Pastoral Aids,” distinct from “Pastors” canonically “sent,” were no part of the old Church plan.

men, if I may have leave so to term them, with very special graces of knowledge to this end; yet inasmuch as they have not the former of "sending," it agreeth not to them, neither may they exercise it until they be *sent*, that is, until they have their calling thereunto.

It being then neither personal, nor peculiar to them as Apostles, nor again common to all as Christians, it must needs be committed to them as ministers, priests, or preachers; and consequently to those that in that office and function do succeed them, to whom, and by whom, this commission is still continued. Neither are they that are ordained or instituted to that calling,⁴ ordained or instituted by any other words or verse than this. Yet not so that absolutely without them GOD cannot bestow it on whom or when He pleaseth, or that He is bound to this means only, and cannot work without it. For the Grace of GOD is not bound but free, and can work without means either of Word or Sacrament; and as without means, so without ministers, how and when to Him seemeth good. But speaking of that which is proper and ordinary, in the course by Him established, this is an ecclesiastical act, committed as the residue of "the ministry of reconciliation" to ecclesiastical persons. And if at any time He vouchsafe it by others that are not such, they be in that case ministers by *necessity*; but by Office, not so.

Now as by committing this power, GOD doth not deprive or bereave Himself of it (for there is His "They are remitted" still, and that, chief sovereign and absolute): so on the other side, where GOD proceedeth by the Church's act, as ordinarily He doth, it being His Own ordinance; there, whosoever will be partaker of the Church's act must be partaker of it by the Apostles' means; there doth the ministerial power "Ye remit" concur in its order and place, and there runneth still a correspondence between both; there doth GOD associate His ministers, and maketh them "workers together with Him;"

⁴ See Note I., at the end of this Tract.

there have they their parts in this work, and cannot be excluded; no more in this than the other acts and parts of their function. And to exclude them is (after a sort) to wring "the keys" out of their hands to whom CHRIST hath given them; is to cancel and make void this clause of "Ye shall remit" as if it were no part of the sentence; to account all this solemn sending and inspiring as if it were an idle and fruitless ceremony; which if it may not be admitted, then sure it is, They have their part and concurrence in this work, as in the rest of "the ministry of reconciliation."

Neither is this a new or strange thing. From the beginning it was so. Under the law of nature (saith Elihu, in Job, speaking of one for his sins in GOD'S prison) "if there be with him an ambassador, commissioner, or interpreter" (not any whosoever, but) "one among a thousand, to show unto Him his righteousness; then GOD shall have mercy upon him and say, Let him go, for I have received a propitiation." Under Moses, it is certain, the "covenant of life and peace was made with Levi," and at the sacrifices for sin he was ever a party. Under the prophets it pleased GOD to use this concurrence towards David himself; Nathan the prophet saying unto him "The LORD hath put away thy sin."

Which course so established by GOD, till CHRIST should come (for neither covenant nor priesthood was to endure any longer), was by CHRIST re-established anew in the Church, in that calling to whom He had "committed the word of reconciliation." Neither are we (the ordinance of GOD thus standing) to rend off one part of the sentence. There are here expressed three persons:—1. The person of the sinner in "*whosoever*" sins. 2. Of GOD, in "they are remitted." 3. Of the Priest, in "ye shall remit." Three are expressed; and where three are expressed, three are required: and where three are required, two are not enough. It is S. Augustine that thus speaketh of this ecclesiastical act in his time: "Let

no man say to himself, 'I repent secretly'—'I repent before GOD'—'GOD that pardoneth me, knoweth, because I repent in my heart.'—Else without cause hath it been said 'What ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven!' Else without cause 'the keys' are given to the Church of GOD. We make void the Gospel of GOD. We frustrate the words of CHRIST!" Which may suffice for the distinguishing of these two powers; the deriving of the one, from WHOM, and to Whom; the continuance, and concurrence of them.

The remission of sins, as it is from GOD only, so is it by the death and blood-shedding of CHRIST alone; but, for the applying of this unto us, there are diverse means established. There is, saith S. Peter, "variety of graces," whereof we are made the disposers. Now all, and every, of these means working to the remission of sins (which is the first and greatest benefit, our SAVIOUR CHRIST hath obtained for us), it resteth that we further enquire what That means is in particular, which is here imparted. For sure it is that besides this there are diverse acts instituted by GOD, and executed by Us, which all tend to the "Remission of sins."

