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The church's broken unity

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ANABAPTISM,
THE
INDEPENDENTS,
AND
QUAKERISM.

The Church's Broken Unity.

CHIEFLY REPRINTED FROM THE "OLD CHURCH PORCH."

ON

ANABAPTISM,

THE

INDEPENDENTS,

AND

QUAKERISM.

EDITED BY ✓

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ANABAPTISM :

OR,

THE SECT OF THOSE VULGARLY CALLED BAPTISTS.

CHAPTER I.

THERE were, as described in the first volume, two great streams of schism bursting the barriers of the great river of CHRIST'S Holy Catholic Church. The one was classed under the general name of *Presbyterianism*, *i. e.*, the government of a community by Presbyters, exclusive of the episcopal office: the other was classed under the general name of *Congregationalism*, *i. e.*, the assembling together in congregations, which should be independent of each other. These two classes of religionists agree together so far as they reject the office and government of Bishops; but they differ in that the former maintains the necessity of union with each other in a joint corporate body, with com-

mon laws for the regulation of all; while the latter holds that no union is necessary further than in each separate congregation in each separate place. Both these principles seem to have taken their rise at the time of the Reformation, *i.e.*, about three hundred years ago, but quite irrespective of each other. They both seem the offspring of the same evil mother, and though differing in detail, yet manifest the same spirit. The Church and her teaching—the authority of ages, and the traditions of antiquity, are nothing in the eyes of men when once self-knowledge and self-seeking sway the judgment, and every man relies upon himself. The history into which we are about to enter, will clearly manifest this melancholy truth.

The meaning of the word “*Anabaptist*” is this—*one who baptizes a second time*. It is derived from two Greek words—*βαπτίζω*, to baptize, and *ανα*, which signifies “over again.” Part of the sect now remaining in England prefer to take to themselves the name of Baptist, on account of the odious and disgraceful history which belongs to the original professors of their creed; but while the word “*Anabaptist*” has a distinct and proper reference to the opinions which it means to represent, the word “Baptist” would appear to convey the very contrary—for the latter would be equally applicable to the Church of England, the Church of Rome, the Wesleyans, the Independents, and indeed all other communities—for

all hold it necessary to baptize. Thus S. John is called "The Baptist," because he baptized; and we should be very unwilling to lose the idea that we were following the precept of our LORD, when He told us to go and "baptize all nations." Baptism is the distinctive badge and mark of *all* Christians. We are all Baptists. But the very point of distinction and cutting off from the great body of the Church in the sect I am now describing is, that they baptize *over again*—which no other Christians ever do. If one enters into this community already baptized as an infant, they baptize such an one over again, passing by and ignoring the fact of any other baptism than their own. Hence, ANA-baptist is the proper word by which they should be described, as marking the essence of their heresy.

The origin of the Anabaptists is very obscure. There seem to have been, even prior to the time of Luther, various opinions concerning Church government and Church doctrine, which were hidden and kept secret for want of power openly to manifest them, principally in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland, and Germany. When Luther took the lead, and boldly asserted the right of private judgment against the Bishop of Rome, and when the political circumstances of the Princes of Germany induced them to a great extent to take his side—then these other religious opinions found their vent; and there started up in various quarters, men of vigour and enthusiasm, who were

ready, as well as Luther himself, to dare all and to suffer all for the opinions which they held. Among these opinions was the one in question, namely that Infant Baptism was contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and that none should be baptized but adults, and following thereupon, the necessity of Adult Baptism and that alone—and following thereupon again, the necessity of *re*-baptizing all as adults, although previously baptized as infants. And among the several leaders who appeared in the shaping and guidance of this opinion, was one Menno—and from him the sect has generally been denominated Mennonites, as well as Anabaptists.

Whether the religious opinions of these men degenerated into political hostility to the established governments of their several countries; or whether the original movement of their minds was political, and they assumed the garb of religion to cover their ulterior designs of disaffection and rebellion, it would be difficult to say; but certain it is, that combined with the rise of Anabaptism is the history of perhaps the greatest and most furious of rebellious fanaticism which which is on record. The views which the first Anabaptists put forth were these;—they supposed that the time was come when God Himself would inspire the hearts of men and assume a kingdom of religion upon earth—that the Church was to be restored to its pristine power and purity—that CHRIST our LORD would reign alone, and govern

the nations of the earth; and the Divine power to work miracles would be conveyed to their leaders, for the purpose of bringing these glorious events to completion. In the year 1551, their principal chiefs were Thomas Münzer, Mark Stübner, and Nicholas Storch. They gathered together great multitudes of people, inflamed them by public harangues, recounted to them prophetic visions, and disturbed all notions of the government both of Church and State by seditious discourses. They announced sudden destruction to all civil magistrates, proclaimed universal equality, and set up the standard of individual liberty, both in opinion and in act. Even the most moderate, and those who did in some degree reject the extreme fanaticism of the multitude, yet put forth the following tenets, which may be taken as a fair exposition of their more deliberate views, strangely mixing, as will be perceived, the political with the religious. They held—

1. That the Church of CHRIST ought to be free from all sin.

2. That a community of goods and union and equality should be introduced.

3. That all usury, tithes, and tributes, should be abolished.

4. That the baptism of infants was the invention of the devil.

5. That all Christians had a right to act as teachers.

6. That the Christian Church had no need of special Ministers or teachers.

7. That there was no need, under the reign of CHRIST, of any civil magistrates.

8. That GOD made known His Will by dreams and visions.

It would of course follow that persons embracing such tenets as these, and filled with religious excitement by unscrupulous leaders, would soon be guilty of violence in their propagation. Accordingly the first thing we hear of is, that MÜNZER and his associates having collected a large army from among the credulous populace throughout Suabia, Franconia, and Saxony, proclaimed war against all civil government, asserting that CHRIST alone should reign. It did not last for any length of time—MÜNZER, the firebrand of sedition, was put to death, and his rebellious army destroyed by the Elector of Saxony.

But the fanaticism spread and filled all Germany with blood. Some were put to death as rebels, some as heretics. The most horrid crimes were committed by men who joined the ranks of the religionists for no other purpose but their own wickedness ; while, at the same time, many innocent persons suffered for the maintenance of mere religious opinions. In the year 1533, the Anabaptists of Holland attacked the city of Munster, in Westphalia, and there committed deeds that would almost appear incredible, were they not well attested as matters of history. John

Matthæi, John Bockhold, a tailor of Leyden, one Gerhard, and some others, persuaded not only the common people, but likewise some of the religious teachers, that their blessed heavenly Jerusalem was about to be established at Munster, and would thence be extended to other places. Under this pretext, they deposed the magistrates, took command of the city, and ventured upon all the criminal and ridiculous measures which their perverse ingenuity could devise. John Bockhold was created king and law-giver to this celestial republic. But the issue of the scene was tragical and distressing. For after a long siege the city was captured, in 1536, by its Bishop, who was also its temporal lord—Francis, Count Waldec; this New Jerusalem of the Anabaptists was destroyed, and its king punished with the utmost severity. The scenes of violence, tumult, and sedition, that were exhibited in Holland by this odious tribe, were also terrible. They formed the design of reducing the city of Leyden to ashes, but were happily prevented, and severely punished. John of Leyden, the Anabaptist king of Munster, had taken it into his head that God had made him a present of the cities of Amsterdam, Deventer, and Wesel; in consequence thereof, he sent Bishops to these three places, to preach his gospel of sedition and carnage. About the beginning of the year 1535, twelve Anabaptists, of whom five were women, assembled at midnight in a private house of Amsterdam: one

of them, who was a tailor by profession, fell into a trance, and after having preached and prayed for the space of four hours, stripped himself naked, threw his clothes into the fire, and commanded all the assembly to do the same, in which he was obeyed without the least reluctance. He then ordered them to follow him through the street *in this state of nature*, which they accordingly did; howling and bawling out, "*Woe! woe! the wrath of God! woe to Babylon!*" When after being seized and brought before the Magistrates, clothes were offered them to cover their indecency, they refused them obstinately, and cried aloud, "*We are the naked truth!*" When they were brought to the scaffold they sang and danced, and displayed all the marks of enthusiastic frenzy. These tumults were followed by a regular and deep-laid conspiracy, formed by Van Geelen (an envoy of the mock king of Munster, who had made a very considerable number of proselytes) against the Magistrates of Amsterdam, with a design to wrest the government of that city out of their hands. This incendiary marched his fanatical troop to the Town-house on the day appointed, drums beating, and colours flying, and fixed his head-quarters there. He was attacked by the burghers, assisted by some regular troops, and headed by several of the burgomasters of the city. After an obstinate resistance he was surrounded, with his whole troop, who were put to death in the severest and most dreadful

manner, to serve as examples to the other branches of the sect, who were exciting commotions of a like nature in Friesland, Groningen, and other provinces and cities in the Netherlands.*

Such seem to be the acts of madmen, and not professors of religion; nevertheless, they prevailed to a great extent, coupled with a general depravity of morals, which was truly frightful. It was a favourite dogma among them, that true believers could not sin; but finding what was generally understood to be sin was still practised among them, they found it necessary to declare that such things in men as appeared to be opposed to God's Law, were not really so; but that, if existing in the body or the mind of a believer, they ceased to have the nature of sin, and were in reality either indifferent or meritorious! Thus it came to pass that most of those inclinations in human nature which are usually considered sinful were permissible among these fanatical Anabaptists, and the consequence was, every kind of horrid profaneness, blasphemy, and wickedness. Bockhold, one of the leaders of the Munster Anabaptists above-mentioned, affirmed the meritorious nature of polygamy, and is said to have illustrated his doctrine by taking to himself no less than fourteen wives! Another anecdote is given of one Thomas Schucker, that at S. Gall, he convened a numerous assembly, and declared

* Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History.

in the company that he was seized with the Spirit of God, upon which he commanded his brother to kneel down—then taking a drawn sword, he cut off his brother's head—declaring that he was doing nothing but what was revealed to him by GOD the HOLY GHOST.* This man, with many others, suffered the penalty of the law, but still maintained on the scaffold that he had done only that which was commanded of GOD.

It was at the time of the Anabaptists of Munster, and in the midst of this most wild and horrible fanaticism, that Menno Simonis of Friesland, a Priest of the Roman Church, joined the ranks of the Anabaptists. From the lead that he took in their affairs—from his great powers of mind, and the success with which he extricated them from the horrid delusions under which they were labouring; as well, also, from his intrinsic and real integrity, his mild, accommodating, and laborious life, accompanied with a patient and ardent piety, he ultimately gave them the name of Menonites. It was natural that at such a juncture, a man of his temper embracing their religious tenets, would have influence in subduing their political fury. They were a people evidently of the most ignorant and savage description, hitherto under the subjection of teachers that howled and raved in a religious frenzy, rather than taught or instructed in any spirit of true faith. They had

* Broughton's *Bibliotheca Historica Sacra*.

also learned severe lessons from the too fatal experience in suffering for their extravagances. They were anxiously inquiring what they could do in order to be extricated from the bodily perils which justly surrounded them; for of course it followed that those who by their actions had so outraged all the common feelings of civilised life, were, in their turn, met by the indignation and the chastisement of all who could deal with them with the hand of power.

Menno was born in the year 1505. For some time he joined the Anabaptists in secret, but in the year 1536, openly quitted his office as a Catholic Priest, and listening to the entreaties of many of the sober sort, who had taken no part in the disturbances at Munster, placed himself at their head. From this period, for about twenty-five years, he travelled with his wife and children amidst perpetual sufferings through many countries, propagating and advancing the religious tenets of Anabaptism, but gradually softening down those more extravagant and wilder political notions which had been their destruction at the commencement. He struck out a system of doctrine free of the absurdities, while he retained all that was essentially characteristic of the sect, which would, of course, principally turn upon the subject of Baptism. He condemned, and would not permit the inculcation of any doctrine denouncing the Civil Magistrate. He condemned also the idea of any miraculous restoration of

the Church, by effusion of the HOLY GHOST. He condemned the licentiousness of polygamy and divorce, and abolished the fanatical idea of men being directed or impelled by visions, prophecies, and dreams. But that which was the essential feature of the sect, he retained—namely, the impossibility of infant baptism, and the necessity of *re-baptising* as adults the candidates for admission into their community. By this wise and moderate course, by the gentleness of his own life, and by the eloquence of his preaching, he gradually moulded and shaped the whole sect into something like (however erroneous) the aspect of religion. By excluding the original fanaticism of his followers, and by rejecting all opinions in politics injurious to the State; while at the same time he cultivated and enforced sound morality of life, the original evils of the sect gradually died away, and were lost. The name of Menno long remained among them, for in good truth, as at present they exist, he was their founder.

But the very essence of all sectarianism is division. Once part from the common stock on a principle of private judgment, and there can be no solid ground for retention of unity even in the most minute portion of the thing divided. So in the history of Anabaptism. Menno, however much he had done in ridding his community of absolute folly and wickedness, was still utterly unable either to prevent or to remedy the tendency to split into parts. About the middle of

the 16th century, the Anabaptists, or Mennonites, fell into a dispute concerning excommunication; and now, strangely diverging from their original license, they set forth, in the other extreme, the most rigid, austere, and self-denying life, even beyond the usual power of man. Persons refusing this doctrine or failing in its practice, were excommunicated, and it was ruled that persons so excommunicated, should be debarred from all social intercourse, even with husbands, wives, brothers, children, and all other relations of family life. To some of the most austere sort, this severity of discipline was acceptable, while to others it was intolerable. Hence, even in the lifetime of Menno himself, there arose two kinds of Anabaptists, distinguished by the names of "The Fine," and "The Gross;" *i. e.*, the more rigid, and the more lax. The "Fine" Anabaptists retained a considerable portion of the ancient fanaticism, which was no doubt the secret source of their opinions; while the "Gross" fell more into the usual and ordinary kind of Protestants. The greater part of the "Gross," or lax Anabaptists, at first were inhabitants of a part of the north of Holland, called Waterland, and hence took the name of Waterlanders; while the severe sect were inhabitants of Flanders, and hence called *Flandrians*. Among the *Flandrians* another subdivision soon arose, respecting the method and degree of excommunication, and these were called *Frieslanders*. To these were added a new sect called *Germans*.

Thus interminable is the produce of schism once begun ; and thus strange are the wanderings of the human mind, when leaning on itself, it leaves the path of God and His Church.

We need not pursue any further the history of the Anabaptists abroad. They still exist in considerable numbers in Holland and Prussia, but of course with increasing knowledge around them, and greater light of God's Holy Word, are harmless in the profession of their tenets, and irreproachable in their lives. Let us now rather pursue their history in our own country.

Whatever was held or taught among the German Reformers, or their schismatic offspring of multifarious names, whether for good or for evil, was sure in the end to travel towards England. And this was the case with Anabaptism. It is said by the present English Anabaptists, (called by themselves Baptists) that they owe their origin to times far earlier than Luther. They would fain make their descent from the Waldenses, and confuse themselves with the Hussites and Wickliffites, Lollards, and other such religious bodies, who appeared on the continent previous to the Reformation. No doubt there were many persons here and there among that strange discord of religion which then prevailed, who might not have desired infant baptism ; but it is certain that they did not appear as a *religious community separating on the point of Baptism* until introduced from Germany in the sixteenth century.

The historian Lingard tells us that there was a sect of fanatics who infested the north of Germany, called Puritans. Usher calls them Waldenses; Spelman, Paulicians, (the same as the Waldenses). They gained ground and spread all over England; they rejected all Roman ceremonies, denied the authority of the Pope, and more particularly *refused to baptise infants*. Thirty of them were put to death for their heretical doctrines near Oxford; but the remainder still held on their opinions in private, until the time of Henry II. (1158); and the historian Collier tells us that wherever this heresy prevailed,—the churches were either scandalously neglected, or pulled down, and *infants left unbaptised*.

No doubt, in these facts, we see a very early intimation of the heresy of refusing to baptise infants; but still, it cannot be said that these persons claimed any distinctive mark on this special head, as they afterwards did, nor did they associate themselves as a religious community under this specific title. There was a book published by the Lollards, entitled “The Sum of the Scriptures,” which denied the Baptism of the Church. It was examined by the clergy and condemned. Fourteen persons, it is said, suffered death, and they were called “Mennonite Brethren.” Here we have, indeed, an intimation of the existence of the sect as introduced from Germany, and it is identified by the name of Mennon. This was in the reign of Henry VIII. Earlier than

this, we cannot see any distinct or positive proof of the existence of the community. There is evident reason why the present professors of the sect in England should desire to trace a more ancient descent than that of the sixteenth century, and to abolish the name of *Ana*-baptist. Simply because they are naturally anxious to be free from the pollution of the history of German Anabaptism. But it is quite clear, that from Germany, it was introduced into England *as a sect*, and did exist here before the time of Mennon; and though we may cheerfully allow that the present deniers of Infant Baptism have precedents in many individuals before the time of German Anabaptism, still, as a religious sect, they owe their origin solely to Menno.

It was, no doubt, with Luther and his tenets, with the Reformation generally, and owing to the full scope given by Henry VIII. to every man to oppose his private judgment to the Church, that Anabaptism, such as it now is,—a religious sect,—crept in among us, and assumed the important position which it now occupies. Under Edward VI., the penal laws against heresy were in a great degree repealed, and the Anabaptists flocked in from Germany, and in great numbers polluted the ancient faith. Bishop Burnet says, that at that time they became very numerous, and openly preached this doctrine, that “*children are Christ's without water.*” (*S. Luke* xviii. 16.) In Queen Mary's time, the

laws against heresy were again enforced, and Anabaptism was decried, and even Queen Elizabeth, though she promised liberty of conscience, was most bitter against all who denied her religious supremacy. She made a proclamation to suppress Anabaptism, and commanded the Anabaptists to depart out of the kingdom within twenty-one days. King James succeeded, with much the same policy, proclaiming and expelling; but the thing lived on, with many other evils of those days, and without any particular mark of publicity, until the time of one Edward Wightman, who suffered death for maintaining the doctrine of Anabaptism in the year 1611.

The first congregation of Anabaptists was formed by one Mr. Smyth, a clergyman of the Church of England, in the year 1607. He opened a place for public worship in London. Many others quickly followed throughout England and Wales, and the sect rapidly increased with the increasing liberty given to the profession of every creed, and the removal of penal liabilities. The Anabaptists of England had always been conspicuous as defenders of religious freedom, and of private judgment, but they are by no means to be confounded in the remotest possible way (the sole exception is their *origin*) with the fanatical tribes of the German Anabaptists. Though in the main doctrine of the sect, they are the same, and as far as religion in its proper sense is concerned, they uphold nearly all that

their originators upheld, yet, they are by no means to be confounded with the outrageous enemies of law and order, of which we have furnished a specimen from Munster and Leyden, The tendency of all sectarianism is, of course, from its very nature, against the constituted authority of the Church, and as the Church is so far wrapped up, and identified with the State, the Anabaptists would generally be found on the side of democracy, and as it is popularly called, radicalism ; yet they are generally good subjects, and loyal citizens.

They are divided at present into two principal classes, calling themselves by the name of, 1, The *General*, and 2, the *Particular* Baptists.

1. The Particular Baptists (rightly called *Anabaptists*,) hold the views of Calvin on the subject of election and grace. 2. The General Baptists, rightly called *Anabaptists*, maintain the doctrine of universal redemption ; but these are subdivided again into *Old Connexion*, (Unitarian), and *New Connexion*, (Trinitarian). There is another point of division also in regard to Communion in the LORD'S Supper [so called]. Each congregation or society assembling together stands by itself, on the principle above described, of Congregationalism. They call each congregation so standing aloof and in itself, a Church. Some of these "*Churches*" do not allow persons who have not received baptism according to *their* views of it, to join with them in the celebration of the LORD'S

Supper. Of this number are some of the Particular Baptists, and all the New Connexion of General Baptists. Others, however, do not scruple to meet together at the Lord's Supper, and put aside so strict and so bigotted an exclusiveness. They will admit all—even those who do not hold the strict views of adult baptism which they themselves do: they will communicate with all, without narrowing the terms of Christian fellowship. Of this, Mr. Robert Hall was a great advocate among them, and it is called "Free Communion." This principle is now making rapid progress throughout the whole sect. They display great energy and activity in the maintenance and propagation of their peculiar tenets. In 1812, they formed what was called a "*Baptist Union*." They have a "*Baptist Building Fund*." They have a "*Missionary Society*," and sustain many Missions in all the parts of the world; but in no part have they made such advances as in America. The number of their adherents there may, perhaps, be half a million. The Particular Baptists support Colleges at Bristol, Bradford, Aberghavenney, and Stepney; the General Baptists' New Connexion have schools at Wisbeach and Loughborough for the education of their Ministers.