1. In the institution of Baptism there is a power to that end. "Be baptized every one of you for the *remission of sins*" (saith S. Peter to three thousand at once). "Arise, and be baptized" (saith Ananias to S. Paul) "and *wash away thy sins.*" And to be short, "I believe in one BAPTISM for the Remission of sins," saith the Nicene Creed.

2. Again, there is also another power for the Remission of sins in the institution of the HOLY EUCHARIST: The words are exceeding plain—"This is My Blood of the New Testament for the *remission of sins.*"

3. Besides, in THE WORD itself, there is a like power ordained. "Now are you *clean,*" saith CHRIST (no doubt from their sins) "through THE WORD which I have spoken

unto you." And the very name giveth as much, that it is entitled "THE WORD of *reconciliation*."

4. Further there is to the same effect a power in PRAYER; and that in the PRIEST'S prayer. "Call for the Priests," saith the Apostle, "and let THEM pray for the sick person, and if he have committed sin it *shall be forgiven* him."

All and every of these are acts for the "Remission of sins;" and in all and every of these is the person of the Minister required, and they cannot be dispatched without him.

But the ceremonies and circumstances that here I find used, prevail with me to think that there is somewhat here imparted to Them that was not before. For it carrieth no likelihood, that our SAVIOUR bestowing on Them nothing here, but that which before He had, would use so much solemnity, so diverse and new circumstances, no new or diverse grace being here communicated.

1. Now for BAPTISM it appeareth plainly, that the Apostles baptized, in a manner from the beginning; which I make no question they did not without a commission.

2. And for the power of administering THE HOLY SACRAMENT [of the B. EUCHARIST], it was granted expressly to Them by "This do"—*before* His passion.

3. The like may we say of the power of PREACHING, which was given them long before; even when He "sent them" and "commanded them to preach the kingdom of God," which was done before *this* power was promised, which here is bestowed, as will evidently appear, the one being given (S. Matt.: x.) the other, after, promised, (S. Matt. xvi.).

4. Neither can it be meant of PRAYER. There is no partition in prayer. "Prayers and supplications are to be made for *all* men." But here is a plain partition. There is, *whose* sins are remitted, and "*whose* sins are retained."

If, then, this new ceremony and solemn manner of pro-

ceeding in this, are able to persuade any, it was some new power that here was conferred, and not those which before had been; (though there be those that apply this, some to one, and others to all of them). I take it to be a Power distinct from the former, and (not to hold you long) to be the accomplishment of the promise made (S. Matt. xvi. 19.) of the power of "the keys," which here in this place and in these words is fulfilled; and have therein for me the joint consent of the Fathers. Which being a different power in itself, is that which we call the act or benefit of ABSOLUTION, in which (as in the rest) there is, in the due time and place of it, an use for the remission of sins. Whereunto our SAVIOUR CHRIST, by His sending them, doth institute them and give them the key of authority: And by breathing on them, and inspiring them, doth enable them, and give them the key of knowledge to do it well; and having bestowed both these upon them as the "Stewards of His house," doth last of all deliver them their Commission to do it, having so enabled them and authorized them as before. So much for THE POWER.

II. Every power is not every where to be exercised, nor upon every matter, but each power hath his proper subject. The matter or subject whereon this power is to be exercised is sin. To be considered first in itself, as the matter at large. And then as qualified with the person: (for it is "whosoever" and not "whatsoever" sins) as the nearer and more proper subject.

First then the subject is sins. Sins in themselves, no ways restrained or limited. No sins at all, either for number or greatness being excepted.

Not for number. For CHRIST teaching us, that we ourselves should "forgive until seventy times seven times," doth thereby after a sort give us to understand that He will not stick with us for the like number in ours. For GOD forbid we should imagine He taught us to be more merciful, or of

greater perfection than He will be Himself. That number amounteth to ten jubilees of pardon ; for so many sins may we then hope for pardon at His hands. If those be not enough, we have example of one whose “sins were more in number than the hairs of his head,” and of another, whose were “more than the sands of the sea” ; both which give us hope, for they both obtained pardon.

But that which followeth in the place of S. Matthew maketh both parts plain. For there, a debt is remitted, not only of five hundred (as S. Luke, vii.), but of ten thousand, and those (not as in [S.] Luke pence, but) talents ; a great and huge sum, yet for that hath He remission in store ! So that no man shall need to say, his sin is greater than can be remitted, as Cain did, since that assertion is convinced to be erroneous ; for his sin may be forgiven that slew Abel, though his brother, seeing S. Peter saith that their’s was not greater than might be forgiven that slew the SON of GOD. For no man but will conceive that the betraying and murdering JESUS CHRIST was a far more heinous offence than that of Abel’s killing ; but *that* might (saith S. Peter), therefore this much more may be forgiven. And to end this point, whereas it is affirmed, and that most truly, by the Apostle, that “the weakness of GOD is stronger than men,” if there were any sin greater than could be remitted, the weakness of man (for of that cometh sin) should be stronger than GOD, which neither religion nor reason will admit. In respect of the sin itself, therefore, there is no exception.

But because it is not “whatsoever sins” but “whosoever,” it sheweth that in the act of remission, we are to respect not the sin so much as the person. So that, though all sins may be remitted, yet not to all persons, but to a “quorum,” as we see. For, there is another “quorum,” whose sins are retained ; so that this limiteth the former, and sheweth indeed what is the immediate subject of this power committed.

Our SAVIOUR CHRIST Himself, at the reading of His Commission (whereof this is a branch), in effect expresseth as much. For He telleth them, "There were many lepers in the days of Elisha, and many widows in the days of Elias; yet none cleansed but Naaman; nor to none was Elias sent, but to the Widow of Sarepta." And so the case standeth here. Many sinners there be, and many sins may be remitted, but not to any except they be of this "quorum." In which point there is a special use of the key of knowledge to direct to whom, and to whom not, since it is not, but with advice to be applied nor "hands hastily to be laid on any man," (as the Apostle testifieth); which place is referred by the ancient writers [S. S. Cyprian, Augustin, and others] to the act of ABSOLUTION; and the circumstance of the place giveth no less. But discretion is to be used in applying of comfort, counsel, and the benefit of ABSOLUTION. Whereby it falleth out sometimes, that the very same sins to some may be remitted, being of the "quorum," that to some others may not, that are out of it.

To see, then, a little into this qualification, that thereby we may discern who be of either "quorum." The conditions to be required to be of the "quorum" whose sins are remitted are two.

First, that the party be *within* the House and Family whereto those keys belong, that is, be a member of the Church, be a faithful believing Christian. In the law, the "Propitiatory" was annexed to the ark, and could not be severed from it, to show that they must have hold of the ark, that is, be of the number of the people of GOD, or else could they not be partakers of the propitiation for their sins. So saith the Psalmist in the Psalm of the CHURCH, "all my fresh springs shall be in Thee." All the conduit-pipes of my spiritual graces are conveyed into Thee, and are no where else to be had. And namely, of this benefit of remission of sins. "Thou hast," saith he, "O LORD, been gracious unto Thy land," &c. "Thou

hast *forgiven all their iniquity* and covered their sin." But the prophet Isaiah most plainly: "The people which dwelleth in Her (that is, the CHURCH), they shall have their iniquity forgiven." And to end this point, the Angel, when he interpreteth the name of JESUS, extendeth it no further than thus, that "He shall save His people from their sins." To them is the benefit of remission of sins entailed and limited. It is the "lot of the Saints," and the "gift of the Church." And they that are of this number have their certain hope thereof. They that are out of it pertain to the second sort, of them that have their sins retained. The power of the keys reacheth not to them. "What have I to do with them that are without," saith the Apostle, "them that are without GOD shall judge." Therefore all Pagans, Infidels, Jews, and Turks are without the compass of this "quorum." For "whoso believeth not in CHRIST," whoso is not a faithful Christian, "shall die in his sins."

But are all that are within this house thereby partakers of this remission? Is there nothing else required? Yes, indeed, there is yet another condition requisite, whereby many are cut off, that are within the "quorum" of the Church. And that is, as OUR SAVIOUR CHRIST Himself setteth it down, repentance. For He willeth "repentance and remission of sins to be preached in His Name:" both these, but repentance first, and then remission of sins to follow after. So that the sinner that is a member of the Church, if he want this, is not of the former but of the latter "quorum."