So much then for the history of this peculiar sect;—its origin, its present tenets, and its prevalence as a religious body. With its peculiar

opinions on the more common doctrines in which they may be classed with other Dissenters or Nonconformists, it is not worth while to enter, as all such points will be discussed in the order in which we meet them, marking out the essence of each sect.

CHAPTER II.

The heresy of the Anabaptists is deduced from two main principles in which they deviate from the Catholic faith. Both of them, as the name of the sect would imply, regard the sacrament of Holy Baptism, and may be classed under the following heads:—

1. The *subjects* of Baptism.
2. The *mode* of Baptism.

What I mean by the “*subjects*” of Baptism is this—the persons who are thought fit to be baptized; and what I mean by the “*mode*” of Baptism is this—the peculiar manner in which it is thought requisite to perform that holy rite. I propose to consider the first of these points at present.

The Church throughout all the world, both as to time and as to place, received and practised the sacrament of Holy Baptism without regard of age. This she did directly from the time of the Apostles down to the commencement of the

sixteenth century. There might have been occasional deviations in individuals, and probably, as there is hardly any subject upon which there have not been found strange opinions in the Church at some time or other, the question of Infant Baptism may have suffered under the hands of these individuals; but until the sixteenth century there never was any religious community which openly denied the baptism of little children. There might also have been differences of opinion as to the number of days that should elapse between birth and baptism; as, for instance, the Copts in Africa, did not baptize their children until forty days old; and the Abassens, as also the Maronites in Asia, did not baptize their male children till forty days old nor their female children till eighty days old. Such differences as these might have been—but there was never anything in the Church more universal and of less doubt, than that every child, as a child, if born of Christian parents, should be brought unto CHRIST for Holy Baptism.

How then did the thought enter into the hearts of these men described above, such as Storch, Munzer, Menno, and the rest, to set up a different doctrine? It is very easy to imagine how persons of a disobedient spirit such as they were—persons of an inquisitive temper, and of minds searching for themselves, with the Holy Scriptures, now more widely open for their reading than they had ever been before, should

be struck with what, it must be confessed, does at first sight appear an anomaly—that is, certain conditions required in the subjects of Baptism, and yet persons brought to Baptism of such an age as to render it impossible for them to fulfil those conditions. They would argue in this way:—“The Church, it is true, has practised Infant Baptism—but then she did not in the first ages set before the people God’s Holy Word. The Church has gone on in this practice in a spirit of blind ignorance, and a mere following of precedent. The Priests and rulers of the Church have kept the people in ignorance. But now that the light of God’s Word is freely shed over the face of the earth, things must be judged by a different measure. Men must think for themselves:—and who, thinking for himself, and judging by mere common sense, cannot but see that it is absurd to say with one voice, that repentance and faith are requisites of Baptism; and yet withal to baptize such persons as cannot by any possibility possess them?”

There is evidently a very specious appearance of reason in such a statement, and men of a really religious tone of mind might very easily be led away by it. In fact, such we find to be the case. The modern writers in defence of their heresy of Anabaptism, “insist on the absolutely personal nature of true religion, which in none of its acts can be performed by proxy. They say that those who are unconscious, as infants, of

what is done, cannot be members of the Christian Church, or competent to embrace its institutions; that, in fact, the concurrence of the sanctified mind is the essential element of all Christian obedience."

One of their writers asks, as all do in one form of expression or other, "Ought the profession of Christianity to be a matter of mere imposition, or a matter of free conviction and choice? And if religion be personal, all religious acts and ordinances must be so. It is plain that acts and ordinances of a different description would be out of harmony with the character of religion itself."

. "Believers, and believers only," it is further said, "who have been convinced by the Word and Spirit of God that they are in a sinful and dangerous condition, and who have been guided by the same Word and Spirit to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as a Redeemer able and willing to forgive, and sanctify, and save them; these, and these only, are the proper subjects for the significant and solemn ordinance of Baptism."

Now if we grant—as we most readily do—that the defenders of Anabaptism, or rather the deniers of Infant Baptism, are actuated by a sincere desire for the truth; if we grant—as we most readily do—that they rest their opinions to the best of their knowledge on the Word of God, it would be expected that from that Word of God they would urge their main defence. Ac-

cordingly, so we find it. Reason and common sense—the impossibility, as they say, abstractedly of entering into covenant with God without a personal interest therein, are, to a certain extent, arguments—but not arguments sufficiently strong for any Christian to be satisfied with, when, as in their case, they claim for themselves the full liberty of interpreting God's Word. Thus, then, after setting forth their idea that *in itself* it would be unreasonable to think that any person could enter into the covenant of Baptism if unconscious of its responsibility, and thereupon excluding infants; they do not rest content with that abstract statement, but fortify their opinion by appeals to Holy Scripture. They urge as their main basis of proof that our Blessed Lord set forth the institution of Baptism in such words as would infer that He could not mean infants to be baptized. It is thus in S. Matthew's Gospel, xxviii. 19—"Go ye, therefore, and *teach* all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Wherein they say, that by the very fact of our Lord's command—"Go ye, and *teach*," it is presumed that the persons to be baptized were *capable of being taught*—certainly, therefore, not children; and then they follow up this command of our Lord by the evident, and, as they say, universal fact, that none are ever mentioned as admitted

to Baptism, unless they were so taught, or in some way manifested fruits of teaching in open and personal profession of faith. As for instance —“ ‘Those baptized by John *confessed their sins.*’ (S. *Matt.* iii. 6.) ‘The LORD JESUS CHRIST gave the command to *teach* and baptize.’ (S. *Matt.* xxviii. 19; S. *Mark* xvi. 15, 16.) ‘At the day of Pentecost, they who *gladly received the Word* were baptized, and they afterwards continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship.’ (S. *Acts* ii. 41, 42, 47.) ‘At Samaria, those who *believed* were baptized, both men and women.’ (S. *Acts* viii. 12.) The Eunuch openly avowed his faith (in reply to Philip’s statement—‘If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest,) and went down into water and was baptized.’ (S. *Acts* viii. 35, 39.) ‘Saul of Tarsus, after his sight was restored, and he had received the HOLY GHOST, arose, and was baptized.’ (S. *Acts* ix. 17, 18.) ‘Cornelius and his friends heard Peter, received the HOLY GHOST, and were baptized.’ (S. *Acts* x. 44, 48.) ‘Lydia heard Paul and Silas; the LORD opened her heart, and she was baptized, and her household. Paul afterwards went to her house and comforted the brethren.’ (S. *Acts* xvi. 14, 15, 40.) ‘The jailor, and all his house, heard the Word, and were baptized, believing and rejoicing in God.’ (S. *Acts* xvi. 32, 34.) ‘Crispus, and all his house, and many Corinthians, heard, believed, and were baptized.’ (S. *Acts* xviii. 8.) ‘The disciples of Ephesus heard and were baptized.’ (S. *Acts* xix. 5.)

‘The household of Stephanas, baptized by S. Paul, were the first fruits of Achaia, and addicted themselves to the ministry of the Saints.’ (1 Cor. i. 16; xvi. 15.)”

I have thus given, as fairly as I can, because *in their own words*, the arguments from Holy Scripture for denial of Infant Baptism; and as long as we look merely on the superficial words, I do not wonder that common persons should be caught by them, and once forgetting that the voice of the Church has any weight, and denying the importance of universal practice, it is very easy to see how the sect of Anabaptists has on these grounds multiplied and extended. But we must look further than the merely superficial words. We must examine the meaning of the words in *the original language* of the Scripture; and we must connect their use, and the incidents accompanying the facts which they relate, with the history and customs of the times. Until we do that, we are not in a position to judge fairly of the matter.

Now at the very first outset, the text upon which the main strength of the Anabaptists depends, at once falls to the ground when we look to the original language of S. Matthew's Gospel. Look to the text again—S. Matt. xxviii. 19. The word which is translated *teach* in the first part of the text, is quite a different word from that which is translated *teaching* in the latter part. The first word is in the Greek language, (*μαθητευσατε*)—*make disciples of*; or more closely still, “*enter*

their name as a scholar ;” whereas, the second word is more properly *teach*, or *instruct*—(διδασκόντες.) Now, though it might be perfectly true that if we are to *teach* the faith to any person before he is baptized—infants by that rule would be excluded ; yet, if the command of our LORD is merely “ *enter their names as scholars,*” there is no reason why infants’ names, as well as others, might not be so enrolled. The difference is this. The Anabaptists say—“ You must by our LORD’S direction *teach* the faith to all persons *before* they are baptized.” But the Church says—You must *enrol their names as disciples*, and do so by baptizing them ; and having once so baptized them, you must then “ *teach* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” These two statements, it will be readily seen, are very different things.

Then, with regard to the words connected with the Baptism of S. John—namely, that they came “ *confessing their sins,*” and therefore as the argument is, must have been adults. That citation has nothing to the point ; for we are not speaking of “ John’s Baptism,” which was confessedly the Baptism of Repentance, but of that which was specially distinguished from it—namely the Baptism of JESUS—which was not commanded as a Christian institution until long after John’s death—not, indeed, until the final departure of our LORD in His Ascension. But it is far from true, even in S. John’s case, that it is *certain* he never

baptized children. There is, indeed, no express mention that he did so—but that does not show that he did not; any more than in the history of the Jews—there occurs a period of 500 years without mention of the rite of circumcision; but we are quite convinced that the rite of circumcising children did continue, although not specifically mentioned. It will be shown presently, that according to the Jewish custom, most likely, nay, almost certainly, S. John *did* baptize children. The expression “*confessing their sins*,” has nothing to do with the matter; for if “*multitudes*” came, as we are told, “*confessing their sins*,” and if it was the custom, as will be shown, for the Jews to baptize children, then it would be inferred that among the multitudes, according to custom, would be found children—children coming with their parents,—not mentioned as children, because coming as a matter of course.

Then with regard to the instances cited from the Acts of the Apostles—it is perfectly true that all these instances manifested a mature and responsible age in the persons baptized; but that must have been of necessity the case from the very nature of the thing—for we must remember how it was. The Apostles, even as our Blessed Lord Himself, were of the Jewish nation. To the Jewish nation they were, in the first instance, sent specially to preach. It was to grown-up persons clearly, as in the ordinance of preaching it must be, that the Apostles spoke. It was

grown-up persons that listened—grown-up persons that were converted—grown-up persons, therefore, naturally *at first* that were baptized. And, moreover, we must consider the object of the writer of the Acts of the Apostles in giving us those instances. It was not his object to speak of Baptism, but of conversion to the faith. He was giving a history of the first preaching of CHRIST, and of the commencement of the Church. He selects the more eminent of the instances of conversion—such as the Eunuch, Cornelius, the Jailor at Philippi, S. Paul, Lydia, and so forth. These are brought forward to show, not how Baptism was practised, but how the Gospel was spreading. Baptism is only introduced as a secondary, or incidental matter. When those special instances of conversion took place, Baptism, as a thing of course, according to the precept of CHRIST, followed; but it is only incidentally mentioned in the course of the narrative *as a fact*, and not as the main object of the writer to give rules concerning it.

Then, moreover, let us deal fairly by those very passages. Look at the case of Lydia. It is distinctly said, that not only she, but “*her household*,” was baptized. It is reasonable to suppose that among her household were children. And the same in the case of the Jailor—“*He, and all his house*,” were baptized; and so with Crispus,—“*all his house*;” and so with Stephanas—the *household* of Stephanas—they were *all* baptized by

S. Paul. Now, if it had been said, "all the household, except the children," or "all the house that were of mature age;" or, if it had been said, "all of the household who came forth and professed faith, being of such an age that they could rightly do so;"—if any such intimations, however remote, had been given, then there would have been an end of the dispute; but when it is said, as a mere matter of course, "*all the household,*" it is impossible but that we should infer that children of every age were included therein.

But, after all, these are but trifling arguments in defence of the doctrine of the Church concerning Infant Baptism. They are but answers to citations from Holy Scripture, superficially aduced. We must look for the foundation of the Universal Church custom to something deeper than this.

And first, for the principle itself. Can, or ought persons to enter into covenant with God, although they be in themselves incapable at the time of understanding the nature of the covenant? If that principle be taken in the negative, there is an end of the matter, and the deniers of Infant Baptism are in the right. But is it so?

It is acknowledged on all hands that Circumcision was a covenant of God, instituted as the way of admission into the Jewish Church. But who, and under what conditions of *personal* responsibility were the Jewish people admitted into this covenant? None at all; for by ALMIGHTY GOD'S

Own Law children were admitted at eight days old—at which age there could be, of course, no personal responsibility whatever. If, therefore, in the first dispensation, children could enter into covenant with God, why not in the second? The principle must in both cases be the same; and therefore to say that it is impossible for children, as such, to be partakers of a Divine covenant, is simply to contradict the words of ALMIGHTY GOD.

But have we a right to identify Baptism with Circumcision? Is not the law a state of bondage, and unfit to be compared with the glorious liberty of the Gospel? Yes; certainly it is. But however inferior the one is to the other, still the principle of entering into covenant with God is not affected by that; add to which, we have S. Paul's authority for comparing the one with the other; for in the Epistle to the *Colossians* ii. 11, he calls Baptism "*the Circumcision made without hands.*" He illustrates the one by the other. If the Circumcision made with hands could embrace, as it necessarily did, children—the Circumcision made without hands was meant to do the same. Both were divine institutions, and appointed with the same intent and object; *i.e.*, the reception of the human race within the pale of salvation. How would it have been, if when God appointed Circumcision, and commanded every male person—Abraham himself, at ninety-nine years old, and Ishmael at thirteen; and afterwards, when the

promised seed was born, Isaac at eight days old—how would it have been, if when God had so appointed it, Abraham had said, “It is very well for *me*, a grown-up person, one who can be responsible for what he is doing, and has faith—one who can understand and appreciate what is given—it is very well for *me* to be circumcised, and *perhaps* it may be of some use to Ishmael also, for he is a grown boy, and *may* possibly understand something of what he is doing; but *of what use can it be to Isaac?* What can a child of eight days old know about a covenant? Now if Abraham had argued thus, what had become of the promised blessing of the nations? This single point, then, settles at once the question, not only as to the possibility, but the propriety of entering into God’s covenant, although a person should be, by reason of age, unconscious of the blessing to be imparted.

But Circumcision was not the only ceremony of covenant which Almighty God appointed for His people. Four hundred and thirty years afterwards, under Moses, He appointed *Washing* to be another such a ceremonial or sacramental rite. (See the Book of *Exodus*.) *Washing*, is in the Greek language, *Baptism*; and it is said in the Book of *Numbers*, in the case of receiving any Gentile into covenant, and incorporating him into the Jewish privileges, that he was always to resort to this ceremony. “One law and one manner shall be for you and for the stranger

that sojourneth with you." (*Num. xv.*) These strangers, or Gentiles, were called Proselytes; and just as it was with the Jew himself and his children, so it was with the Gentile father and his children; they were altogether and at once as *families*, father and children together brought into the Jewish covenant by Baptism and Circumcision. The child's inability to promise for himself, or to be responsible for himself, or to express his own will or his own faith, was held to be no bar to his admission into the Jewish covenant. The blessing of being dedicated and sealed in covenant with God, was considered so unquestionable, that no one ever dreamed of objecting to it. The rule, as given to us by Selden, was this—"Any male child of a proselyte to be baptized, that was under the age of thirteen years and a day, and females that were under twelve years and a day, were baptised as infants, at the request and by the assent of the father, or the authority of the Court, because such an one was not yet the Son of Assent, as they phrase it; *i.e.*, not capable of giving assent, *but the thing is for his good*. If they were above that age they assented for themselves."

It is this custom and law of the Jewish people, which throws light upon the command of our Blessed Lord when He institutes *Christian* Baptism. We must remember that our LORD Himself was a Jew—that His Apostles were Jews—that He spoke to them, and gave rules to them as

men already in the knowledge of what Jewish customs were, and in the habit themselves of using them. We must remember also, that the whole principle of our Blessed LORD's Coming was not to "destroy the law, but to fulfil it." Everything He says, everything He does, bears upon and is to be understood by customs and regulations already existing. He does not bring anything new. Well, then; just as the Jewish custom was to make proselytes of the Heathen nations by baptizing them, and just as it was a Jewish custom to make such proselytes, irrespectively of *age*, irrespectively of any idea of immediate personal responsibility, but in families—fathers and children together—none excluded; so now He says to His Apostles (upon whom He was about to build His Own Church,) in regard to His Own people—"Go YE, and make proselytes of men of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST.

The same idea exactly as in the *Jewish* way of making proselytes out of the nations, is preserved in the *Christian* way of making proselytes out of the nations. Go YE, and do the same thing, and in the same manner as you have been hitherto accustomed to do by our law—only do it instead of, as heretofore for the law, do it for ME—"In the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST." If our BLESSED LORD had meant that in adopting Baptism as the sacrament of admission into His Church, there should be

any change from the usual custom then existing, He surely would have said so. But not saying so, the inference is clear—followed up by the Apostles' practice, and by the primitive Church, that no change was contemplated. It only needs a knowledge of this great key to the whole system of our LORD's teaching, to enable us at once, without any doubt, to receive Infant Baptism even out of Holy Scripture itself, as the right doctrine of the Catholic faith.*

* Dr. Lightfoot has a very apt illustration of the subject in the following words:—"The whole nation knew well enough that infants were wont to be baptized. There was no need of a precept for that which was always settled by common use. Suppose there should at this time come out a proclamation in these words:—'Every one on the LORD's Day shall repair to the public assembly in the Church.' That man would dote, who should in times to come conclude that there were no prayers, sermons, psalms, &c., in the public assemblies of the LORD's Day, because there was no mention of them in the proclamation. For the proclamation ordered the keeping of the LORD's Day in the public assemblies in general, and there was no need that mention should be made of the particular kinds of Divine worship there to be used, since they were both before and at the time of the said proclamation known to every body, and in common use.

"Just so the case stood as to Baptism. CHRIST ordered it to be for a Sacrament of the New Testament, by which all should be admitted to the profession of the Gospel, as they were formerly to proselytism in the Jew's religion. The particular circumstances of it, as the manner of Baptism, the age of receiving it, which sex was capable of it, &c., had no need of being regulated or set down, because they were known to everybody by common usage.

"It was therefore necessary on the other side, that there should have been an express and plain order that infants and little children should not be baptized, if our SAVIOUR

But still further—for indeed there is no end of a multiplication of proofs tending to the same conclusion—the Jews used to call their Baptism by the name of “Regeneration,” or “New Birth.” They told the proselytes when they came into their covenant, that however unclean or sinful they or their children had been previously, they were by their Baptism, as then dedicated to the True God, entering into a new state, in all respects as though they were “new born.” In this idea, the writers on the law abound, as for instance—“If any one become a proselyte, he is like a child new born.”* “The Gentile that is made a proselyte, and the slave that is made free, behold he is like a child new born.”† Thus, S. Paul constantly illustrates the baptismal state—“If any one be in CHRIST, he is a *new creature* ;” and S. Peter calls Christians “*new-born babes*,” and says that God hath *begotten* us ;” (1 S. Pet. i. 3) ; but more particularly S. Paul identifies the sacrament of Baptism with Regeneration, or New Birth, by specially calling it (*Titus* iii. 5,) “the *Washing of Regeneration*.” Thus it came to pass, that all writers on Christianity, both the Apostles and Evangelists, and those succeeding close after

had meant that they should not. For since it was ordinary in all ages before, to have infants baptized—if CHRIST would have had that usage to be abolished, He would have expressly forbidden it. So that His, and the Scriptures' silence in this matter does confirm and establish Infant Baptism for ever.”—*Hor. Hebr. on Matt.* iii.

* Gemara.

† Maimorides.

them, invariably use "Baptism" and "Regeneration," the "Baptized" and the "Regenerate," as convertible terms. This accounts for our LORD'S conversation with Nicodemus. He speaks of a new birth:—"Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God," and then applies it to Baptism—"Except a man be born of *water* and of the Spirit." And when there was a difficulty in the mind of Nicodemus, He says—"Art thou a Master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" (*S. John* iii. 10.) Our LORD expected that Nicodemus would have understood as to the new birth of which He spake, by the fact of its being well understood among the Jews—not a birth a second time in the mother's womb, but *baptismal* birth.