To repentance, then, go two things (as heretofore hath been entreated more at large). To insist upon the resemblance here made;—first, that he feel his chains and imprisonment, and be grieved with them, and therefore would gladly be let loose, and discharged from them. And no otherwise doth our SAVIOUR CHRIST proclaim it, that none should come to Him but such as are "weary and heavy laden." For "he who

wishes to be relieved feels his burden, and he who wishes to be loosed feels his bonds." And no reason there is, means should be made for his enlargement, that is well enough already, and had rather be where he is than at liberty abroad.

Out of which groweth this division of sinners, which make this double "quorum." For there are sinners that are weary of their commitment, and would gladly be enlarged. Such as he was, "O bring my soul out of prison that I may praise Thee." And as he: "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" And to these belongeth the first clause of remission, even to them that are weary of their durance, and that desire and sue for deliverance.

Again, there are sinners which care not greatly for their present estate, but are, as it were, without sense of their misery. The prison grieveth them not: being in it they reckon themselves well enough, either because they have drunken of the slumbering cup, which is the very dregs of God's wrath, having "their hearts as brawn," and "their consciences seared with a hot iron;" that is, as the Apostle doth interpret it, "being past all feeling" or remorse of sin: or else a worse sort of people, that not only have no sense of their present wretched case, but do even take delight and pleasure in the place, and (to choose) will not be out of it. "Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked;" that scorn the denouncing of God's judgments, and when they "hear the words of this curse, absolve themselves, and say, 'I shall have peace,'" and do full well for all that. "Of such," saith Moses, "let not God be merciful unto them!" Pity it is they should be let go, or the key once turned to let them out! Sense and sorrow is required of their restraint, and an earnest desire of enlargement, else they pertain not to the first, but to the latter "quorum."

In which very point (of sorrow for sin) there is an especial good use of the key of knowledge for counsel and direction.

(1). For inasmuch as Repentance itself is an act of corrective justice, and to repent is “to do judgment” (as the prophet) and “to judge ourselves,” as the Apostle calleth it. (2). To which then belongeth not only a sentence, but also⁵ a revenge or punishment. (2 Cor. vii. 11.) And because it is not a fruitless repentance which must serve the turn; but it must have fruits (saith S. John Baptist), and “fruits worthy of repentance:” that is, more plainly (as S. Paul saith he was charged to preach even from heaven), that men must not only “repent and turn to God, but also do works worthy of repentance.” 3. And for that the works of repentance, all of them are not meet and suitable to every sin; but as the sins are diverse, so are the works to be also. 4. For that also, as a man may go too far in them (as appeareth in the case of the Corinthian), so may one fall too short, as appeareth in the case of Miriam: and a proportion or analogy is to be kept according as the case of the sin requireth. In both these to advise both what works are meet, and also what measure is to be kept, the key of knowledge will help to direct, and we may have use of it, if we mean to use it to that end.

The other condition, which must be joined to the former, is an unfeigned purpose and endeavour ourselves to remit or let go those sins which we would have by God remitted. For it is not enough to be sorry for sin past, or to seek repentance, no, though it be “with tears,” this will not make us of the first “quorum,” if there be nothing but this; if there be in our hearts a purpose ourselves to retain and hold fast our old sin still. Esau “lift up his voice with a great cry and bitter out of measure, and wept,” yet even at the same time vowed in his heart, so soon as his father was dead, to make away with his brother. And this purpose of mind, for all his bitter crying and tears, cast him into the latter “quorum,” and made

⁵ (ἐκδίκησις)

his sins to be retained still. And such is the case of them that would be let go out of prison, but would have liberty to go in and out still to visit the company there, when and as often as they list. So do not the Saints that be of the first "quorum," to whom GOD as He "speaketh peace," so He speaketh this too, "that they turn not" thither again, "that they fall not again to their former folly."

But these latter would have their sins let go by GOD, but themselves would not let them go, but kept fast their end still. They would "as to the guilt," hear that saying from CHRIST'S mouth, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," but "as to the deed," would not willingly hear that other, "Go and sin no more." But we must be willing to hear them both; willing to have our sins remitted by GOD, and willing too (ourselves) to remit our sinning, or from thenceforth "remisius peccare" to sin more remissly, and nothing so licentiously as before. To the former sorrow, sentence, and revenge, we must, saith S. Paul, join "a desire"; and to that desire, "an endeavour"; and that such an endeavour as may be able to allege for itself an honest defence, that we have used all good means to do that which on our part is to be performed—that we may be of the first "quorum."

In which point, no less than the former, there may be use of the key of knowledge, to advise and to direct ourselves, no less in the cure of sin than in the sorrow for it. They in the second of the Acts, which were "pricked in their hearts," knew of themselves that somewhat they should do (as by their question appeareth), but what it was they should do they knew not. Sometimes men have good minds, but know not which way to turn them, or set themselves about it. Sometimes they are scrupulous and doubtful whether they do as they should, because one may favour himself too much, and be over partial in his own case, neither so careful to use the means to good, nor to avoid the occasions of evil as he ought. Wherein it

were good for men to make sure work, and to be fully resolved. For most usual it is for men, at their ends, to doubt not of the power of remitting of sins, but of their own disposition to receive it, and whether they have ordered the matter so that they be within the compass of GOD's effectual calling, or, as the text is, of the "quorum" to whom it belongeth. So much for the matter or subject whereto this power is to be applied.

And here I should now speak somewhat of the applying or use of it; but the time hath overtaken me, and will not permit it. Now only a word of the the third part, of the efficacy, or GOD's Ratification, and so an end.

III. "Wherein GOD, willing more abundantly to shew to them that be partakers of it the stableness of His counsel," He hath penned it exceedingly effectually, and indeed strangely to them that deeply consider of it, which He hath so done, to the end that thereby such poor sinners as shall be partakers of it, might have "strong consolation" and perfect assurance not to waver in the "hope which is set before them."

And to that end, even for comfort, I will only point at four things in the inditing of it; all expressing the efficacy of it, in more than common manner.

1. The *order*, in this, That "Ye shall remit," standeth *first*, and "They are remitted" second. It is S. Chrysostom's note, that it beginneth in earth, and that heaven followeth after. So that whereas in prayer and other parts of religion it is "as in heaven, so in earth," here it is "as in earth, so in heaven." "Heaven," saith he, "takes the primary authority of judging from earth. For the Judge sitteth in the earth: The Lord followeth the servant—and whatsoever the latter may have judged below, He approves above."

2. The *time*, in this, That it is "They are remitted," in *present* tense; there is no delay between—no deferring or holding in suspense, but THE ABSOLUTION pronounced "upon earth," presently "they are remitted," that He saith not, hereafter they shall be, but they *are* already remitted.

3. The *manner*, in setting down of the *two* words. For, it is so delivered by CHRIST, as if He were content it should be accounted *their* act, and that the Apostles were the agents in it, and Himself but the patient, and suffered it to be done. For the Apostles' part is delivered in the active "Ye remit," and His own in the passive "They are remitted,"

4. The *certainty*, which [appeareth] in the *identity* of the word, in not changing the word—but keeping the self same in both parts. For CHRIST hath not thus indited it; 'whose sins ye wish, or ye pray for,' or 'whose sins ye declare to be remitted'; but "whose sins ye REMIT," using no other word in the Apostles, than He useth in HIS OWN.

And to all these, in S. Matthew, He addeth His solemn protestation of "VERILY, VERILY" or "Amen, Amen," that so it is, and shall be. And all to certify us, that He fully meaneth with effect to ratify "in heaven," that is done "in earth," to the sure and steadfast comfort of them that shall partake it.—AMEN!

Θεω δοξα.

NOTES.

I.

THE Form of ordaining Priests in the Church of England is—

“Receive the HOLY GHOST for the office and work of a Priest of 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 following is a part of the exhortation in the Communion Office :

“If there be any of you who.....cannot quiet his conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me or to some other discreet and learned minister of GOD’S Word, and open his grief, that by the ministry of GOD’S Holy Word, he may receive the benefit of Absolution.”

II.

The Three Absolutions of the Church of England are—

1. The DAILY Absolution for a General Congregation of Christians :—

“ALMIGHTY GOD.....who hath given power and commandment to His Ministers to declare and *pronounce* to His people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins : He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His Holy Gospel.”

2. The SPECIAL Absolution at the Holy Eucharist, to a more select body of Christians :—

“ALMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly FATHER, who of His great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Him ; have mercy upon you ; pardon and deliver you from all your sins ; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness ; and bring you to everlasting life ; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. *Amen.*”

3. The PRIVATE absolution to the confessing penitent, delivered *personally* :—

“Our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences : And by His authority committed to me I absolve thee from all thy sins, In the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON and of the HOLY GHOST. *Amen.*”

III.