Since then Regeneration is thus identified, according to the Jewish idea, with Baptism; and since Baptism, according to the Jewish law, was always applied to infants, it follows that Regeneration and Baptism (the same thing) when used in Scripture by our LORD and the Apostles, is to be applied to infants as well as to grown-up persons. In the Jewish idea all the baptized were regenerate, and all infants made proselytes with their parents were so baptized, and made regenerate. When, therefore, *Christian* Baptism was instituted in the same parallel with *Jewish* Baptism, not only the doctrine of Infant Baptism is made perfect, but by the side of it the great doctrine of the Catholic Church, namely, *Baptismal*

Regeneration, is established. We may argue and argue on and on for ever, and not come to a conclusion, if we argue without this key of the whole statement—namely, the custom of the Jews to which our LORD alludes in every word He speaks. It is this which lessens the wonder among us that men should deny the grace of Regeneration in Baptism. It is simply because they strive to interpret the Scriptures by their own light, instead of first obtaining a knowledge of the Jewish law under which our SAVIOUR taught.

It will be interesting to pursue the subject with reference to the facts of history and the opinions of the early Fathers, showing how in practice everything here asserted was borne out, and how the idea of denying the Baptism of these little ones whom JESUS in His love expressly desired to be brought unto Him—was never heard of till those unhappy times when individuals thought themselves wiser than the Church.

CHAPTER III.

But after all, any arguments which we may build up by our own sagacity as deductions from Holy Scripture, must sink into insignificance when compared with positive matters of fact. The question is—*Is it a fact that infants were baptized in the Apostolic ages, and the ages of the Church immediately succeeding?* Is there any clue in authentic history by which we can ascertain, as a matter of fact, not a matter of inference, whether the Church did baptize infants. We are now not to speak of doctrine, of reasons, or of surmises, but of facts; not whether in our own eyes it is good or bad, proper or improper to baptize infants, but whether, in point of fact, it was done by the early Church.

Eighteen hundred years have elapsed since our Blessed Lord sent forth His Divine command—“Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST.” How did the Apostles receive and act upon this command? Did they include, or did they not include, little children in the words “all nations?” or did they reserve for themselves an interpretation of the

command not heard of before in the custom of Baptism. If they *did* reserve to themselves such an interpretation, and it were vital to the principles of Infant Baptism, surely they would in their inspired writings, or in their practice, have made it sufficiently plain. Is there any mention of such an interpretation in the inspired writings?—None. Is there any instance on record of any limit of age—of any child, or infant rejected, when presented for Baptism?—None. But that is not enough. We must go further. We are not content with the absence of proof that children were rejected—we want to ascertain whether they were received; and this we can only do, after the cessation of the inspired writings, by looking to the various treatises, sermons, homilies, and commentaries, of these Apostolic men, who, immediately succeeding the Apostles themselves, are generally called the Fathers of the Church.

This we shall now do.

In the first place, we must get it well settled down in our mind that the ancients invariably used the words Baptism and Regeneration as signifying the same thing. When they speak of Baptism they mean Regeneration—when they speak of Regeneration they mean Baptism. For instance—Justin Martyr lived a very few years after the Apostles, quite at the beginning of the second century; and you will remember that S. John himself lived into the beginning of the second century, so that S. Justin might almost be called next in succession

to the Apostles themselves. He says of himself, that he was a disciple of the Apostles. Now this holy Father writes thus :—

“I will now declare to you after what manner we, being made new by CHRIST, have dedicated ourselves to GOD ; but if I should leave out that, I might seem to deal unfairly. They who are persuaded, and do believe that those things which are taught us are true, and do promise to live according to them, are desired first to pray and ask of GOD with fasting, the forgiveness of their former sins. Then we bring them to some place where there is water, and they are regenerated by the same way of regeneration by which *we* were regenerated, for they are washed with water in the Name of GOD the FATHER and LORD of all things, and of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, and of the HOLY SPIRIT.” *

This is the first account that we find of Holy Baptism after the Holy Scriptures themselves. In this we find no actual mention of the word Baptism, but it is simply called Washing, or Regeneration. The person who wrote this, and the persons to whom it was written, lived in the Apostles' time. It is clear that they understood the one by the other without any need of mentioning it.

S. Irenæus was another Father of the Church. He lived about the year 170 : he was a disciple of S. Polycarp, and S. Polycarp was a disciple of

* Justin Martyr, Apol. i. s. 61.

S. John. Now this S. Irenæus always speaks of Baptism and Regeneration as the same thing; for instance, he says—

“When He gave His disciples the commission of Regenerating, He said unto them—‘Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them,’” &c.*

Here, it is plain, he uses the words Commission of *Regenerating* as the same thing as Commission of *Baptism*.

Moreover, the Fathers continually used the expression “make disciples of,” from the word used by our LORD Himself—*μαθητευσατε*, in the same light as baptizing; because as our LORD had said—“Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them,” it followed that when they spoke of persons being made disciples of, they meant by baptizing them; and if they spoke of *baptizing* any, they meant make disciples of them:—the two expressions were equivalent. So that here we gather a very important rule of interpretation, when we read the ancient writers; viz., that “made disciples of,” “regenerated,” and “baptized,” mean the same thing; and when they speak of one of these things, we know that they mean to convey to us the parallel idea of the other two, as given them originally by our Blessed LORD Himself.

Who then do they tell us were the persons

* Adver. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 19.

who were thus “baptized,” or “regenerated,” or “made disciples of?” Were they, in any case, infants or children, or were they not? That is the question at issue.

S. Justin Martyr, of whom I first spoke, gives us the following passage:—

“Several persons among us of sixty and seventy years old, *who were made disciples to CHRIST from their childhood*, do still continue uncorrupt.”*

Now persons that were seventy years old when S. Justin wrote, must have been children in the times of the Apostles. We have testimony then here direct and immediate, that in the Apostles’ time children were baptized.

Again, S. Irenæus, of whom I just spoke, furnishes a similar testimony. He flourished about the middle of the second century. He says thus:—

“He [our Blessed LORD] not disdaining or going in a way above human nature, nor breaking in His Own Person the law which He had set for man, sanctified every age by the likeness that it has to Him. For He came to save all persons by Himself—all, I mean, who by Him are regenerated unto God; namely *infants and little ones, children and youths, and elder persons*. Therefore, He went through the several ages in His Own Life; for infants, being made an infant, sanctifying infants;—to little ones, He was

* Justin Martyr, Apol. i.

made a little one ; sanctifying those of that age," &c.*

The next testimony is S. Clement of Alexandria. He lived before the close of the second century, and he writes as though he took for granted that the Apostles baptized little children. He is speaking about wearing rings and seals, and is giving directions how such ornaments in Christians ought to be free from any idolatrous sign ; and he says :—

“Let your seal be a dove, or a fish, or a ship under sail, or a harp, as was that of Polycrates ; or an anchor, which was that of Sileucus and if any man be by trade a fisherman, he will do well to think of *an Apostle, and the children taken out of the water.*”†

“To lift any one out of the water,” was a phrase well understood then to signify to baptize ; and here, when S. Clement adverts to signs well known for the engraving of a seal, such as a ship or an anchor, and couples these things with another sign, *i.e., an Apostle lifting a child out of the water*, we see at once that he was speaking of a thing well known and understood ; namely, that the Apostles did baptize children. ‡

* Irenæus, adv. Hæres. lib. ii. c. 39.

† Clem. Alex. Pædagog. lib. iii. c. 11.

‡ Gertianus Hervetus, commenting on this passage, gives us the following paraphrase :—

“If there be engraved on a seal the picture of a fisher-

The next authority to be cited is that of Tertulian, born about the year 160. He wrote about the year 200; *i. e.*, we may say, the very beginning of the third century. He wrote a special treatise upon Baptism: he was on some points considered by the Church as unorthodox; and in the very passage now to be cited, he seems to wish Baptism to be somewhat delayed. With that *opinion* we have nothing to do. We have only to do with the fact which he testified, that it was the custom in his time to baptize infants. He says—

“They whose duty it is to administer Baptism, are to know that it must not be given rashly. . . . Therefore, according to every man’s condition and disposition, and also their age, the delaying of Baptism is more profitable, especially in *the case of little children*. For what need is there that the godfathers should be brought into danger? because they may either fail of their promises by

man, let him think of S. Peter, whom CHRIST made a fisher of men; and let him think of the children, which, *when baptized, are drawn out of a laver of water*, as out of a fish-pool (*piscinâ*). It is curious to see how familiar the idea was that children should be baptized.

“It is not an uncommon device in ancient sculpture of fonts to find this idea represented. At Bridekirk, in Cumberland, there is a font of stone so ancient that Camden, even in his time, could not decipher the inscription. But it represented in carving, the figure of an Apostle, as supposed, in a long sacerdotal garment, drawing a child out of the water, while a dove, the emblem of the HOLY SPIRIT, is hovering over the infant.”—*Wall’s Infant Baptism*.

death, or they may be mistaken by a child's proving of a wicked disposition," &c.*

Tertullian might have thought as an individual that the Baptism of infants had better be delayed. That is of no matter. Here we have from him *as to the fact*, an undoubted testimony that children were baptized.

The next authority is Origen. He lived and wrote about the year 230. He writes thus:—

“Having opportunity in this place, I will mention a thing which causes frequent enquiries among the Brethren. Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Of what sins? *When* have they sinned? or how can any reason of the laver in their case hold good, but according to that sense that we mentioned just now, *i.e.*, none is free from pollution though his life be but of the length of one day upon the earth. And it is for that reason, because by the sacrament of Baptism, the pollution of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized.”†

And again:—

“For this it was (original sin) that the Church had *from the Apostles* a tradition to give Baptism even to Infants.”‡

Here the testimony is very emphatic and clear, not only that infant Baptism was then practised,

* De Baptismo, c. 39, 40.

† Hom. in Lucam, 14.

‡ Ep. ad Rom. v. 9.

but that it was a precept and custom handed down in the Church from the Apostles.

We go on next to S. Cyprian. He was Bishop of Carthage, and flourished about the year 250. A question was raised whether an infant before it was eight days old, might be baptized. Sixty-six Bishops met in Council to decide this question, among others ; and it was in a letter to Fidus, a country Bishop, who had raised the question, that S. Cyprian wrote as follows :—

“ If then the greatest offenders, and they that have grievously sinned against God, have, when they afterwards come to believe, forgiveness of their sins ; how much less reason is there to refuse an infant ; who, being newly born has no sin, save that being descended from Adam according to the flesh, he has from his very birth contracted the contagion of the death anciently threatened ; who comes, for this reason, more easily to receive forgiveness of sins, because they are not his own but other’s sins that are forgiven him. This therefore was, dear brother, our opinion in the assembly, that it is not for us to hinder any person from Baptism and the Grace of God, Who is merciful and kind to all. Which rule, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in *reference to infants newly born*, to whom our help and the Divine mercy is rather to be granted, because by their weeping and wailing at their first entrance into the world,

they do intimate nothing so much, as that they implore compassion.”*

Now here we find a question raised about infants of eight days old. No question about infants generally—that is taken for granted. The only difficulty was as to the number of days. The Church decided unanimously that every infant even immediately at birth, might be a recipient of baptism.

The next authority will be S. Gregory Nazianzen, about the year 360 ; and there is something very peculiar in the testimony given by him—for he was himself not baptized until adult years. Nevertheless, or rather perhaps in consequence of this, no ancient writer is so strong on the subject of not delaying Baptism. He enters into all the excuses and pretences which heathens and others brought forward for deferring their baptism, and he says—

“ Art thou a youth ? Fight against pleasures and passions with this auxiliary strength. Enlist thyself in God’s army. Art thou old ? Let thy gray hairs hasten thee—strengthen thy old age with baptism. Hast thou an infant child ? Let not wickedness have the advantage of time—let him be sanctified from infancy—let him be dedicated from his cradle to the HOLY SPIRIT.”†

* S. Cyprian. Epistol, 64, ad Fidum.

† Oratio de Baptismo.

And again—

. . . . “What say you to those that are as yet infants, and are not in a capacity to be sensible either of the grace or of the loss of it. Shall we baptize them too? Yes, by all means, if any danger make it requisite. For it is better that they be sanctified without their own sense of it, than die unsealed and uninitiated.”*

Next let us cite S. Chrysostom. In the 40th Homily on the Book *Genesis*, he is speaking of Circumcision, and compares it with Christian Circumcision or Baptism, and he says thus:—

“There was pain and trouble in the practice of Jewish Circumcision, and no other advantage derived from it than this only, that by this sign, the Jews were known and distinguished from other nations. But *our* Circumcision, I mean the grace of Baptism, gives cure without pain, and procures to us a thousand blessings, and fills us with the grace of the SPIRIT, and it has no determinate time as that had; but one that is in the very beginning of his age, or one that is in the middle of it, or one that is in his old age, may receive the circumcision made without hands.”‡

In another place he says more decidedly to the point—

“You see how many are the benefits of Baptism. . . . For this cause we baptize infants also,

* Hom. in Gen. 40.

though they are not defiled with sin [*actual sin*] that there may be added to them saintsship, righteousness, adoption, inheritance, and brotherhood with CHRIST, and to be made members of Him."*

And now S. Augustine comes. He was Bishop of Hippo, about the year 395. He is writing a treatise on Free Will, and discussing the question of sin connected therewith, and he says—

“Men are wont to ask this question also—What good the sacrament of CHRIST'S Baptism does to infants—whereas after they have received it, they often die, before they are able to understand anything about it. As to which matter, it is piously and truly believed that the faith of those by whom the child is offered to be consecrated, profits the child.”†

In another place he is speaking of the baptism of Simon Magus, and he shows how even that baptism—although received with an evil heart was still valid, and that such a man must repent of his sin, but not be re-baptized. Having discussed this point, he goes on—

“So that many persons increasing in knowledge after their baptism, and specially who have been baptized *when they were infants and when they were youths,*” &c.‡

And again. Boniface, another Bishop, had

* Hom. ad Bapti.

† De Libero Arbitrio, lib. iii. c. 23.

‡ De Baptismo contra Donatistas.

written to S. Augustine for his opinion regarding some difficulties in infant Baptism, to which S. Augustine replies—

“Let not that disturb you, that some people do not bring their infants to Baptism with that faith that they may by spiritual grace be regenerated to eternal life, but because they think they do procure or preserve their bodily health by this remedy. For the children do not therefore fail of being regenerated, because they are not brought by the others with this intention. For the necessary offices are performed by them,” &c.

“The little child loses not the grace once received, except by his own wickedness, if in after-life he should turn out evil-disposed. For then he will begin to have sins of his own which are not removed by regeneration, but are cured by other treatments.”*

A little further on than the time of S. Augustine, we find the Council of Milevi—that is in the year 416. Sixty-two Bishops were present, and they decreed thus (Canon II.) :—

“Therefore little children, who have not by possibility themselves committed sin, are rightly baptized for the remission of sins, in order that that which they have contracted by generation, may be washed away by regeneration.”

Here then I think we may stop. We have traced this undoubted Catholic practice from

* S. August. Ep. ad Bonifacium, xxxiii. s. 98.

the very Apostles downward. For four hundred years, without deviation, we find as occasion calls for it, the various writers of the Church alluding to it—setting it forth—defending it—explaining it;—so that as to the fact that Infant Baptism was a practice of the Church of Apostolic authority, there can be no doubt. Time advanced—four hundred years is not a fourth part of the time that has elapsed since our Blessed Lord's time. But the first four hundred years constitute the main portion of the enquiry, and in themselves settle the question—for granting that Infant Baptism was the practice of the Church for the first four hundred years—it matters not then what heresies may have arisen afterwards to disturb it. Whoever says now that infants are not proper subjects of Baptism, must acknowledge that he is against Catholic usage, and the authority of the Scriptures and the Apostles, who, by their acts as well as writings, interpreted these Scriptures. Whatever the wit of man may devise in his individual wisdom above and out of the Church, is nothing to the question. The only question is, whether the denial of Infant Baptism is a novelty? If a novelty, then it must be untenable; for anything in religion that is a novelty is, *ipso facto*, wrong.

But it is remarkable, how in other sects and other heretical opinions, however much error there may be, still there is a soundness of doctrine on this head. Hardly any heresies are so

all-destructive as to set aside every article of the Catholic faith. So in this.

Let us pass over some hundreds of years, from the Council of Milevi to the times of the Reformation. The German Reformers, and those who were akin to them, such as Melancthon, Luther, and the like, all maintained Infant Baptism as an essential part of their Church system. For instance, at the Conference at Wittenbergh, it was said thus (A.D. 1536):—

“ Since of such infants as are in the Church, it has been said—‘ It is not the Will of the FATHER that one of them should perish, it is manifest that to infants is given by Baptism remission of original sin, and the HOLY SPIRIT, which in them is efficacious for that purpose. For we reject the error of those who imagine that infants please GOD, and are saved without any action of GOD ; since CHRIST clearly says, ‘ Unless a man be born again of water and of the SPIRIT, he cannot enter the kingdom of GOD.’ Although, therefore, we do not understand what kind that action of GOD on infants is, yet it is certain, that in them new and holy motions are effected.”

To the same purpose Luther writes in his Commentary on the Book of Joel :—

“ This, too, is the cause why we bring infants to Baptism, *following the example of the Apostles in the primitive Church.* For because it is certain that the HOLY SPIRIT wills to be efficacious through the Water of Baptism—we determine

that the action of the HOLY SPIRIT is in the same point of view unimpeded by the want of feeling in the infants, just as we adults cannot render the work of the HOLY SPIRIT *more* perfect by our strength or our senses."

And Melancthon at the Diet of Worms, 1540, adds his testimony.

"The Baptism of Infants has been defended with success in the writings of many among us. We are too, most of us, fathers of families, and certainly we reflect concerning the salvation of our children. How often have I heard this saying—'It is not the Will of the FATHER that one of these little ones should perish.' We hold that they in baptism are made sons of GOD—that they receive the HOLY SPIRIT and abide in grace, so long as they do not forfeit it through actual sin, in that age which is now called capable of reason."

There is nothing more to say, but this only to do. To weep at the hard-heartedness of those, who, spite of all the love and mercy of GOD daily and hourly manifested upon the weak and fragile forms of little babes, should imagine that His Mercy, in regeneration, cannot visit their souls, until they be of minds and intellects capable of understanding it. Alas! why should not GOD visit the soul as well as the body, from the very beginning. Why are there—on this miserably proud reasoning of man—so many thousands in this, our country, brought up from childhood to

manhood, unsealed, uninitiated, without a sign or mark of the calling of CHRIST. Why do they grow up thus to man's estate, taught by their parents that by and by, when they are old and have their own will, then they may receive what they term "*Believer's Baptism*," but not before. So taught, they pass on through lives of gross sin—deterred, frightened, bewildered, or else careless and apathetic, into their graves, and *are never baptized at all*. Yes: this is the sure end of this frightful heresy. Some few select and chosen—some of the more gentle and temperate, may in mature age, go down into the water, and receive a baptismal grace, after their manner of baptizing; but of the majority—of the great bulk of the sect of Anabaptists—making so much as they do of its *intellectual* reception—of the majority it would rather be more just to say, that they deny Baptism altogether, than that they defer it; for denying to the little ones, whom CHRIST called unto Himself, and forbade not—denying to them a state of Christianity and of salvation without their own co-operation—they, *ipso facto*, deny the power of the HOLY GHOST, and shut Him up within the confines of their own miserable short-sightedness. Let us pray that soon some light may be shed upon their darkness, and that they may be recalled to the ancient practice and Catholic doctrine, by which the gifts of the HOLY SPIRIT are measured, not by man's intelligence, but by God's Free Gift.

CHAPTER IV.

It is sufficiently plain by what has been already said, that in regard of the *subjects* of Baptism, there never was meant to be either by the Holy Scriptures or by the Church, any restriction as to age or sex in the reception of that holy Sacrament. Our Blessed LORD'S OWN WORDS, "ALL NATIONS," coupled with the customs of the Jews, and the invariable tradition of the Church, settle the matter.