How deeply the mind of this holy bishop Andrews was imbued with

the *old* theology of the primitive times, may, perhaps, be fully seen only in his "Manual of Devotions." In which blessed book we see the man, in his uncontroversial moments, "pouring out his heart before God." He was particularly distinguished for his defence of the Royal Prerogative against Bellarmine; but how *soberly* he defended it may be seen by his prayer (Manual, p. 161), against the prevalent adulation of the monarch, "The deifying of kings." But, except as showing his extreme jealousy of Erastianism, this is not as important as other striking petitions, such as the following; which show the man—the prelate—the Christian; who confessedly (by the admission of all parties, from Laud, who styled him the "Light of the Christian world," down to Millton, who wrote his elegy) holds the first rank among English Divines and Doctors.

He specially thanks God (p. 154), "That THOU hast given me good hope for the remission of my sins, by repentance; by the POWER of the HOLY KEYS; and of the SACRAMENTS administered in THY CHURCH!"

P. 96. He prays, "Be mindful, O LORD, of those who devote their lives to virginity, abstinence, and religious seclusion."

P. 142, "I believe that the SPIRIT imparteth Grace in His Holy Mysteries: O, grant that I receive not His Grace nor the hope of His blessed Sacraments in vain."

Nor can we forbear adding one more:—

"Let us pray for the Catholic Church,
For all the Churches throughout the world;
For their truth, unity, and stability!
That love may abound and truth flourish
In them all!

"Let us pray for our own Church,
That whatsoever is deficient in it
May be supplied!
And whatsoever is wrong
May be corrected!
That all heresies, schisms, and offences,
Both public and private, may be removed!"

P. 218, *Peter Hall's Edition*. 1830.

At the Hampton Court Conference this learned and holy man was placed first on the list of those appointed to revise our translation of the Bible. He was revered as a pillar of the English Church, in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I.; and it has been eloquently said of him, by one whose praise sounds to us scarcely overcharged,

"If any ever merited to be
The universal bishop, this was he."

IV.

“Sin is not helped but by being assured of pardon. It resteth therefore to be considered what warrant we have concerning forgiveness, when the sentence of man absolveth us from sin committed against GOD. At the words of our SAVIOUR, saying to the sick of the palsy ‘son thy sins are forgiven thee,’ exception was taken by the scribes, who secretly reasoned against Him, ‘Is any able to forgive sins but only GOD?’ Whereupon they condemned His speech as blasphemy; the rest, which believed Him to be a prophet sent from GOD, saw no cause wherefore He might not as lawfully say, and as truly, to whomsoever amongst them, ‘GOD hath taken away thy sins.’ as Nathan (they all knew) had used the very like speech; to whom David did not therefore impute blasphemy, but embraced, as became him, the words of truth with joy and reverence.

“Now there is no controversy, but as GOD in that special case did authorize Nathan, so CHRIST more generally His Apostles, and the ministers of His word in His Name to absolve sinners. Their power being equal, all the difference between them can be but only this; that whereas the one had but prophetic evidence, the other have the certainty partly of faith, and partly of human experience, whereupon to ground their sentence: faith, to assure them of GOD’s most gracious pardon in Heaven unto all penitents; and touching the sincerity of each particular party’s repentance, as much as outward sensible tokens or signs can warrant.”—HOOKER’S *Eccl. Pol.* book. vi. Ch. vi. 1.

“The Priest’s proper power of absolving, that is of pardoning (which is in no case communicable to any man who is not consecrated to the ministry) is a giving the penitent the means of eternal pardon: the admitting him to the Sacraments of the Church, and the peace and communion of the faithful: because that is the only way really to attain pardon of GOD: there being in ordinary no way to heaven but by serving GOD in the way which he has commanded us by His SON; that is in the way of the Church, which is His Body, whereof he is Prince and Head. The Priest is the Minister of Holy things. He does that by his ministry which GOD effects by real dispensation: and as he gives the Spirit not by authority and proper efflux, but by assisting and dispensing those rites and promoting those graces which are certain dispositions to the receiving of him; just so he gives pardon: not as a king does it, nor yet as a messenger, that is not by way of authority and real donation; nor yet *only* by declaration, but as a physician gives health; that is, he gives the remedy which GOD appoints: and if he does so, and GOD blesses the medicine, the person recovers, and GOD gives the health.”—JEREMY TAYLOR’S “*doctrine and practice of repentance.*” ch. x. sect. 4 § 51.