But now comes the question, *How* are such persons to be baptized? This is what I called at the outset, the *mode* of Baptism, *i.e.*, in what way, with what words, and with what ceremonies ought this holy Sacrament to be administered?

In the consideration of the "*mode*" of administering a Sacrament, there are two things to be set forth. One, the *matter* of the Sacrament, the other, its *form*. Matter and form are essential to its vitality; while there are in addition to the matter and the form, certain other *accessories* which may vary, either in kind or degree, and by so varying not vitiate the essence of its nature. Whether Holy Baptism is performed with the sign of the Cross or not—whether oil is used or not—whether salt is used or not—all such matters are mere accessories, and not essential to the

Sacrament. Two things are alone so necessary ; that is to say, the matter—which is water—commanded by our LORD ; and the form—which is the pronouncing of the Words of Our LORD—“ I baptize thee in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST.” If either of these parts are omitted, or varied, then Baptism is not performed ; but these two simple things being present, Baptism is valid.

It is very singular, and a proof of the strange wanderings of the human mind in heresy, that so simple and plain a thing as this should ever have been denied. Yet it has been so. S. Irenæus, who lived close after the Apostles, tells us that there were some persons in his time who thought it “ needless to bring the person of one to be baptized to the water, but mixing oil and water together, they poured it on his head.” Others used no water at all, nor any other external ceremony, but said “ Spiritual Baptism which consists in the knowledge of the Unspeakable Majesty, is all in all.” “ Some of them,” he says, “ dress up a bride-chamber, and perform mystical ceremonies with certain profane words, and call this a spiritual marriage. Others bring the party to the water, and as they are baptizing use these words :—“ In the name of the Unknown FATHER of all things ; in the truth of the Mother of all things, in Him that came down as JESUS, in the Union, and Redemption, and Communion of the Powers,” &c. . . . “ Others of them ex-

press their Baptism thus :—‘ In the name that is hidden from every deity, dominion, and truth, which JESUS of Nazareth put on in the zones of light.’ And he that is baptized, answers—‘ I am confirmed and redeemed, and I redeem my soul from this Æon, and all that comes of it, in the name of I. A. O,’ &c. Then they anoint the baptized person with balsam.”*

The Manichees were a sect that denied Water-Baptism altogether ; but had a profane and indecent ceremony which they used instead of it.†

These absurdities will show to what an extent the delusions of men will carry them ; and prove to us that even in so simple a thing as the use of water with special words appointed by CHRIST Himself, the Church has never been secure from the errors of individuals.

But this remark does not affect the Anabaptists. The *matter* of Baptism, which is *water*, is allowed by them, and used by them ; and the form, which is the “ Name of the Holy Trinity,” is also allowed by them, and used by them.

Wherein then consists their heresy ?

They assert that it is absolutely necessary to a valid Baptism, that the whole body of the baptized person should be immersed and plunged under the water ; that pouring water over the person, as the Church permits, is not valid Bap-

* S. Irenæus, lib. iii. c. 2.

† S. Cyril of Jerusalem. Catech. vi. c. 33.

tism. This is the only point at issue, in regard of the *mode* of their administering it.

Now let us at once begin by saying, that, beyond question, both in the descriptions given in Holy Scripture, and in the figurative arguments of doctrine derived from it by S. Paul and others, as well also in the custom of the Primitive Church, the primary and ordinary way of baptizing was by immersing the whole body. The case of Philip and the Eunuch is very plain—" *They went down into the water.*" It was not a little water sprinkled or poured, but they went into it. The figure of being "baptized into the *death* of CHRIST,"—of being "*buried*" with CHRIST in His Death—of being "*raised* again to newness of life;" all these figurative descriptions of the doctrine contained in it, are derived from the evident supposition that baptism was performed by immersion. There was a "*burying* of the body under the water, as the dead body is buried under the earth." There was a *raising up* of the body out of the water, as the dead body is supposed to be raised from the grave at the resurrection, and to put on "*newness of life.*"

But has the Church ever denied this? Has the Church ever said that Baptism by immersion is not right? Has she ever refused it, or thrown any hindrance in the way of it, to any person who may wish it? Quite the contrary. Baptism by immersion is the doctrine and desired practice of the Catholic Church; and specially of the Church of England. Let us consider this.

Tertullian says—"It is all one, whether one be washed [baptised] in the sea, or in a pond, in a fountain, or in a river, in a standing or running water, nor is there any difference between those that John baptised in Jordan, and those that Peter baptised in the Tiber."* In correspondence with this description—when Churches came into use, and Christians ceased to worship in upper rooms—then along with the Churches came, as a necessary part of them, a *baptistery*. This baptistery was a building outside of the Church, and had within it a large cistern or pond—large enough for several persons to go down into the water together, divided into two portions—one for the men, the other for the women. We are told by one of our learned writers, that the manner at that time of "baptising by immersion, or dipping under water made it necessary to have a large font. It is called the "Aula Baptismatis,"—the Hall of Baptism,—and was so capacious, that we sometimes read of councils meeting and sitting therein."†

S. Gregory also in after times makes a distinct order in his Directions for Baptism, contemplating, that of necessity, the body should be immersed. He directs, that after the Priest has baptised them "with three immersions, they are to be clothed, and brought to the Bishop to be

* De Baptismo, c. 4.

† Bingham, lib. viii. c. 7, s. 2.

confirmed." The direction of *clothing*, of course contemplates the previous immersion of the whole body in the water.

But there is no need to say anything further on this head. It was never denied but that Baptism by immersion is the true and ancient Catholic usage. Nor is it less so in that portion of the Church to which we ourselves belong. In the ancient Prayer-Book, which is called "The Use of Salisbury,"—a book in use just before the Reformation, we find the following direction—
"Then let the Priest take the child by his sides in his hands, and having asked his name, let him dip him thrice, invoking the Holy Trinity thus:—N. I baptise thee in the Name of the FATHER; (and let him dip him the first time with his face to the north, and his head towards the east), and of the SOX; (the second time let him dip him once with his face to the south), and of the HOLY SPIRIT, Amen. (And let him dip him the third time with his face towards the water).

The first Prayer-Book which the English Church set forth as peculiarly her own, was that which is generally called "The first Book of Edward VI." Turning to the direction given to the Priest for the act of baptizing, we find it thus:—

"Then the Priest shall take the childe in his handes, and ask the name. And namyng the childe, shall dippe it in the water thrise; first dypping the right side, second, the left side;

third time dyppying the face towarde the fonte : so it be discretly and warily done, saying,—N. I baptize thee in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SONNE, and of the HOLY GHOST. AMEN.

“ And if the childe be weake, it shall suffice to power water upon it, saying the aforesayd wordes.”

The same is the direction of the Book of Edward VI., save only that the direction to dip the child *three times* is omitted. But still he is to be *dipped*. Then going on to the Prayer Book now in use, what do we find? Still the same. The Priest is directed thus: “ Then naming the child after them (the God-parents), if they shall certify that the child may well endure it, he shall dip it into the water, discretly and warily, saying, &c. . . . But if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it, saying, &c. . . . Now the whole tenor of this direction,—the order of the Church in the Canon, that every Church shall have a font of stone,—the rubric that the Priest shall *dip* the child—and the insertion that it shall *SUFFICE* to pour the water, *i. e.*, it is not the thing desired, but it shall *suffice*—all this shews that the Church does still adhere to the primitive practice, as far as her wishes go, of baptism by immersion. It is not her fault; but a fault arising from neglect and abuse of an ancient truth;—that *that* is substituted as a general rule which was only meant for an indulgence,—that *that* has become a gene-

ral practice in the baptizing of little children which was only permitted, if the children were certified to be weak.

How does the case stand then? Why thus. That any Priest of the Church to this day would be compelled to immerse every person he baptizes, if such persons coming for baptism so desired it? Nay, that he is bound strictly speaking to do so on all occasions, *unless the parents of children certify that they are weak.* Wherein then, proceeding from this, do the Anabaptists raise their cry of objection to the Church, and separate from her? They raise it upon this ground, that it is not lawful *in ANY case* to baptize otherwise than by immersion. The Anabaptists say, all persons ought to be immersed. The Church says the same; but the Church goes on to say, but in case of children being weak, it shall suffice to pour the water. No, rejoin the Anabaptists; it does *not* suffice. Both agree upon the principle. But the one separates from the other on the ground of permitting a certain exception. The whole question then narrows itself into this: Is it permissible to baptize by pouring water, or does such an act invalidate Baptism altogether? In other words, is it as much the essence of the Baptism, that it should be performed by immersion in the water, as it is that water should be used at all?

Let us consider this.

Suppose from haste, in case of sickness, ap-

proaching death, want of quantity of water, weakness of body, want of a proper place, and the like, it were *impossible* to baptize by immersion, would the Anabaptists say that Baptism could not take place by pouring, and that a man should be left to die unbaptized? Most likely in the case of the jailor at Philippi, one of these suppositions was actually the case. It was in the night, it was sudden—a whole household was baptized, and that “*straightway.*” They could not have gone down to the river; was it likely they were prepared with a bath or font for such an unexpected purpose in a common jail?

Many such instances no doubt occurred even in the times of the Apostles. In after times we know they did. As for instance, there was a bishop of the name of Novatian, in the year 251. He was chosen Bishop of Rome. A controversy arose to show that Novatian was uncanonically elected, because “it was not lawful” they said, “for one to be a Bishop or even a Priest who had been baptized as he had been, in bed during a time of sickness.”* He had been baptized as he lay on his bed, by *pouring* water on him.

There was a question put to S. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, whether a person baptized in his bed as a sick man should be baptized again if he should recover. To which he answered “The contagion of sin is not, in the sacrament

* Eusebius, Eccles. Hist. vi. 43.

of salvation, washed off by the same measure that the dirt of the skin and of the body is washed off in an ordinary and secular bath, so as that there should be any necessity of soap and other helps, and a large pool or fish-pond by which the body is washed or cleansed. It is in another way that the breast of a believer is washed; and after another fashion that the mind of a man is by faith cleansed. In the sacraments of salvation, where necessity compels, the shortest ways of transacting divine matters do, by God's gracious dispensation, confer the whole benefit. And no man need therefore think otherwise, because these sick people, when they receive the grace of our LORD, have nothing but an affusion, or sprinkling; whereas the Holy Scripture, by the prophet Ezekiel, says, 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.'"

Again S. Cyprian says—"If any one think that they obtain no benefit, as having only an affusion of the water of salvation, do not let him mistake so far, as that the parties, if they recover of their sickness, should be baptized again. And if they must not be baptized again, that have already been sanctified with the baptism of the Church; why should they have cause of scandal given them concerning their religion and the pardon of our LORD? What! shall we think that they have granted to them the grace of our LORD, but in a weaker or less measure of the divine and HOLY SPIRIT; so as to be accounted

Christians, but yet not in equal state with others? No; the HOLY SPIRIT is not given by several measures, but is *wholly* poured on them that believe." Further on, we have more instances—instances of exception we acknowledge—but still instances wherein the essence of Baptism is shown not to be impugned. Eusebius relates how Basilides was baptized in prison—a case similar to that of the jailor at Philippi. In the account of the martyrdom of S. Laurence, we find that one of the soldiers who was to be his executioner, came up to the martyr with a pitcher of water, requesting to be baptized. In the Gallican Church we have many canons in which the Baptism of immersion and that of affusion, or pouring, is spoken of indifferently. Gennadius, of Marseilles, speaks of both as equally good. The Synod of Angiers blames some ignorant Priests that they dipped the children or *poured the water over them* once instead of three times. The Synod of Langres speaks of pouring only:—"Let the Priest make three pourings or sprinklings of water on the infant's head." In Italy, up to the year 1260, immersion was the ordinary way, but after that affusion was gradually introduced, and so continues. In Germany the same, *i. e.*, at first immersion was the universal practice, except in cases of sickness or haste; but in the year 1536, the Council of Cologne speaks of it indifferently.—"Then let the Priest take the child on his left arm, and holding him over the font, let

him with his right hand three several times take water out of the font and pour it on the child's head, so that the water may wet its head and shoulders." In our own country, so early as 1422, it seems to have been an open question. In the reign of Henry V., Lyndewode, who wrote upon the English Constitution, speaks of it in these words. He recommends *dipping*, but then adds:—"This is not to be accounted of as the essence of Baptism, but it may be given also by pouring or sprinkling. And this holds especially where the custom of the Church allows it." But it was not till the time of Edward VI. that the practice of affusion prevailed in the Church of England over that of immersion.

Such being the case—the primitive practice being conceded—and the permission of the Church being the only thing pretended, and that as a permission lawful, because it does not violate the essence of the Sacrament—why should the Anabaptists, if this were all, have caused their miserable schism? They say that they must baptize in water of such a quantity as to cover the whole body. Why do they say that? Because the word used by our LORD βαπτίζω, has that signification. So it has; but it also has the signification of washing—common washing by pouring of water—as we see the same word used by our LORD on several occasions. "As He spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him, and He went in and sat down to meat. And when

the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not first *washed* before dinner." If this word were strictly translated it would be, "he marvelled that he had not been first *baptized* (ἐβαπτίσθη) before dinner. If it had been so translated, would the Anabaptists tell us that it meant that our Blessed SAVIOUR was expected, and that all the Jews were expected always before dinner to be immersed in water! It is evident that it alludes to the mere washing of hands. Take another case. We find in *S. Mark* vii. 4, a description given of the Pharisees—"And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the *washing* of cups and pots, brazen vessels and of tables." Now, in the original it is *baptisms* of cups, &c. (βαπτισμοί). If it had been so translated, would it have held that it was of necessity the case, that all these vessels used by the Jews, were to be *dipped under the water*. No, surely. Some of them were so large that they could not be submerged. It evidently alludes to the act of cleansing them by water, what we call washing—no matter how that washing were performed. The argument then for immersion derived from the critical use of the word βαπτίζω, is evidently, on the face of it, ridiculous.

But they devise another defence, from the fact of our LORD being baptised in the River Jordan. This being the case, they say all persons ought to imitate Him, and be baptised by submersion. Yes; but they ought to go further, and say

all persons ought to be baptised in a *river*. But they do not. The Anabaptists have a schism among themselves on this very head. Some are River-Baptists, and others are contented with a pool of water in their Meeting-House. To be consistent, and bring things home to the full, it must in truth be said, that the River-Baptists are the more correct. Milton—the great poet Milton—I am sorry to say, followed this singular opinion, and was a River-Baptist. He writes thus :—“ Under the Gospel, the first of the Sacraments, commonly so called, is Baptism ; wherein the bodies of believers who engage themselves to pureness of life are immersed in running water, to signify their regeneration by the HOLY SPIRIT ;” and in the “ Paradise Lost,” he says—

“ Them who shall believe
Baptising in the *profluent stream*, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of Sin to Life.”

But why all this dispute ? Why all this division ? Does any Christian parent in this country think it binding on his conscience that his child should be *immersed* in Baptism ? He can exercise his right, and demand it of his parish Priest. Indeed, the more ordinary way ought to be that every parish Priest shall immerse the child, unless prevented by certificate that the child were too sickly to bear it. Why then need any one make a schism on *that* ground ? Does any one, being grown up to years of discretion, and having so far and so long neglected Baptism, hang back

from joining the Church, because he thinks the Church would refuse to baptise by immersion, which immersion he might conscientiously think necessary. Let him look to the Prayer-Book at the office of the Baptism of Adults, he will read thus, "Then shall the Priest take each person to be baptised, by the right hand, and placing him conveniently by the font, according to his discretion, shall ask the Godfathers and Godmothers his name, and then shall DIP HIM IN THE WATER, OR POUR WATER ON HIM, SAYING," &c.

Now I would say to these Anabaptists, who still to so great an extent abound among us—"I am aware that the grounds of the practice you maintain are conscientious, and that your Baptism by immersion is according to the Catholic custom. Indeed, I will go so far as to say, that as a matter of fact, as a habit and custom among your people, you are better Catholics than we are, for we have lost and omitted the custom *as a custom*, throughout the West. But still there is on this point no need of your schism. Your error consists in making that an *essential* which has never so been made by the Church, by our Lord, nor by the Apostles. There is nothing that you can desire on the points of your schism, that the Church of England does not afford you. To baptise you according to the primitive practice, the Church of England is at all times ready. She would thank you to come in among her members, and restore that practice which by permission has

gradually grown into desuetude. She would implore you in sober earnestness, and stern reality, (since there is no possible ground of your division as far as Baptism by *immersion* goes,) to return to the fold from which you have strayed ; to re-build, and revive, and strengthen the mother, whose fostering arms you have so needlessly fled from and deserted.

CHAPTER V.

When we considered the *subjects* and the *mode* of Baptism to be the two great points upon which the sect of Anabaptists have deviated from the Catholic Church—there were still left behind many interesting matters upon which useful information might be conveyed. I said that there were two things absolutely essential to the right performance of Baptism, and those were—1, *The proper use of words ; i.e., the Name of the Holy Trinity* : and 2, *The right matter ; i.e., Water*. But the Church has always accompanied these two essentials with various ceremonies and holy usages which are full of meaning, and convey much to the spiritual mind. It will be useful if in this chapter I set forth these various ceremonies and usages.

In the first place then, it must be evident, that if Baptism has any spiritual blessing within it— if it be, as we hold it, one of the greater Sacra-

ments, it must look to two parties in its due performance. As yet, we have only considered one party that is the agent of it—the person who performs or offers it; but we must equally consider the other party, that is, the person who receives it. As it is necessary to its due performance that water should be used, and the Name of the Holy Trinity be pronounced, so it is equally necessary, on the part of the person who is presented as a candidate for its privileges, that there should be within him certain characteristics to fit him for the holy rite. What are these characteristics? On the one hand, everything belonging to the world—everything belonging to the agency, dominion, or pollution of the devil, under whom, by nature, mankind are slaves, must of course be repudiated and cast out of the mind of him who is given by baptism to the service of God. And on the other hand, in the person presented and offered to the service of a new master, repudiating the old, there must be a perfect faith in the existence, the power, the goodness, and the value of such a new master. Consequently, *faith* must be ascertained to exist in the heart of the candidate of Baptism, for “He that cometh unto God, must believe that He is.” Hence then, as outward demonstrations of the right tone of mind, which the Church requires and holds to be necessary in a baptized person, two things were required:—

I. Renunciation ;

II. A Profession.

I. In the Apostolic constitutions, the form of Renunciation was this :—“I renounce Satan and his works, and his pomps, and his service, and his angels, and his inventions, and all things that belong to him.” This renunciation was made by way of question and answer, and is traced as a custom necessarily attached to Baptism up to the Apostles’ times. S. Paul alludes to it when writing to Timothy. He says—“Lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.” (1 *Tim.* vi. 2.) And S. Peter is thought to refer to it, specially alluding to question and answer, when he calls Baptism “the *answer* of a good conscience towards God.” (1 S. Peter iii. 21.)

The Renunciation was made in the following way. The catechumen, or person who was about to be baptized, was brought into the Baptistry with his face towards the west. The east was the quarter in which our Blessed Lord arose, as the sun, “with healing on His wings ;” and so it came to pass, that the west, as opposed to it, was looked upon as the abode of Satan. Turning towards the west—the catechumen made some gesture of aversion or hatred of him who dwelt there, and whose service he was then abandoning. This was by stretching out his

hands, or by striking them together, and frequently by exsufflation, or spitting at him, as though describing the intensity of the aversion with which he was regarded. "The west," says S. Cyril, of Jerusalem, "is the place of darkness and Satan is darkness; and his strength is in darkness. For this reason, ye symbolically look to the west, when ye renounce the Prince of Darkness."* The Renunciation, coupled with these gestures, was repeated three times—the catechumen was to say the words thrice, stretch forth his hands, and make a spitting thrice—probably to signify the Holy Trinity, in whose three-fold help the grace of Baptism was sought.

This being done, the catechumen was then to turn to the east; and as he before renounced all further co-operation with the Prince of Darkness, so now, turning towards the light, he was to make his covenant with the Prince of Light. "Thus," S. Ambrose says, "He that renounces the devil turns unto CHRIST."†

II. In this manner they came to their Profession, and it involved two things—obedience and faith. In the first place, obedience with reference to the Ten Commandments of the moral law; and in the next place, a recital of the articles of the Apostles' Creed. The germ of

* S. Cyril, *Catech. Mystery*, 1 & 2, p. 278.

† S. Ambrose, *De Initiatis*, c. 2.

this confession of faith is evident from the instances of the Holy Baptism found in the Scriptures, more especially in that of the eunuch baptized by S. Philip; for when coming to the water, the eunuch said—"See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip said, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest;" and he answered and said, "I believe that JESUS CHRIST is the SON of GOD." (Acts viii. 36.) As the Renunciation was made three times, so was the Confession of Faith and Profession of Obedience. And this, some of the Fathers say, after the example of our LORD's conversation with S. Peter; for our LORD said three times, "Lovest thou Me," and three times S. Peter answered, "LORD, Thou knowest that I love Thee." (S. John xxi. 17.) All this was followed by a record entered in a book of the Church, in which by the person baptized, or by some one for him, his solemn Renunciation and Profession was enrolled as a testimony and seal for ever.

Now it is curious to observe how very clearly, even to this present day, all these customs of Renunciation and Profession are maintained; for in the first place, the situation of the font at which Holy Baptism takes place is, or ought to be, in every church towards the west or some other door, and the Priest standing towards the east, receives the person baptized turning towards the west; while he is answering the questions of Renunciation. And the questions are put just as in the early

times—"Dost thou renounce?" and again, "Wilt thou obey?" and afterwards, the registration of the Baptism of each person in the Church-books is the record of the thing done, to which in after-life the baptized may appeal, and by which he may be reminded of the solemn covenant by which he was originally made God's child.

But to revert to the ancient customs. Since it was necessary that a public renunciation should be made, and a public confession of faith on the part of every person, before the Sacrament of Baptism could take place; and since at the same time, as is clear from the preceding papers, it was the universal custom to baptize children even of the tenderest age, even infants—how then could both these customs be simultaneously maintained? For, of course, as it is obvious on the one hand that a fitness for baptism must be ascertained, so it is obvious, on the other hand, that an infant, absolutely unconscious, could never, in himself, manifest that fitness. Out of this difficulty another ancient custom of the Church arose; and one which, in the case of the Anabaptists, or Deniers of Infant Baptism, has proved a very great stumbling-block.

But let us consider it. It is, in the first place, beyond question, that the spiritual benefits of Baptism are personal; that the grace of the Sacrament is applied to the person baptized; how then, it is argued by the opponents of Infant Baptism, can

a spiritual blessing, said in one case to attach to a preliminary condition, be applied, or thought to apply, to another case where such preliminary condition cannot exist. The Church answers the question in this manner. ALMIGHTY GOD has frequently manifested His Will throughout Holy Scripture, that a personal benefit should be received, even where a necessary preliminary condition cannot be ascertained *personally*, but may be ascertained by *proxy*. Great blessings have often been bestowed, and covenants entered upon, between God and man, where the necessary requirements have been ascertained, by the voice of a person other than that of the very person receiving the blessing or entering upon the covenant. For instance, the great and primary covenant of circumcision, coupled with its attendant blessing of being enrolled thereby as one of the people of God, was, in the case of infants of eight days old—of necessity one of proxy. What was required of ALMIGHTY GOD in that covenant was received by Him in His Mercy on the faith of the parents, and not on any personally expressed faith of the child. So too, in the case of miracles, it was our LORD's general practice, if it were not implied by previous circumstances, to exact a confession of faith of those upon whom He worked a miraculous cure. It was either asked directly, or it was implied. But sometimes the miraculous cure was effected upon a subject which had not the power

of expressing the faith personally, in which case it was not unfrequently expressed by another, as may particularly be remarked in chapter ix. of S. Mark's Gospel: for a child is there described as brought before our LORD, and the parent supplicates in behalf of the child, and our LORD says, "If thou canst believe, it shall be done; all things are possible to him that believeth;" and straightway, the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, "LORD, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief;" and the miracle was wrought upon the child upon this expressed faith of the parent. The same thing is observable in the healing of the centurion's servant recorded in S. Matt. viii. The servant is absent, and is entirely unconscious of the prayer offered on his behalf by his master. The centurion says, "My servant lieth *at home* sick of the palsy." It was the faith expressed by the anxious master at a distance—"Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." It was this faith expressed by proxy, that drew forth the miracle of healing. And it was the same again with the nobleman pleading for his child, recorded in S. John iv. "The nobleman said, Come down ere my child die." "JESUS saith unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth." It was the faith of the father expressed on behalf of the child, that obtained the miraculous cure.

By a just analogy then, the casting out of the evil spirit of *nature*—the cure of the palsy of

nature—the imparting new life, and the entering into covenant with God—all may be done—where the renunciation, and the profession of the required conditions may be made on the part of the child by a spiritual Parent. And hence the Church's custom of God-parents or Sponsors—persons, who in the name of the child, reply to the requisitions made to candidates for Baptism—promising, and guaranteeing, and taking upon themselves the responsibility of teaching in after-life the faith and obedience which is so promised in infancy.

But we must not understand by this that the Sponsors or God-parents answer for the *future* holiness, or the *future* faith of the child; for, of course, they cannot see into that future; they only answer as at that time, introducing the child into the covenant of CHRIST, and undertaking to teach what they can, afterwards. It was an old dispute concerning the sponsors, whether they answered on the strength of their own faith, or for the children's faith. One of the Fathers (Tertullian) seemed to think that it was the faith of the sponsors that was promised, but it was not so, as we learn from others—it was the faith of the children; and so in our own Baptismal Service it is distinctly asked of the *child*, not of the sponsor, “Dost thou renounce?” “Dost thou believe?” “Wilt thou be baptised?” Of course, it is the child that is to be baptised, and not the sponsor. The child is asked—“Wilt

thou be baptised?" The sponsor answers, "I will." In the same way precisely as he takes upon himself to express the will of the child to be baptized, so in the other question he takes upon himself to express the will of the child to believe in JESUS CHRIST. In both cases the child is unconscious; but the answer of the proxy stands for the principal. Bishop Boniface, so long ago as in S. Augustine's time, proposed the difficulty, and asked, how it could be said with truth that a child believed, or renounced the Devil, or turned to God, who had no thought or apprehension of these things. "If any one should ask us concerning a child, whether he would prove chaste, or the contrary, when he became a man, we should, doubtless, in that case, answer, I know not; or, if the question was propounded, whether a child in his infancy thought good or evil, we should make the same answer, I know not. Since, therefore, no one would promise either for his future morals, or his present thoughts, how is it that when parents present their children as sponsors in Baptism, they answer and say, that the children do those things, which their age does not so much as think of, as, for instance, that they believe in God," &c.

To this query of a difficulty, S. Augustine answers thus:—"That the child is only said to believe, because he receives the sacrament of faith and conversion, which entitles him to the name of a believer. For the sacraments, because

of the resemblance between them and the things represented by them, do carry the name of the thing represented." And then he illustrates it by the other great sacrament, and says, "CHRIST was but *once* offered in Himself, and yet He is offered not only on the annual solemnity of the Passover, but *every day*, for the people; and no one tells a lie that says He is offered. As, therefore, the Sacrament of CHRIST'S Body after a certain manner is called His Body, and the Sacrament of His Blood is called His Blood, so the sacrament of Faith is Faith. And upon this account, when it is answered that an infant believes, who has not yet any knowledge or habit of faith, the meaning of the answer is, that he has faith because of the sacrament of faith; and is converted to God, because of the sacrament of conversion. For these answers appertain to the celebration of the sacrament."* The meaning of S. Augustin is simply this:—The infant is called a believer, and is said to promise faith, because he is in very deed placed *in the covenant of faith*. What he cannot do, because of his tender age, *i. e.* speak with his own mouth, the sponsors do for him; and thus being made God's child, as to what remains, he is to embrace the faith, and is bound by the pledge when he comes to understand it.

So much then for the first great principle of

* S. Augustin. Ep. 23, ad Bonifac.

the things required as the condition of Baptism, and the customs thereunto attached. When we hear them thus discussed, so early as the time of Tertullian (A.D. 200) and S. Augustin (A.D. 395), we cannot be told that they are mere modern inventions, or that they are peculiarities of the Church of Rome. No; they can be traced up very nearly to the Apostolic age; and we ought, in our humility, to rely upon them, however difficult in some respects they may appear, as simply taught us and practised without deviation by the Church throughout the world.

The ceremonies which I have just depicted represented the internal mind of the person baptized: they were taken as outward demonstrations of certain qualifications already existing within. But there was, in addition to these, another class, whose object was a warning and a teaching upon things not yet existing—a conveying of grace by symbolical representations. The ancient Church rejoiced very much in all such allegorical or figurative ways of teaching. She thought, very differently from our present practical, unpoetical, business-like way of doing things, that religion might do much work by appealing to the senses, stimulating the imagination and warming the heart. Under this head, we find a great variety of ancient ceremonies attending Holy Baptism.

1. And first, *Uction, or Anointing.* S. Cle-

ment of Rome (A.D. 96) tells us that those who were baptized were anointed with oil consecrated by prayer; and many of the Fathers either describe or allude to it. It would seem quite according to the language and customs of Holy Scripture, that anointing with oil should accompany acts of consecration or dedication to God's service. We know how fully this was the case in the Levitical law, and following it up in our LORD, we remember that He was, from His special dedication to God, called "THE CHRIST," or "The Anointed." Baptism in this light, as conferring the gift of the HOLY GHOST, is frequently called an anointing or unction; and the HOLY GHOST the Anointing SPIRIT. The hymn "Veni Creator" calls the HOLY GHOST by this title—

"Thou the Anointing SPIRIT art."

We see, therefore, how peculiarly significant this ceremony must have been. The Christian is said to be CHRIST's soldier. He is a wrestler—an athlete,—a contender in the battles of the Church against the devil. As the wrestlers or athletes were in the games anointed with oil for their battle, so the Christian. The unction of the SPIRIT prepares him for his contest.

2. Another ceremony was the signing with the sign of the Cross. This was a frequent ceremony before, during, and after Baptism, as well as at Confirmation. And it was done sometimes with oil, sometimes without; sometimes on the fore-

head, sometimes on the breast. The Christian needs hardly to be told the peculiar beauty of this. Opposed and maligned as the holy symbol of our faith has been by the Puritans in their opposition to the Church, praise be to God, the Church of England has adhered most faithfully and pertinaciously to its use. Other things, as the unction, and some others which we shall presently describe, she has given up, but the sign of the Cross she has never given up. Protestants are very strange about it even yet. They see the sign of the Cross in Baptism, and are obliged unwillingly to tolerate it, but they are unwilling to look upon it elsewhere. Alas! why should it not be to us all our familiar every-day sign—that by which we should salute each other daily, and remind ourselves, from time to time, of what we are. “It was usual,” Tertullian tells us, “for Christians to sign themselves upon the forehead in the commonest actions of their lives; at their going out and their coming in; at their going to the bath, or to their beds, or to meals, or whatever their employment called them to do.”* S. Cyprian, alluding to it, says—“Let us guard our foreheads, that we may preserve the sign of God without danger.”† As the slave of the heathen was marked or signed, so that he might be known whose servant he was: so the Christian was to have this mark, that he might be known both to

* De Coronâ Mil. cap. 3.

† Ep. 50, p. 125.

himself and the rest of the world, whose servant he was. In the Book of Revelation, the servants of God are known by the seal upon their foreheads. Probably it was the Cross.

3. The next peculiar ceremony in Baptism was the Consecration of the Water. Tertullian says —“ The waters are made the sacrament of sanctification by invocation of GOD; the SPIRIT immediately descends from heaven, and resting upon them, sanctifies them by Himself, and they, being so sanctified, imbibe the power of sanctifying.”* We retain this custom of consecrating the water, as well as that of signing by the Cross. The Priest invokes, or prays to the HOLY GHOST to sanctify the water: “ Sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin.” By this it becomes something more than it was by its original nature. It is compared by the ancients to the change wrought in the elements of the other great Sacrament. A *mystical* efficacy is imputed to it. As is the mystical Presence of CHRIST’S Body and CHRIST’S Blood in the Holy Eucharist, so the mystical Presence of the HOLY GHOST is in the consecrated water:—“ Sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin.”

But these that I have already mentioned are by no means all the ceremonies of the holy sacrament of Baptism. There are many others spoken of

* De Baptismo, c. iv.

by S. Augustin, S. Ambrose, and other Fathers.

4. For instance, immediately before the Baptism, the Priest used to take a small grain of salt and place it in the mouth of the person to be baptized. Salt, we know, is the element of purification. Our LORD mentions it, and says that Christians are the "salt of the earth;" (*S. Matt.* v. 13); because they are meant to purify the rest of the world; and He says, "Have salt within yourselves." (*S. Mark* ix. 50.) Salt is, moreover, the emblem of wisdom; as S. Paul says, (*Col.* iv. 6), "Let your speech be always seasoned with salt." Thus, then, the placing of a grain of salt in the mouth before Baptism was very significant. It represented that the child was thereby to receive the savour of life and wisdom—imparting to him a relish for those Divine precepts of purity and holiness to which he was about to pledge himself at the font.

5. There was, moreover, in the Ancient Church a special and direct Exorcism, or casting out of the Evil Spirit. By nature, the Evil Spirit had possession of the unbaptized—by Baptism he is exorcised. We still possess this in some degree, but rather in the form of a prayer than a direct exorcism; for in our present Service, immediately after the asking of the questions, we pray that the "Old Adam may be buried, and the new man raised up;"—that "all carnal affections may die"—"that the child about to be baptized may have

power and strength to have victory, and to *triumph against the devil,*" &c. &c. This is a faint shadow, but still a shadow, of the more direct exorcism of the ancient services, in which the Priest, in the Name of the Holy Trinity, commanded the Evil Spirit to depart out of the body of the child.

6. There was again another remarkable ceremony in pronouncing the word "Ephphatha," *i.e.* "Be opened." By nature, the organs of our senses are closed—we are dumb, and cannot speak forth words of holiness or of devotion;—we are deaf, and cannot hear words of instruction, or of God's praise. It needs the HOLY SPIRIT to open our closed senses. So it was that our Blessed LORD, coming to one that was deaf and dumb, touched his tongue and his ears with spittle, and said "Ephphatha." (*S. Mark vii. 33.*) This was adopted by the Ancient Church as one of the ceremonial signs of Baptism. The Priest would touch the ears and nostrils of the child in a similar manner, pronouncing the sacred word of CHRIST. It was a sign that, by the gift of the SPIRIT, a new sense was to be imparted. The knowledge of the truth of God, of His faith, and His doctrine, was now to pass through the renovated senses of the child clean and uninterrupted by the stain of nature.

7. Still further; after the anointing as before described, there was *a white garment* given to the

child. We often speak in figure, even to this day, of "sullyng our baptismal robe;"—it was derived from this ancient custom. The garment was *white*, to show innocency and purity. It was the garment of the Church, not the person's own garment, to show how, in Baptism, we derive our purity, not from ourselves, but from the HOLY SPIRIT through the Church. This white garment was worn by the newly-baptized for eight days, and then stored up in the Vestry of the Church. It was a token and record of what had been done—an evidence to be brought against the baptized whensoever he should decline from the purity which it betokened. In S. Gregory's order for administering Holy Baptism, the Priest, when he gave the white garment, was to use these words:—"Receive the white and immaculate garment, which thou mayest bring forth without spot before the tribunal of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, that thou mayest have eternal life."

8. Then again, it was an ancient custom to place a lighted taper in the hands of the child. As Christians are called, as before observed, "the salt of the earth," and therefore salt was placed in the mouth, so Christians are also called "the light of the world," (*S. Matt.* v. 14), and therefore a light was placed in the hand. Our LORD says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works." (*S. Matt.* v. 16.)

We find also in *S. Matt.* xxv. the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins. The wise took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. In our Service to this day, we always say to the grown-up person when he is baptized—"As for you, who have put on CHRIST, it is your part and duty, being made the children of God, and *of the light*, to walk answerably to your Christian calling, and as becometh the children of light." We must be ready to go forth to meet the Bridegroom. Our lamp must be in our hands—our light must shine so that He may see us, and we Him, and enter into His glory.

9. Then, once more, there was given to the newly-baptized, after all else was concluded, a *taste of milk and honey*. This was a sign of the new birth now acquired, and the life to be sustained after it. *S. Peter* says to Christians—exhorting them, as such, to remember their state, "As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word." *S. Clement of Alexandria* says—"As soon as we are born, we are nourished with milk, which is the nourishment of the LORD; and when we are born again, we are assured of the hope of rest, by the promise of Jerusalem which is above, where it is said to rain milk and honey." It was typical of the food of the new life. It was to represent in the milk the innocence and simplicity of the Christian life; and in the honey the sweetness of the Word of God, upon which

the Christian soul was ever to feed in meditation and in prayer, even as David said, "The fear of the LORD is clean, and endureth for ever. The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether; more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." (*Ps.* xix. 9.)

Such were the ancient customs with which, from the Apostles' times, more or less, the Church has thought good to clothe her holy sacrament of Baptism. One thing in all this we cannot but observe. How very important a feature in religion the early Christians must have thought Baptism to be. In proportion as we think any object important, we surround it with various devices of protection and safeguard, clothe it with ornaments, and multiply in its approach, outwarks of defence. So in Baptism. If the Church coming down from the Apostles had thought that holy sacrament but a thing of course—a mere rite of initiation to be performed as it might chance—she would not have taken all this care in the ritual and ceremonies attending it. But it was seen and felt from the teaching of the Apostles, and from the study of Holy Scripture, that the whole life of a Christian man must take its tone from the manner in which he should receive and imbibe the great first gift of the HOLY SPIRIT. It was no ordinary thing to be a Christian. They were no ordinary privileges

to be conferred ; consequently, they were no ordinary responsibilities to be undertaken. Every step in the process had its teaching and its meaning. The renunciation, profession, consecration of water, blessing of oil for anointing, the salt, the white garment, the Ephphatha, the light, the milk and honey—all were so many figurative lessons to show the world what Baptism concealed within it, and what Baptism intended its members to become. It is very remarkable to see, how in proportion as Sectarians have denuded the holy sacrament of ceremonial rites, its teaching has become lost, and its efficacy weakened. The Puritans, in the time of the Reformation, quarrelled with the Church because she would retain some few remembrances of the ancient Catholic usage. They would not, if they had obtained their will, have even left the sign of the Cross or the consecration of the water. Praise be to God, they did not prevail. We might as individuals, each according to his taste, have desired that our form of Baptism had been a little more rich in ritual signs ; but, as individuals, we must be content if our wishes are not fulfilled. Sufficient remain for much holy teaching—more than sufficient for the meagre ideas which, alas, too many even still possess of the doctrines of that Holy Sacrament.

If Holy Baptism be a *Sacrament*, it must not only be an outward rite or ceremonial observ-

ance, but it must also be a means of grace. And this is the point wherein the essence of the heresy of the Anabaptists is to be found. It is something, indeed, to look upon Baptism as a great ceremony of initiation, or entrance upon the membership of CHRIST'S Church—for so undoubtedly it is—but so to look upon it *only*, is to treat it in its lowest aspect. I have already shown that it was always used as a ceremony of initiation, both in the Jewish Law, and in the making proselytes from among the Gentiles; and in the case of S. John Baptist and his disciples; and it was also the case still more remarkably in our LORD Himself. For long before the institution of Baptism as a *Sacrament*, our LORD and His Apostles did baptize those who came for the profession of their faith, as any one may see by looking to the Gospel of *S. John* iv. 1: “When, therefore, the LORD knew how the Pharisees had heard that JESUS made and baptized more disciples than John, though JESUS Himself baptized not, but His disciples, He left Judæa and departed into Galilee.”

But the great and most important difference between the Baptism which our LORD and His disciples used during His life, and the Baptism which He appointed after His departure, lies in this very point, which is altogether unseen and discarded by the Anabaptists, and those who follow more or less in their spirit—namely, that it is a *means of grace*. All the baptisms before

our LORD's final departure in His ascension, as recorded in *S. Matthew* xxviii. 19, were mere ceremonies of initiation; but this latter Baptism stands out in this special manifestation—"Go ye, and teach all nations, in the Name of the FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST." "He that believeth, *and is baptized*, shall be saved."