.....The course which our Church Service here prescribeth for the pardon of our daily offences, being put in practice, what can be more

just, more due, than to declare that forgiveness and absolution which those that are (as they pretend to be) penitent for their sins do obtain? What more comfortable than to hear the news of it from his mouth by whom the Church ministereth these offices?—*A note written in Bishop Cosin's own hand, in a MS., on the Absolution in the office for Morning Prayer.*

And because he speaks it *authoritative*, in the name of CHRIST and His Church, he must not kneel but stand up. For authority of absolution, see Ezek. xxxiii. 12, Job xxxiii. 13, Num. vi. 24, 2 Sam. xii. 13, S. John xx. 23.—*From MS. notes of Bishop Andrews.*

Non est igitur potestas peccata suo arbitrio remittendi (quod tantum jus CHRISTO homini concessum est) sed annunciandi veniam, quæ Nathani etiam ad Davidum, et prophetis aliis mandata fuerit.—*From MS. notes in a Common Prayer-book in Bishop Cosin's Library, collected and written by him.*

It is most expedient that this be read, to induce the people that they bethink themselves of the sovereign benefit of Absolution by their penitent confession. Idem. Dr. White in his "Way to the Church," quotes all this latter part of the Exhortation (in the Communion Service), showing against the slander of the Jesuits, that we abolish not, but willingly retain, the doctrine of confession. § xl., 231.—*From MS. notes of Bishop Andrews, in an interleaved Book of Common Prayer in Bishop Cosin's Library.*

"The Church of England, howsoever it holdeth not Confession and Absolution Sacramental, that is, made unto received from a priest, to be absolutely necessary, as that without there can be no remission of sins; yet by this place it is manifest what she teacheth concerning the virtue and force of this sacred action. The confession is commanded to be '*special*;' the absolution is the same as that of the ancient Church, and the present Church of Rome useth: what would they have more? Maldonate, their greatest divine that I meet with (de. Pœnit, p. 19), saith thus: 'Ego autem sic respondendum puto non esse necesse, ut semper peccata remittantur per sacramentum pœnitentiæ, sed ut ipsum sacramentum naturâ suâ possit peccata remittere, si inveniatur peccata et non inveniatur contrarium impedimentum,' and so much we acknowledge. Our, 'if he feels his conscience troubled,' is no more than 'si inveniatur peccata;' for if he be not troubled with sin, what needs either confession or absolution? Venial sins, that separate not from the grace of GOD, need not so much to trouble a man's conscience. If he have committed any mortal sin, then we require confession of it to a priest, who may give him, upon his true contrition and repentance, the benefit of absolution, which takes effect according to his disposition that is absolved; and therefore the Church of Rome adds to the form of absolution '*Quantum in me est,*

et de jure possum, Ego te absolvo ;' not absolutely, lest the doctrine should get head, that some of their ignorant people believe, that be the party confessed never so void of contrition, the very act of absolution forgives him his sins. The truth is, that in the priest's absolution there is the true power and virtue of forgiveness, which will most certainly take effect, nisi ponitur obex, as in baptism."—*A MS. note on the Absolution in the office for the Visitation of the Sick, by Bishop Overall, written in an interleaved Common Prayer-book, in Bishop Cosin's Library, printed in the year 1619.*

"It is confessed that private confession unto a Priest is of very ancient practice in the Church; of excellent use and practice, being discreetly handled. We refuse it to none, if men require it, if need be to have it. We urge it and persuade it in extremes, we require it in cases of perplexity, for the quieting of men disturbed, and their consciences. It has been so acknowledged by your fellows, that 'in the Visitation of the Sick it is required by the communion book, that the sick person make a special confession, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter'...and likewise before the receiving of the LORD's supper"—MONTAGUE'S *answer to the late Gagger of Protestants.* p. 83. A.D. 1624. 4to.

"Abuses and errors removed, and especially the priest being learned, as we have said before, we mislike no manner of confession, whether it be private or public"—JEWEL'S *Defence of the Apology*, pp. 156. 158. *Edit.* 1611.

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