It is very true, let me repeat, that even in the Catholic Church, Baptism is considered a way of entering into covenant with GOD—a way of becoming a member of the Church; and so, up to this point, the Anabaptists are right. But then the Church goes further—and in not going further, the heresy consists. The Church says in her Catechism—speaking of the Christian name—that it is given in Baptism, "*wherein a person is made a member of CHRIST, a child of GOD, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven;*" but then, she afterwards, in addition to this, affirms that inasmuch as Baptism is a Sacrament, it is not *only* an imparting of such membership, but that it is also an outward sign of an *inward grace*. In reality, a person could not be a member of CHRIST, and a child of GOD, and an inheritor of His Kingdom, without inward grace; and so the affirmation in the first instance is equivalent to that in the second; but it is repeated more decidedly and unequivocally afterwards, when it is defined as a Sacrament—"an outward and visible sign of an inward and spi-

ritual grace given unto us, ordained by CHRIST Himself, AS A MEANS whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof."

For a person then to say, as the Anabaptists do, that Baptism is merely a way of admission into the Church, and thereupon to defer the baptism of children until such time as they can make of themselves an outward profession of faith, is to do one of these things: it is either to say that such grace may be given to children as may save them, exclusive of Holy Baptism, and so to put aside its necessity as a means of grace altogether; or it is to say, that in the event of God's visitation of persons unbaptized by the hand of death before the time of adult life, they must of necessity be out of the pale of salvation. To such an alternative does the heresy of Anabaptism inevitably lead; whereas the Catholic faith, harmonizing with God's mercy and the Holy Scriptures, at once assures us, that with the idea of Baptism conferring in itself, as a Sacrament, the grace of the HOLY SPIRIT over and above the privilege of admission into the Church, absolutely, and in itself, saves every soul alive, which, as an infant, is sealed by its heavenly sign. "It is certain, by God's Word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved."*

* Rubric in the office of Baptism of Infants.

Let us consider then the opinions of the ancient Church on this subject; and this we shall very readily do, by considering two points—

I. The ancient names of Holy Baptism.

II. The scriptural types and descriptions of it.

1. In the Nicene Creed we assert our faith that there is “one Baptism for the remission of sins;” by which we mean, first, that Baptism is a Sacrament which can never be repeated, and therefore *Anabaptism*, or Baptism over again, must be a heresy; and, secondly, that such Baptism once administered is efficient, and that its object and purpose is remission of sins. In accordance with this, the ancient Church applied to Baptism the name of Indulgence. It was called “THE INDULGENCE.” The doctrine is, that every sin, either by birth as infants, or actual, as in grown-up persons, is, by the very act of Baptism, washed away and cancelled. When the water of that blessed Sacrament is applied, and the baptized person is placed within and under it, then all previous sins, of whatsoever sort they be, are remitted and forgiven. Just as in S. Paul’s case, after his conversion to the faith, Ananias said to him, “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.” Thus in the office for holy Baptism there runs throughout it the one great idea, that by it and through it, *as*

a means, is imparted forgiveness of sins and escape from God's wrath. "We call upon Thee for this infant, that he, coming to Thy Holy Baptism, may receive *remission of sins*." And again—"Dearly beloved, ye have brought this child here to be baptized; ye have prayed that our LORD JESUS CHRIST would vouchsafe to receive him, to *release him of his sins*." And in the consecration of the water it is said, "Sanctify this water to the mystical *washing away of sin*." Let therefore the ancient name of THE INDULGENCE, which means no more than forgiveness—let that ancient name keep safely within our hearts the Catholic doctrine, that in and by holy Baptism there is, of a certainty, "*Forgiveness of sins*."

2. The next name which the ancients used to apply to the Sacrament of Baptism was that of "THE REGENERATION." They had no idea but to apply the words of our Blessed LORD in *S. John*—"Except a man be *born again*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,"—to the birth of Baptism. Born the first time, by being taken from his mother's womb, he was born the second time by being taken out of the waters of the font. And so the font was called the "Water of Life"—the "Divine Fountain." Christians were called for this reason by the name of "fish," because they were born in water; and the birth they then received was called "The Spiritual Birth." Following up this idea, based upon S.

Paul's declaration, that our GOD and SAVIOUR has saved us, "not by works of righteousness, but by washing of regeneration;" and our LORD's most holy words, "Except a man be born of water and of the HOLY SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD"—the Church, in her office of Baptism, constantly speaks of the baptized as Regenerate:—"We call upon Thee for this infant, that he, coming to Thy Holy Baptism may receive remission of his sins by *spiritual regeneration*." And we say, "Give Thy Holy SPIRIT to this infant, that he may be *born again*." And when the Baptism is over, we say, "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is *regenerate*." And again, we say that we "yield unto GOD, our most merciful FATHER, our hearty thanks, that it hath pleased Him to *regenerate* the infant" so baptized. This birth of the SPIRIT, associated with the water, may indeed be wonderful and beyond our comprehension, but there is no more wonder in the second birth than in the first. Tertullian says, "Happy the Sacrament of Water, whereby being cleansed from the sins of our former blindness, we are made free unto eternal life." And then, discussing the hardness of men's hearts in rejecting this doctrine, he says—"O wretched unbelief! which deniest to GOD His own proper qualities—simplicity and power. What then? Is it not wonderful that death should be washed away by a mere bath? Yea: but if because it is wonderful, it be therefore not

believed, it ought on that account the rather to be believed. . . . Remembering this declaration, as one precluding further question, let us consider the mighty foolishness and impossibility that man should be reformed by water. . . . The waters being in a certain manner endued with power to heal by the intervention of the Angel, the spirit is washed in the water after a carnal manner, and the flesh cleansed in the same after a spiritual manner.”*

3. Another name of Baptism was this—“THE ILLUMINATION.” It was before said, that the heathen or unbaptized state was considered one of darkness; and in speaking of the customs of Baptism, I mentioned the lighted taper placed in the hands of the baptized. It signified the escape from the darkness of the snares of the devil, into the light of the glory of God. JESUS Himself says—“I am the Light of the world.” Those who follow Him, follow light. Light is knowledge. Those who are baptized into CHRIST are clear and distinct in faith. Light is purifying. Those who are baptized into CHRIST purge and cleanse away all that is corrupt and foul, as the fire cleanseth while it burneth. Light is hardening, as the burning sun hardeneth clay. Those who are baptized into CHRIST are hardened and made good soldiers of battle—“enduring hardness.” Light is softening,

* Tertullian, De Baptism. II.

as the sun melteth the wax. Those who are baptized into CHRIST lose all the hardness of heart with which nature encases them, and become gentle and loving. Even so Baptism, which worketh by its graces in all these several ways, is "*The Illumination*," and Christians were "*The Illuminated*." Baptism enlighteneth all who come unto it, even as CHRIST enlighteneth the world; and in this sense it is that S. Paul says—"God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of JESUS CHRIST." (2 Cor. vi. 6.)

4. Another name given to it was "*THE UNCTION*." This name, as is evident, agrees with the custom of anointing with oil, and refers directly to the idea of the anointing with the HOLY Spirit. Anointing was a ceremony of royalty and of priesthood. Kings and Priests were specially appointed, and given to God by the anointing of oil, and of this we read fully in the Levitical Law. The very Name of our Blessed LORD in the word CHRIST bears this evidence. It is as one set apart and consecrated to God—"the Anointed One." Just, then, as He was anointed materially on more than one occasion, and spiritually in the descent of the HOLY GHOST, when the words were said, "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased," so the disciple and follower of the CHRIST must also needs be anointed; anointed without by the oil, as a sign of the anointing

within by the SPIRIT. S. Gregory Nazianzen says, that Baptism had the name of Unction, because it was a sacred and a royal thing, whence every man was in some sense made a King and Priest to God. And this explains S. John's allusion in the book of *Revelation*, where he says, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His Own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto GOD and the FATHER;" and S. Peter in like manner, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to GOD by JESUS CHRIST." (1 *S. Peter* ii. 5.) And for this reason, S. Jerome calls Baptism "the Layman's Priesthood." It was that by which he was lifted up out of his common and ordinary nature, and made a consecrated and anointed person.

5. The fifth name which the ancients gave to Holy Baptism was "SALVATION." S. Augustin tells us that the African Christians called the two great Sacraments by the name respectively of "Salvation" and "Life." Baptism was "Salvation;" because if a man required to be delivered from spiritual danger, that was the way in which he was to be so: and the Holy Eucharist was "Life;" because when a man was once saved, he must needs *continue* safe; and if once alive *continue* life; and he could only do that by the Eucharist. S. Gregory Nazianzen describes a

person who was desirous of delaying his Baptism, speaking thus :—“ I stay only for my father, or mother, or brother, or wife, or children, or friends, or some near relations, and then I will be *saved* ;” *—meaning, I will be baptized. And this exactly tallies with Holy Scripture, as in the 1st Epistle of *S. Peter*, iii. 21, “ The like figure whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us.” And all along the Scripture language runs in the same spirit, coupling Salvation with Baptism and Baptism with Salvation ; as for instance in the case of the jailor at Philippi. He asked with fearful earnestness, “ Sirs, what must I do *to be saved* ! And they said, Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST and thou shalt be saved.” But *how* believe ? What was to be done along with that belief ? “ He took them the same hour of the night, and was *baptized*, he and all his straightway.” (*Acts* xvi. 30.) And as though there could be no doubt about the matter, our Blessed LORD Himself, when He institutes Baptism as His Own most special Sacrament, uses these very words : “ Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth *and is baptized* shall be saved.” Upon this the Apostles did go forth, as we know, and whenever we hear of an increase in the Church, of its propagation or success, such propagation or success

* Orat. xl. De Baptismo.

is invariably coupled both in numbers and in individual cases with baptismal salvation; as in the second chapter of the *Acts*: "Then they that gladly received his words *were baptized*, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." "The LORD added to the Church daily such as should be *saved*." They were *baptized* who were received into the Church, and those who were received into the Church were *saved*. The two ideas run parallel together. Hence the Church is justified in asserting and believing as she does in the Rubric of the office of Baptism before quoted: "It is certain, by GOD'S Word, that children which are baptized dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly *saved*."

6. Another name was "THE SEAL." Baptism is a covenant. All covenants are made sure by a seal. Baptism is a consigning of property; for whereas we are not our own, but bought with a price, namely, His precious Blood, He marks us and seals us for His own. To the Jews, Circumcision was the seal of their covenant. To us, as Christians, Baptism is the seal. S. Paul says that "Abraham received the sign of Circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised;" and it is said again in 2 *Tim.* ii. 19—"The foundation of GOD standeth sure, having this *seal*, the LORD knoweth them that are His;" and we know how,

in the magnificent language of the Book of *Revelation*, the servants of GOD are described as *sealed* with GOD'S mark upon their foreheads, signifying their salvation and redemption, as contra-distinguished from those who were to be destroyed. See *Rev.* vii. 3. Following this scriptural idea, the Church delighted to call Baptism "The Seal of the LORD." It is said by S. Clement of Alexandria,* that S. John, after converting a certain young man, gave him to the Bishop to be instructed or catechized, until he should receive the phylactery, or preservative against sin—namely, *the seal* of the LORD—meaning Baptism; and Hermas Pastor, in like manner, speaking of some that were baptized, and gone into heaven, said, "They that are now dead, are sealed with the seal of the SON of GOD, and are entered into His Kingdom. For before a man receives the Name of the SON of GOD, he is consigned over to death; but when he receives that seal, he is forced from death, and consigned over to life. Now that seal is water—into which men descend bound over to death, but rise up out of it marked or sealed unto life."† How full of teaching all this is! We give ourselves to GOD. He takes us, He marks us for His own. He gives, we receive. He places the impression on us, makes us known as conspicuously His.

* Eusebius, lib. iii. c. 23.

† Hermas Pastor, lib. iv., quoted by Bingham.

And yet it is not any mere outward mark only, but an inward one also. The outward mark is the water that passes over us : we come out and it externally leaves no mark at all. The sign of the Cross is stamped upon us, but outwardly its mark is evanescent—it perishes, and is not seen. But then, as the effect of this sealing is not so *outwardly* visible, by reason of the perishing and fugitive nature of the water ; so the effect *inwardly* is to come out with broad lines of distinction, and separate the Christian from that world, which is something altogether alienate and opposed to God. The seal or mark so made is in the interior character—the life of continued vigilance, self-denial, and love—the life of perpetual warfare with the flesh—the life of never-ceasing holiness and purity—the life of humble, gentle, peaceful devotion, by prayers, fastings, and almsgiving. This life which is, or ought to be, the life of the baptized, God's seal—the gift of the SPIRIT, the gift of grace, first coming down from heaven and resting on the water, and then from the water entering into the heart and soul of man. By this life he is known to be of God—*i. e.* a life of holiness, of obedience, and of faith ; by this is the test of his love, the proof of his calling, and the certainty of his acceptance with God.

Such are the names with which the ancient Christians delighted to honour and to dignify the holy Sacrament of Baptism. The name signifies

the thing. Every one of these names teaches a doctrine, and all combined together manifest the essence of the Sacrament to be not the self-willed or self-chosen act of man, but the freely imparted gift of God. It is not a matter of choice or profession arising on man's part to be saved or not to be saved, to believe or not to believe, to be holy or not to be holy, but the free gift of God; and though the HOLY SPIRIT works in ten thousand ways of influence of which we ourselves are utterly unconscious—still for the commencement and channel of these ways, for the development and perfection of these ways, holy Baptism is God's appointed instrument, appointed by His Blessed SON, JESUS CHRIST. We cannot be saved, unless we be baptized. We cannot have any knowledge of God, except we be baptized. We cannot be regenerate, except we be baptized. We cannot be anointed with the SPIRIT, unless we be baptized. We cannot receive forgiveness of sins, unless we be baptized. We cannot be sealed with the mark of God's people, unless we be baptized. In short, none of the gifts and graces of redemption can possibly belong to us, unless we place ourselves, or as children be placed by others, in the waters of holy Baptism. It is all in all, and without it there is nothing. Compare the notion of the Anabaptists with the notion of the Church. The one a mere stiff cold formalism of membership, a voluntary rationalistic thing of man's own choice; the other, the descending grace of

the SPIRIT of GOD, free and abundant; the one limiting the power of GOD, and denying that He can, as He has appointed and said that He can, cause a man to be born a second time, from above, of His sole will and appointment; the other acknowledging in humble faith that all things are possible with GOD, and that as the wind bloweth where it listeth, and we know not whence it cometh and whither it goeth; even so may it be with him that is born of the SPIRIT. "Great indeed," saith S. Cyril, "is the Baptism that is offered you. It is a ransom to captives, the remission of offences, the death of sin, the regeneration of the soul, the garment of light, the holy seal indissoluble, the chariot of heaven, the luxury of paradise, the procuring of the kingdom, the gift of adoption. But a serpent is by the wayside watching the passengers—beware lest he bite thee with unbelief. He sees so many receiving salvation, and seeks to devour some of them. Thou art going to the FATHER of Spirits, but thou art going past that serpent. How then must thou pass him? Have thy 'feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,' that even if he bite, he may not hurt thee."*

It is wonderful how Sectarians cramp and confine GOD's Holy Word—what a narrow and con-

* S. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catech. sect. i.

tracted view they take of that vast scene of mercy and love, which appears so plain and so beautiful to the eyes of the Church. In no one doctrine is this so manifest as in that of Holy Baptism. The Anabaptists, and those who in various shades and degrees follow in their heresy, have but one idea of that holy rite;—namely, that it is an external and formal enrolment of the membership of a Christian. They make it the sign of a covenant, but deny its power to confer grace; and this they do, because they are not capable of looking along the extended line of teaching which the Bible opens to the faithful. No doctrine can be judged by a reference to one or more isolated passages taken up by individual fancies, or illustrated by the practice of a party, but it must depend for its fulness and its meaning on a large and generous grasp of the whole spirit of Revelation. And this spirit can alone be set forth by the Church.

In illustration of this, we have just considered the ancient names of Holy Baptism, because the name illustrates the thing. Let us now pursue this subject by examining the scriptural types and descriptions of it.

It is very remarkable to see how the Holy Scriptures, even from Genesis to Revelation, are full of allusions, shadows, and illustrations of that which was to be developed and explained in full only by our LORD. “In how great favour,” saith Tertullian, “both with GOD and His CHRIST

is water, for the institution of Baptism. Everywhere CHRIST appeareth with water. He Himself is baptized with water. The first beginning of His Power when called to the marriage is in consecrating water. When He uttered His discourse He invited the thirsty to the everlasting water. When He teacheth of charity, He commendeth among its works the cup of water given to His poor. He recruiteth His weary Body with water. He walketh to His disciples on the water. He willeth often to cross the water. And the testimony of water endureth even to His Passion, for when He is given over to the Cross, water cometh in—witness Pilate's washing his hands ; and when He is wounded, water bursteth forth from His Side—witness the soldier's spear.”*

These things, however, relate more to our LORD'S OWN LIFE. We must begin in the same idea even from the beginning, and trace downwards as we go on, the types of the sacrament of water. And,

1. *The Creation.* “ In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth ; and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” There was, as we see here, a “ *deep*,” that is, water—all else was confusion and chaos ; all else was but a turbid,

* De Baptism. c. ix.

indigested, unorganised mass, just as the human soul is, until God of His infinite mercy visits it. But it is said—"The SPIRIT of GOD moved upon the face of the waters." This being done, that is, the water set in motion by the SPIRIT of GOD, there came light, and shape, and order; and the earth took its place, and the firmament became defined both above and below, and the stars and other luminous bodies were brought into existence, and the various animal creation, both beasts and fish, and lastly man. But it was out of *water*, as the original forming power, and that water moved by the SPIRIT of GOD, that the birth of all things took its place. Water was, as it were, the womb of the Creation. Water was the originating channel of its life. Out of water came life and breath, and all things. Thus Tertullian says—"Water was, as the dwelling-place of the HOLY SPIRIT, more favoured than the other elements. For all was darkness, shapeless, undecked with stars; a gloomy abyss—an unprepared earth—an unformed sky; water alone, as an ever-perfect matter, joyous, simple, pure in itself,—yielded itself as an appropriate chariot to God. By this very position was it foreshown that the SPIRIT of GOD, Which from the beginning was borne above the waters, could abide upon those of *the baptized*."* And so S. Jerome says, "The

* De Bapt. c. iii. iv.

waste world visited neither by the brightness of the sun, nor the pale light of the moon, nor gleaming of stars, was a formless and viewless matter—vast abysses covered with fearful darkness. The SPIRIT of GOD was seated and borne over the waters, guiding and controlling them, and with *a likeness to Baptism*, in its birth gave light to the world.”* In the old Latin Liturgy there was a prayer exactly corresponding and setting forth the waters of the Creation as typical of the waters of Baptism:—“O GOD, Whose HOLY SPIRIT was in the very rudiments of the world borne above the waters, that the nature of water might even then receive the power of sanctifying.” Thus we see how very early, yea, even from the beginning, there was a foreshadowing of the grace and creating power of Baptism.

2. *The Flood.* In this there are two parts of a type, both equally of signification, though in a different manner. First, the ark; secondly, the water. The ark, as containing that portion of the human race and of the other animals which God in His mercy designed to save, represents the Church selecting and drawing together on the surface of the water those whom God would save from the destruction of the world. The ark, being a vessel or ship, is, of course, a building or

* Jerome, ad. Oc., Ep. 69.

habitation of use only in or upon the water : without the water, the ark would have been useless. Just so the Church without Baptism would have been useless. Its very purpose of existence at all is manifested only by the waters of the flood. To the ark all must fly who would be saved from that flood. To the Church all must fly who would be saved from the penalty of their sins. But its means of saving is by water.

Then secondly, the water itself must be considered with reference to the world. The world was lost in sin and wickedness. "The end of all flesh was come before God. The whole earth was corrupt. All flesh had corrupted his way before God. It repented the LORD that He had made man ; and the LORD said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created.'" And He did so ; saving only a few, that is, eight souls. But the earth having been covered by the waters of the flood for forty days, afterwards emerged, cleansed and purified of the sins of those who had dwelt therein. It had been *baptized*—it had been placed under the water, and the water by its purifying efficacy had restored it to its place. It received a new life, and new inhabitants came to dwell upon its surface ; and new ways and a better spirit breathed over its regenerated life. It was "*saved by water.*" And this is the peculiar meaning and beauty of the expression of the Collect used in the Baptismal Service—"Almighty and Everlasting God, Who of Thy great mercy didst

save Noah and his family in the ark from perishing, by water." It is not only that Noah and his family were saved from perishing, but that they were saved from so perishing by *the means of water*—"saved by water." Water was the gracious and saving element, on which floating, during the descent of the flood, they were enabled to live again upon the surface of the regenerated earth. It is very singular how our LORD couples the idea of another Baptism of the world in its final destruction at the great day, with a similar idea of another Regeneration. In one place He speaks of this destruction as a baptism of fire; and in another, He speaks of His chosen as entering with Himself into a Regeneration:—"And JESUS said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me *in the Regeneration*, when the SON of MAN shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (*S. Matt.* xix. 28.) There seem then two Baptisms of the earth, and two Regenerations,—one in the flood by water, and then its Regeneration, and its re-peopling by the descendants of Noah; and the other, at the great day by fire; and then its regeneration, when there shall be, as S. John says, "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

We learn then clearly and without doubt, by this analogy, the doctrine that Baptism regenerates—that old sins are buried in the water, and

new life created; that what is foul and impious is cleansed and purged away, and a new life sanctified and blessed of God. Just as in the flood, so in Baptism; there is destruction and there is salvation simultaneously—destruction of evil, salvation of life; a death unto sin, new birth unto righteousness; Satan's kingdom destroyed, God's kingdom renewed. And so Holy Scripture, and the Church following the same by the interpretation of the fathers, ever teaches. S. Peter says (i. 3)—“When once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us.” And S. Ambrose says, “What is the deluge but that wherein the righteous is preserved for a stock of righteousness, and sin dies. Therefore, the LORD, when He saw the offences of men multiply, preserved only the righteous man with his offspring, and bade the waters go forth above the mountains; and therefore in that deluge all the corruption of flesh perished—the stock and pattern of the righteous man alone remained. *Is not the deluge the same as Baptism; whereby all sins are washed away, and the righteous mind and grace alone are brought back to life?*”*

3. *Circumcision.* As in Noah, the righteous

* De Sacr. lib. ii. c. 1.

man *before* the flood, so in Abraham, the next and most conspicuously righteous *after* the flood, we have again a type of Baptism. The waters of the creation, and the waters of the flood, represent in their typical character, a setting in order and a cleansing. Circumcision has a different bearing, but still it is a type. Its bearing is in regard of cutting off and renouncing. One of the great and essential features of Baptism, as has been oftentimes said, is the "Renunciation." "We renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of the world, and the sinful lusts of the flesh." To represent this very same renunciation to the Jewish people, it pleased ALMIGHTY GOD to institute a peculiar rite, so full of signification that no one could possibly mistake it. To be marked with the mark of circumcision, was the only outward sign by which the people of GOD could be known; and by this mark it was absolutely essential that they should be marked, for salvation. Its typical character, as referring to Baptism, is plainly taught us by S. Paul, when he alludes to "the circumcision made without hands" (*Col. ii. 11*). And its meaning as representing the abnegation of every fleshly lust and sin is taught us by S. Chrysostom, when he says—"Circumcision is no longer with the knife, but in CHRIST Himself. For not as before doth the hand effect this circumcision, but the SPIRIT. It circumciseth not a part, but the whole man. The one is a body,

the other also is a body ; but the one is circumcised in the flesh, the other spiritually. It is not then with you as with the Jews. For ye have not stripped off the flesh, but sins. When and how ? *In Baptism.*”*

4. *The Red Sea.* Next after the covenant with Abraham, comes the covenant with Moses ; and in the working on towards that covenant is described in a long narrative the wonders of God in the delivery of His people out of the House of Bondage. From the House of Bondage, which is Egypt, the Israelites pass on to the Land of Promise, which is Canaan. During the passage they are pressed hard by their enemies, the hosts of Pharaoh, and come to the Red Sea. The sea opens to them of its own accord by God’s almighty power, they pass through, Pharaoh and his host also pass through, but the waters of the sea close in upon the hosts of Pharaoh, while the Israelites arrive in safety on the opposite shore. This Red Sea, so passed by the Israelites in safety, is a type of Baptism. So says S. Paul in 1 *Cor.* x. :—
 “ Moreover, brethren, I would not have you ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all *baptized* unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.”
 And the Church follows up S. Paul by saying in

* S. Chrysostom in 1 *Cor.* v. 1.

one of the prayers of the Baptismal office—"And also didst safely lead the children of Israel, Thy people, through the Red Sea." But how is this a type? Just as in the flood there was a simultaneous destruction and salvation, so in this. The destruction affected the hosts of Pharaoh; the salvation, the Israelites. The means by which both were effected was *water*. It was water that destroyed the hosts of Pharaoh, which represent the devil and his angels; it was water which saved, by that very destruction, the children of Israel, God's people. It is water, which in Baptism destroys the enemies of the soul—namely, the devil, sin, the world, and the flesh; but it is by that very destruction that the water saves and preserves the soul, and brings it in safety to the inheritance of the kingdom of God. The fathers are full of this; as, for instance, Tertullian, who says thus:—"As soon as the people marching out of Egypt, by passing through the water escape the might of the king of Egypt, the water destroyed the king himself with all his hosts. *What more manifest figure of the Sacrament of Baptism?*"* And so S. Cyprian:—"The passage of the people through the sea signified in type nothing else than the passage of the faithful *through Baptism*, as the Apostle testifieth; the Egyptians pursuing, nothing else than the multitude of past offences. Behold, how plain the

* De Bapt. c. ix.

mystery! The Egyptians press on, the sins follow hard, but only to the water. Why fearest thou then who hast not come, to come to the Baptism of CHRIST, and to pass through the Red Sea?" *

5. *The Levitical Washings.* Almost every man, as well as thing, before used for a holy purpose was cleansed, by the law of Moses, in water; this cleansing, not an ordinary matter, as for profane cleanliness, but evidently in a formal and typical matter for a spiritual signification. Aaron and his sons are directed, as a matter of such importance, to wash before entering the Tabernacle, that they are commanded to do it, "*that they die not.*" (See *Exod.* xxx.) "Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his feet also of brass, to wash withal; and thou shalt put it between the Tabernacle of the congregation and the Altar, and thou shalt put water therein, for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat. When they go into the Tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water *that they die not.*" That they die not! This must mean something more than a mere outward ceremony. Yes. The laver of brass standing between the congregation and the Altar would signify the passage through Baptism up to the

* Ep. 76, ad Magn.

privileges of the Atonement. And so with all the rest. Could all these washings and sprinklings so minutely described and insisted upon as *a matter of salvation*, refer only to the ordinances of that temporary covenant of Moses and the Law? Surely not. They were the beginnings and shadows of that ulterior system, by which, water charged and blessed by the command of JESUS CHRIST, became the channel of salvation to the lost world. S. Augustine says distinctly—“Whoso is rightly washed by the Sacrament of Baptism, which was figured by the water sprinkled, is cleansed spiritually, though invisibly, both in body and soul.”* And S. Paul alludes to this when discussing the whole figurative character of the Levitical Priesthood and the Levitical Law; he says that it “stood only in meats and drinks, and in *divers washings* and carnal ordinances imposed on them *until the time of reformation*.” It was all a figure, a foreshadowing, a school-master to teach and prepare the world for the greater privileges, as well as the greater responsibilities, of the washing of Regeneration in the laver of Baptism.

Such then are the great types of the Old Testament, preparing the way for the Baptism of the HOLY GHOST. In the New Testament we cannot

* In Numb. § 11.

exactly say that there are *types*, but there are two great illustrations and emblematic teachings of Baptism, and those derived from our Blessed LORD Himself. The first is in the beginning of His prophetic office, when coming to the river Jordan, He Himself was baptized, though sinless and needing it not. The second is in the termination of His Life, when nailed upon the Cross, there came forth out of His precious Side both water and blood. To both of these events the Church appeals, when in one of the prayers at the office of Baptism, she says—"By the Baptism of Thy well-beloved Son JESUS CHRIST, in the river Jordan, Thou didst sanctify the element of water to the mystical washing away of sin;" and in another (the prayer of Consecration), she says—"Almighty and Everlasting God, Whose most dearly beloved Son, JESUS CHRIST, for the forgiveness of our sins, did shed out of His most precious Side both water and blood."

6. Now the first of these, our LORD'S Own Baptism, is certainly one of the greatest mysteries of His most mysterious life; for why was it necessary, we might say, that He Himself being GOD, should condescend to be baptized by man, the Sinless by the sinner, the CREATOR by the creature? Why was it that He Who needed no washing, yet should descend into the waters of a river, and then so doing, should receive of the FATHER glory and praise:—"This is My Beloved

SON, in Whom I am well pleased." It is said that it was done "to fulfil all righteousness." But what was this righteousness? It was evidently "to sanctify the element of water," and make it for ever after the channel of cleansing to man. It was not the water that cleansed our LORD, but our LORD the water. It was not that His sins should be washed out, Who never had a spot of sin, but that His blessing and consecrating water as an outward sign and channel of His grace, (the SPIRIT at that moment descending and testifying to the fact by the visible shape of a dove,) might ever after make it a Sacrament of His Church. So S. Ambrose says—"The LORD was baptized, not seeking to be cleansed Himself, but to cleanse the water; so that the water being washed by the Flesh of CHRIST, which knew no sin, men might have the privilege of washing therein. And therefore doth he who cometh to the laver of CHRIST, put away all sin."* What makes Baptism then so peculiarly mysterious, so full of hidden teaching, so awful and yet so beautiful, is simply this, that Our Blessed LORD took part in it in His Own Person—"He sanctified the element of water."

7. The other event is that most wonderful issue out of His most precious Side at the very moment of His Death, of *water and blood*. This seems to

* S. Ambrose, Exp. Ev. sec. Lucam. lib. xi. § 83.

set before us a junction of the two great sacraments in one view, both depending on His most precious Body. So Tertullian says—"Two Baptisms He put forth from the wound of His pierced Side, in order that they who believed in His Blood should be washed with water, and that they who were washed with water might drink of His Blood."* The water sets forth the first Sacrament, by which alone the human soul is born again of the SPIRIT. The blood sets forth the second Sacrament, by drinking of which alone, life from time to time is continued. So S. John seems to mean when he couples the water and the blood together with the SPIRIT, and says these three bear witness of the truth. "This is He that came by water and blood, even JESUS CHRIST; not by water only, but by water and blood." . . . "And there are three that bear witness on earth, the SPIRIT, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one." (1 *S. John* v. 6.)

In the one Sacrament His Presence is veiled under the form of blood, in the other under the form of water. In the one it is the SPIRIT which internally nourishes, while the external form is the blood that issued from His precious Side; in the other, it is the SPIRIT equally nourishing, while the external is the water which issued from His Side, in a parallel life-giving stream. Thus

* De Pudicitia, c. xxii.

Holy Baptism receives its very highest line of teaching. It is made to depend on CHRIST'S OWN Person, to be of Him, to be His. It is made a Sacrament greater than others, because it depends on His Own very Body, just as the Holy Eucharist—no otherwise and no less. And thus it is that these two Sacraments agreeing together, teach the same most solemn doctrine. In the Passion and suffering of our LORD there is the blood which we drink, imparting to us the fruits of His Atonement—but yet not without water—that is, not without cleansing and sanctification. While again, in the Passion and suffering of our LORD there is the water in which we are cleansed and sanctified, but yet not without the faith of the Atonement wrought for us by His precious Blood. The teaching is, that neither sanctification without faith, nor faith without sanctification, is of any avail, nor are both together without the third, which is the SPIRIT of GOD—for all the Three are One. No wonder then that in the Litany, when we make our most earnest supplications to GOD, and we appeal to Him by the great acts of His mercy, His Incarnation, His Birth, His Passion, His Cross, His Resurrection, we also appeal to Him by this—“By Thy Baptism.”

Who can say anything after this? How all these undoubted facts elevate and set forth Holy Baptism in a way which no one, unless taught by the Church, could ever have imagined. It is not, as I said, a mere text here or a passage there,

but it is the spirit of the whole. From the creation to the advent of our LORD in human flesh, and from the advent of our LORD in human flesh until the last moment of His dwelling on the earth, that last moment, when ascending on high He led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, and said, "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them."—Yes, all along it is the same. It is One Voice continued throughout, which cries aloud and without a doubt—"Except a man be born of water and of SPIRIT, He cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

A few pages back, I gave a short historical sketch of the Anabaptists, their rise and progress, and the peculiar tenets by which they were at first distinguished. Among many other peculiarities, was that of fancying themselves under a special inspiration of the HOLY GHOST. This idea seems inseparable from all the sectarians who have departed from the Catholic faith on the subject of Baptism. In proportion as they break the sacramental bond of the Water and the SPIRIT, so do they run wild, in some way or other, on the subject of personal inspiration. Wanting it in Baptism, they must have it in some other shape, and the consequence is as ludicrous as it is deplorable. The Anabaptists, in their origin, held that the HOLY SPIRIT descended upon the souls of chosen believers, in the same manner as upon the Apostles at the time of Pentecost; that dreams,

rageous reprobates, were, totally irrespective of Baptism, to be "born again," and their salvation secure in an internal fancy of their own, that the HOLY SPIRIT was theirs of necessity. Can anything be more awful, at the same time that it is in reality ridiculous?

It seems, then, that the denial of spiritual grace in Baptism only produces outrageous assumptions of spiritual grace in some other shape. It is of necessity that the Christian should be "born of the SPIRIT." Those who cannot allow that this birth takes place in Baptism, are driven to expedients of their own, and leaving the Church fall into absurdity.

While, however, on one side we might be ready enough to allow that such extreme cases as those of the Anabaptists, or of the Ranters, cannot bear the light, we still might be unwilling to concede the full doctrine of the Church in the spiritual regeneration of the baptized. If we speak of "Baptismal regeneration"—if we hold forth in the language of the Church the idea that every child baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity is of necessity thereby and therein a partaker of the HOLY SPIRIT, and is immediately and directly in a state of salvation—how are we met? It is called "an invention of the devil," "a lie," "a Popish figment," "a soul-destroying heresy." And on what ground? On the ground that so many thousands who are baptized never manifest any fruits of the Spirit, but on the contrary, by

leading gross lives of sensuality and vice, are actually in daily hostile opposition to the SPIRIT. And how can it possibly be, say they, that children of the SPIRIT—those “born of the SPIRIT”—those who are sanctified by the grace of GOD, (as is taught by the Church that baptized persons of necessity are)—can thus be leading lives of sin? “By their fruits shall ye know them.” The fruits of sin in the baptized manifest that baptismal regeneration is a falsehood. Read the following extract from a writer who gives his name, and that name, alas, betraying that he is a Priest of the Church of England.

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION,

SATAN'S SECOND LIE.

An extract from a Letter by the Rev. Octavius Piers, Vicar of Preston, Dorset.

When GOD first made man, He formed him upright, in His Own image, and placed him in the garden of Eden, providing him with everything that was needful for him—everything that was pleasant to the sight and good for food, and commanded him, saying, “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” Such was the *command* of GOD, and such His *threat*. Adam believed the word, and being upright in himself, had no desire either to transgress the Divine command, or to risk the penalty. But Satan envied him his position, and would fain mar the fair work of GOD. And how did he accomplish his purpose? By a LIE! He said unto the woman, “YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE: for GOD doth know that in the

day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." Thus Satan, by *one lie*, marred the work of Creation; and now, by *ANOTHER LIE*, he would fain mar the work of Redemption, and bind men in the chains of darkness for ever!

JESUS, the eternal SON of GOD, beholding our lost condition, came down from heaven on the wings of love, to restore us to that image and favour of GOD which we had lost. He died, that we might live. But what said He to man? "*Ye must be born again.*" (John iii. 7.) "*Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" (S. Matt. xviii. 3.) Such was the language of the SAVIOUR. But what saith Satan? Does he say, "*Ye must not be born again?*" O, no! He is too subtle to attempt to deceive mankind a *second time* by an open and barefaced lie. He no longer appears among us in the form of a serpent; he now assumes the character of an angel of light. He quotes the very words of Scripture—"Ye must be born again. Ye are all by nature born in sin, and children of wrath, therefore, *Ye must be born again.*" Thus, by speaking the *truth*, he gains our confidence, we come to him for instruction, we become alarmed at his words, we are ready to cry out, "*What must we do to be saved?*" Then the subtle deceiver turns round and says, "*Oh, be not alarmed; it is true your state by nature is most sad, but you have nothing to fear. Ye are all in a state of grace—ye are all Christians—ye have already undergone that great change—ye have all been regenerated at your Baptism, though ye are wholly unconscious of it yourselves—ye were then made members of CHRIST, children of GOD, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven; therefore listen no longer to the enthusiasts who would disturb your peace by telling you that you need any*

further change! I, your wisest, your best friend, tell you it is *false*." Thus Satan, by this SECOND LIE, binds men in the chains of darkness, quiets their consciences, and leads them captive at his will, crying *Peace, peace*,—till, in the very gulf of hell, their eyes are opened, when it is too late, to see their *error*. Oh, that God, in His infinite mercy, may open the eyes of all the *unconverted* who may read this tract, to see the truth of what I have herein written; that so ye may be led to JESUS, as little children, for the *pardon* of your sins and the CONVERSION of your souls; for without that *great*, that *vital* change—a change as *manifest* as that the sun shines at noon-day—whatever all the *prophets* on earth, or all the *devils* in hell may say to the contrary—“*ye shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven, for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it!*”

This is just a specimen of the perverted way in which the Sacrament of Baptism is destroyed by those who look at it without consideration. How it is possible that such awful words should be used by one professing to minister at the font of the Church of England it is difficult to conceive. But so it is. We must deal with it as we find it; but we must at the same time endeavour to ascertain the source of these mistakes and rectify them. There must be an answer to such strange perversions of truth. For the good of those who still adhere to the Catholic faith, we must set forth this matter in its integrity, neither imagining that the outpouring of the SPIRIT is of necessity at the present day to be manifested by impulsive personal demonstrations; nor, on the other hand, blind to the difficulties which beset the question in the apparent contradiction of

terms involved in a child of God, baptized, becoming a man of unholiness and sin.

I should say, then, that there are three main doctrines in the gift of God's Holy Spirit to man. The first is Conversion, the second is Regeneration, the third is Renovation. That which is generally called Sanctification is wrapped up and contained in the two latter. The only one of these three gifts strictly and peculiarly applicable to Baptism is Regeneration. The former, namely, Conversion, may come either before or after Baptism, and may be repeated; whereas Regeneration can only come in Baptism, and can never be repeated. The latter, namely Renovation, as the term imports, (*renewing*,) can only be applied after a lapse from previous holiness, and is rather conveyed under the idea of Restoration. It may either, therefore, be actually at Baptism, and at the same time with Regeneration (and if we look upon the baptized person as born again, and so renewed from a state of original sin); or it may be applied at times subsequent to Baptism, when a man has fallen away from his baptismal purity, and is restored by a gift of the Spirit upon Repentance. Thus, *Conversion* may be twofold—either, 1, prior to Baptism, or 2, subsequent to Baptism; while *Renovation* may be also twofold—either, 1, at Baptism, or 2, subsequent to Baptism. Whereas Regeneration is that special gift which can neither come prior nor subsequent, but only once, and that once only at

the very time of Baptism. Herein lies the difference between Regeneration and every other gift of the HOLY GHOST.

That Conversion may be prior to Baptism is very plain, from the fact that in the Baptismal pledges the Church requires of the candidate an acknowledgment of renunciation and of faith. Now no good thing can come into the heart of man of himself, but “every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of Lights.” To renounce and hate sin, to express faith in the meritorious Cross and Passion of JESUS CHRIST, is a good and perfect gift—it must have come from GOD. Faith is expressly said to be, by S. Paul, one of the gifts of the SPIRIT, as in the Epistle to the Galatians—“The fruit of the SPIRIT is love, joy, *faith.*” If, then, we must have a hatred of sin in the heart and a renunciation of sin in the mouth, and that feeling of the heart, and profession of the mouth, as being opposed to Satan, must in itself have come from GOD; and if we must have *faith* in the doctrines of the Cross, before we can be baptized into the doctrines of the Cross—and that faith must have come from GOD—then it follows, that prior to Baptism we may and must receive some gift of the SPIRIT. This is more fully shown by the cases of all those persons who are conspicuous in Holy Scripture in their Baptism. In the case of Cornelius, ALMIGHTY GOD specially called him by a vision, and said, that in consequence of his prayers and

his alms, which had gone up as a memorial before God, he was to arise and go to Joppa for the purpose of baptism; and at the conclusion of the scene narrated in the 10th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, S. Peter said—"Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, *who have received the HOLY GHOST* as well as we?" Now this receiving of the HOLY GHOST was *not* Regeneration, for that could only come by water, ("except ye be born of water and of the SPIRIT,") but it *did* come when he was baptized, or (the same thing according to the explanation given in a former chapter,) when he was regenerated. The same was the case with the Ethiopian eunuch, and more especially with S. Paul himself. With the Ethiopian eunuch there was a reading and studying God's Holy Word. There was a special call by S. Philip the Deacon to a further understanding of that Word; then there was belief ascertained and professed in that Word, and a strong desire for baptism openly expressed—all which was God's converting Grace; and then, *afterwards*, there was a baptism. In S. Paul's case there was a still more special, because more miraculous, call—JESUS Himself announced that He had chosen him to bear His Name to the Gentiles. He was specially converted by the Grace of God—he was turned away from his prejudiced infidelity and believed, and the scales fell from his eyes. But then after being thus converted he was baptized:—

his regeneration came in his baptism—his conversion prior to it, and as a gift standing by itself.

But again, there may be Conversion *after* Baptism as well as before; and in that case it is called Renovation. It is clear that we may—fallible, weak, and wandering children of the earth as we are—fall from grace once given. Of that, Holy Scripture assures us, and does not except Regeneration. The power of perfection, unliability to sin, freedom from temptation, does not exist in any, not even in the regenerate—for though regenerate, there remains in them the lust of the flesh. S. Paul, after his conversion and his baptism, distinctly tells us, that in his own case there was a law in his members warring against the law of his spirit—that he was continually doing the things he would not, and not doing the things he would; that he was afraid, lest after preaching to others, he should himself be “a cast-away,” and so forth. If so,—if in the case of S. Paul—how much more in all others! Regeneration then, or Baptism, does not suppose a life free from liability to fall. No. And it is further clear from the case of Simon Magus, for he, we read in the Acts of the Apostles, viii. 13, “believed and was baptized.” If he believed and was baptized, he had received a gift of the SPIRIT, and yet, nevertheless, when he afterwards sought to buy the power of communicating the gifts of the SPIRIT by laying on of

hands, he was told that his heart was not right in the sight of God—he had fallen. But even then—what followed? Was he utterly cast aside because he had so fallen? By no means. S. Peter said, “Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.” He might then have been forgiven after his fall, which fall took place after his baptism. He did not, as it turns out, repent, and he was not forgiven; but it is clear he might have been, and if he had been, it would have been what I have called Conversion subsequent to Baptism, or Renovation. What the HOLY SPIRIT had done first, and what Simon Magus had undone by his wickedness, might still have been restored. Though he never could have been *regenerated* again, yet he might have been renewed, restored, recalled, forgiven, or by whatsoever name we may call that repeated and reiterated gift of God's Grace in receiving back the lost.

Now it appears that the error into which the Anabaptists, and all that have followed more or less in their heresy, have fallen with regard to Regeneration, is this:—First, they have made a mistake in ever using the term “Baptismal Regeneration” at all. The two words, correctly speaking, are not proper to be joined together, because they infer that there can be another kind of Regeneration besides Baptismal, which cannot be. If you speak of Baptism, you mean Regene-

ration—if you speak of Regeneration you mean Baptism. They are the same thing. And secondly, they have made a mistake in confounding the three several gifts of the SPIRIT, and speaking sometimes of Regeneration, when they really meant Conversion, or of Conversion when they really meant Renovation. They forget to draw the distinction between the call of God to the sinner *before* he is baptized, and the call of God to the sinner *after* he is baptized. They forget that in no case is a man described as called of God, or chosen, without that call or choice being filled up and completed by the washing of Regeneration as a separate thing, and that is Baptism. They forget that this peculiar kind of the gift of the SPIRIT called Regeneration is never heard of or mentioned, except it be coupled with water; whereas, the other kinds, namely Conversion, Calling, Restoration, Renewing, &c., are continually spoken of under times and circumstances totally removed from and disconnected with Baptism—clearly manifesting, that when we speak of that gift of the SPIRIT which is conveyed in Baptism, we mean to speak of it as conveying certain properties peculiar to itself,—certain properties charged by God's Holy Word to belong to it, and to belong to it only. Consequently, the being “born of water and of the SPIRIT,” having been pronounced by JESUS CHRIST to be essential to a man's entering into the kingdom of God, and being, of necessity, descriptive

of Baptism, we believe that when a man is baptized he is born of the SPIRIT, and that he cannot be born of the SPIRIT unless he is baptized; but though we do so believe, it by no means follows that there are not other gifts of the SPIRIT. Regeneration is that gift which is imparted at Baptism. It never can be imparted except at Baptism (though other gifts can), and it *must* be imparted at Baptism, otherwise, whatsoever other gifts a man may have, he is not safe. Just as S. Paul, though converted and believing, and having received the HOLY GHOST, yet was told to "arise, and be *baptized*, and wash away his sins." He had not got rid of his sins, nor was he therefore in a state of salvation by his mere conversion. He needed something more.

But it is abhorrent to our sense of consistency to think that a man born of the SPIRIT should not live to the SPIRIT, should not walk in the SPIRIT. No doubt it is. That which was meant and intended by ALMIGHTY GOD in His Love, is frustrated by the crafts and assaults of the devil. But consider. The failure of that which has been begun does not destroy the fact that it has been so begun. This is the point, and it cannot be better illustrated than by the seed of a plant sown in the earth by the expecting husbandman. The seed is sown—the seed takes root—the seed receives life and sends forth its blade—it is born again out of the apparently lost life of the mother plant from which the seed was

taken. But does it grow? May be, no sooner has it sent forth the slight opening of its life downwards, than insects buried in the earth devour it; or sending forth its blade upwards, cattle browse upon it, and mutilate it; and may be, it altogether dies, and is no more; but the fact of its dying even at so early a stage of its beginning does not show that it never lived.

Or may be, it has survived these first attacks of evil. It shoots forth vigorously and strong, and is a healthy tree; but the storm arises, and the winds blow, and the lightning comes, and it is broken down and shivered into fragments, and it perishes and is no more, and comes to nought, bringing forth no fruit. But that so perishing does not show that it never lived.

Or, once more; may be, though the worm beneath has weakened the fibres of its roots, and the storm and blasts of lightning from above have cut it down and shivered it into pieces, still a little shoot may be left, some slight fragment keeping life may remain. What then? The planter comes and says, "Though but a little, still there is something." He waters it, prunes it, manures it; and so from day to day, little by little, it recovers, and a goodly tree springs up, bringing forth fruit in its season. Now in this process, though many changes have taken place, though many interruptions have arisen, still there was but one sowing of the original tree.

So in the spiritual growth of the soul and the seed of the SPIRIT sown in the heart of man, there may be many vicissitudes and alternations of good and evil. Sin may even conquer for a time, and all the effects of goodness disappear. Poisoned or mutilated may the whole spiritual progress of the soul become, and very little of good that is visible left—still life may be there, though hidden; in time, and by fresh accessions of grace, that life may be encouraged and restored: when restored, we should not say that it was *another* life, but only a restoration of the original.

Thus it is. Regeneration, or the spiritual birth of Baptism, was the beginning; the "Renewing of the HOLY GHOST" was the recovery, when by circumstances the birth once begun seemed well-nigh to be lost. Of course, the great intention, the single end and aim of the imparting the gift of Regeneration to the soul of man, is, that such a soul, so born, may have life; and the life of the SPIRIT is Sanctification. S. Peter, mentioning Baptism as the means of our salvation, yet adds "not the putting away of the flesh;" *i.e.* not merely the purification of that which was foul, but also, "the answer of a good conscience towards God;" *i.e.* a life of holiness. The great end of the spiritual life is spiritual holiness—without that no man shall see the LORD. Of this there can be no doubt.

All, then, that the Church desires to claim of the objectors to its doctrine of Spiritual Regeneration by water is this—that the absence of visible and manifest holiness in a baptized person should not be considered as a bar to the previous existence of the SPIRIT, any more than an absence of fruit upon a tree is a proof that the tree has never been planted. When the Church says, “Without Regeneration in Baptism you cannot be saved,” she says that which our LORD has said, “Except ye be born of water and of the SPIRIT ye cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD.” And when the Church says, if Baptism be rightly administered, then, of necessity, in the very act of the Sacrament, spiritual birth ensues, she only says that which must of necessity follow from the fact that there is only “one Baptism” for the remission of sins, as there is only “one faith.” If an unholy life follows, and a baptized man forfeits all sanctity, and becomes a reprobate, still the Church says, the fact of the *death* of the soul of that man does not show that he never had life; on the contrary, he may die, but in the very act of dying he proves his life.

This concludes the great subject of the schism of Anabaptism. In all its bearings—whether regarding its hardness of heart and want of love in excluding little children from CHRIST, or regarding the denial of the vital doctrine of the Church, that Baptism saves by Regeneration, or

regarding the consequences which have followed, namely, the profane and blasphemous assumptions of a spiritual birth independent of the channel which ALMIGHTY GOD has appointed ; or, on the other hand, the equally profane and blasphemous assumption that men may live, and profess CHRIST, and die without entering into the covenant of His Kingdom by the Sacrament which He Himself has appointed—I say, in all its bearings we cannot but see how essentially destructive this schism has been and is of true Christianity.

It is good to speak of those who wander from the Catholic truth, with charity ; and, no doubt, it may have been that the sight of the ungodly lives, as men, of those who have been baptized as infants, has been the great cause of this schism ; but the groundwork upon which it is based, truth compels us to say, is intellectual pride. Men cannot bear to think that there is any value or any meaning in that which is beyond their understanding. Baptism, as every Sacrament must be, is a mystery. How GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT in and by the water visits and moves the heart of man is a mystery, but not more a mystery than the movement of the heart of man in any other way. If we are not content to receive mysteries we cannot be Christians, for what greater mystery is there than the incarnation of the SON of GOD ? May it please ALMIGHTY GOD to put it into the hearts of these men, so vitally and

fundamentally opposing not only the Church, but the very faith of CHRIST, to see the truth as it is in JESUS:—no longer to forsake the teaching of the Church, or deny her authority; but giving themselves up in humility of spirit to seek that laver of Regeneration wherein alone they can be prepared for the combat of the soul with “the rulers of the darkness of this world, and with spiritual wickedness in high places.”

Independency.

INDEPENDENCY.

THE principle of Dissent is involved in the assertion of the right of private judgment; and the right of private judgment, in proportion as it breaks the original authority of the Church, recedes lower and lower into the depths of anarchy and confusion. I have before explained (in the first volume) how it was that the primary seed-plot of Dissent was Presbyterianism; which, by its very name, distinguishes those persons who reject the idea of the government of the Church by Bishops. But while they reject the government of the Church by Bishops, they do not reject *all* government; neither do they reject the idea of a *corporate* Church, but merely assert that the order of Presbyters, convened in synods or assemblies, is sufficient for its government. They set aside the Episcopal order, but they still imagine the corporate body of a Church—they still bind together its members by common laws—they still receive into its body, or excom-

municate from its body, all who will conform to or who disobey the rules of discipline and doctrines of faith, which, as a corporate body, they define and set forth. And, moreover, not only the original Presbyterians themselves, but all those branches of the Presbyterians of whom I have spoken; and likewise the more modern branch of them, the Irvingites, of whom I have also spoken; they *all*—however subdivided their sphere and minute their sect—still cling to the idea of a corporate aggregate body, with the springs of life and circulation of blood running through all the members alike. So, likewise, the great sect of the Baptists, or Anabaptists, of whom I have spoken—they are split and subdivided into many internal sects within themselves, yet all seem to cling to the same idea, as far as they can carry it within their subdivisions, that they are a body, and have general laws of life running through the whole.

But private judgment, as I said, being the principle and root of all Dissent, it follows, as its necessary development, that there must come a time when this idea of a general body will be abandoned. The same right which gave men in one age the power of flinging aside the order of Bishops, and setting forth a government by mere Presbyters, would give men in another age the right of flinging aside the order of Presbyters, and setting forth a government by the laity. What may be said for the one—that is, the right

of judging, each man for himself by the light of Holy Scripture, irrespective of tradition and the Church—may be said for the other; and though one man may see in Holy Scripture that the great course of its teaching tends to the idea of all Christians being bound together by one bond of corporate unity, another man may not see it. Grant him the right of not seeing it, and another may spring up who may follow the right so obtained into endless ramifications, of which the other in his first setting forth could have no conception. The conclusion is just when once the premises are allowed.

So then it came to pass, that Presbyterianism, once maintained on this ground, could not resist the development of its own principles; and what is called in the history of Dissent, INDEPENDENCY, followed. Presbyterianism had said—We cast off Bishops, but we maintain the unity of a corporate body by Presbyters; Independency rose up and said—We cast off Presbyters and all necessity of Christians being bound by any government of unity at all; and we say, each congregation is in itself a Church—each man has a right to think for himself in that Church; and there is no need of any junction between one congregation and another, either in discipline or doctrine. We each and all may do as we like. Let us cast off these trammels of authority and interference with each other, and be INDEPENDENT. Hence the name of that great sect which

flowed naturally out of Presbyterianism, and of which I am now to speak.

The historian Hume describes them in his usual vigorous language, in the following words :—

“ During those times, when the enthusiastic spirit met with such honour and encouragement, and was the immediate means of distinction and preferment, it was impossible to set bounds to those holy fervours, or confine within any natural limits what was directed towards an infinite and a supernatural object. Every man, as prompted by the warmth of his temper, excited by emulation, or supported by his habits of hypocrisy, endeavoured to distinguish himself beyond his fellows, and to arrive at a higher pitch of saintship and perfection. In proportion to its degree of fanaticism, each sect became dangerous and destructive; and as the Independents went a note higher than the Presbyterians, they could less be restrained within any bounds of temper and moderation. From this distinction, as from a first principle, were derived, by a necessary consequence, all the other differences of these two sects.

The Independents rejected all ecclesiastical establishments, and would admit of no spiritual courts, no government among Pastors, no interposition of the Magistrate in religious concerns, no fixed encouragement annexed to any system of doctrine or opinions. According to their principles, each congregation united voluntarily and by spiritual ties, composed within itself a

separate Church, and exercised a jurisdiction, but one destitute of temporal sanctions, over its own Pastor and its own members. The election alone of the congregation was sufficient to bestow the sacerdotal character; and as all essential distinction was denied between the laity and Clergy, no ceremony, no institution, no vocation, no imposition of hands, was, as in all other Churches, supposed requisite to convey a right of holy orders. The enthusiasm of the Presbyterians led them to reject the authority of Prelates, to throw off the restraint of Liturgies, to retrench ceremonies, and to limit the riches and authority of the priestly office; the fanaticism of the Independents, exalted to a higher pitch, abolished ecclesiastical government, disdained creeds and systems, neglected every ceremony, and confounded all ranks and orders. The soldier, the merchant, the mechanic, indulging the fervours of zeal, and guided by the illapses of the Spirit, resigned himself to an inward and superior direction, and was consecrated, in a manner, by an immediate intercourse and communication with heaven.....The political system of the Independents kept pace with their religious. Not content with confining to very narrow limits the power of the Crown, and reducing the King to the rank of First Magistrate—which was the project of the Presbyterians—this sect, more ardent in the pursuit of liberty, aspired to a total abolition of the Monarchy, and

even of the aristocracy, and projected an entire equality of rank and order in a *Republic* quite free and independent.”*

This vivid description of the principles of the Independents will give us a key to their history. Their part in the revolution of our country, their subjugation of the Monarchy, their murder of their King, and their destruction of the Church, is accounted for at once, when we thus find their religion and their politics set forth upon so broad a field of fanatical license.

The first person of whom we hear as setting forth these principles in practice, was one Robert Brown, a clergyman of the English Church in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, about the year 1580. He was a man of most fiery zeal and impetuosity of spirit. His principal sphere of action was the county of Norfolk. He went abroad for some time, then returned to England, and founded many separate congregations. After this, it is said by some that he recanted his opinions and returned to the English Church, being instituted to the rectory of Oundle, in Northamptonshire. But the evil seed sown by him took deep root. Many congregations assembled, and it was computed by Sir Walter Raleigh, in discussing the penal measures with which the Parliament thought it necessary even then to pursue his followers, that they amounted,

* Hume's History of England, vol. vii. p. 557.

exclusive of women and children, to the number of 20,000. They were called at that time *Brownists*, from their founder Robert Brown; or *Congregationalists*, from the fact of their meeting in separate congregations. Several persons suffered persecution, and even death, for adherence to their principles: particularly Thacker and Cokking, two Clergymen, who were executed in the year 1583, ostensibly for denying the Queen's supremacy, but in reality for distributing Brown's tracts, and setting up congregations independently of the Church. Ten years afterwards, two men, of the names of Barrow and Greenwood, were put to death for the same reasons, and from the year 1592 to the year 1604, the persecution of the Brownists, either for their religious opinions, or more likely for their political hostility to the Government, was severe in all parts of the country. Some fled to Holland, and there founded congregations, as at Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and specially at Leyden, under one who was a conspicuous leader among them of the name of Robinson; others fled to America.

We must not, however, imagine that the persecution of the Brownists was solely by the Church. On the contrary, strange to say, their principal persecutors were those out of whose bosom they had sprung, namely, the Presbyterians.

Persecution in those times was not confined to sect or party, but was the result of power where-

soever found. The party which was in power fancied that the exercise of that power was religiously demanded to propagate its own opinion and suppress all others. In King Henry VIII. and Edward VI., the Church were the persecutors. In Oliver Cromwell, the Dissenters. In Queen Mary, the Roman Catholics burnt the Protestants; in Queen Elizabeth, the Protestants burnt the Roman Catholics. In King Charles I. and II., the Presbyterians and Independents struggled together for the mastery, and each persecuted the other. Persecution was the prevalent idea of the duty of true religion. Afterwards, indeed, from their own suffering, the Independents proclaimed the principle of Toleration; but from the time of Elizabeth to that of Charles II. these two great parties, at times opposed to each other and at times united, set forth to the world a miserable spectacle of religious discord and fanatical hatred. At length, under Oliver Cromwell, himself an Independent, the dethronement and martyrdom of the King, together with the abolition of the Monarchy, manifested to the world the true spirit of their faith.*

* It is very curious to see how utterly untrue it is to accuse the Church, as a *sect*, of illiberality in the persecution of sects opposed to them. Of the Independents we know quite sufficient in the history of the Commonwealth. To the Presbyterians, the principle of toleration was as odious as that of actual infidelity. At the Westminster Assembly, speaking of the Independents who then advocated toleration, they said, as it were in astonishment,

The name of Brownists—by which the advocates of Congregationalism were first distinguished—seems gradually in the reigns of James I. and Charles I. to have died out, and the name of Independents to have taken its place. Collier, in describing them, alludes to their original name, and draws a distinction between those who had fled originally into Holland in their first persecution, and those who, succeeding them, returned to their native country in the reign of Charles I.

“Five of these members,” he says, (alluding to the Assembly then arraigned against the Church) “Goodwin, Nye, Bridge, Simpson, and

“It appears to us that the Independent Brethren desire liberty, not only for themselves, but for all men.” Edwards, a Presbyterian Minister of Christ Church, London, whose writings were held in great repute by his brethren, argues thus:—“A toleration is the grand design of the devil. It is the masterpiece, compendious, ready, and sure way to destroy all religion, lay all waste, and bring in all evils: it is the most transcendent, Catholic, and fundamental evil for this kingdom of any that can be imagined. As original sin is the most fundamental sin of all sins—having the seed and spawn of all in it—so toleration hath all errors in it, and all evils. It is against the whole stream and current of Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, both in matters of faith and manners. It overthrows all relations, both political, ecclesiastical, and economical; and whereas other evils, whether errors of judgment or practice, be but against some one or few places of Scripture, this is against all. This is the Abaddon—Apollyon—the destroyer of all religion—the abomination of desolation—the liberty of perdition, as Austin calls it; and therefore the devil follows it night and day, working mightily in many by writing books for it, and other ways; all the devils in hell and their instruments being at work to promote toleration.”—*Gangræna*, Part I. p. 58.

Burroughs, were of the Congregational persuasion, afterwards called Independents. These men had transported themselves into Holland for liberty of conscience. They had proselyted several wealthy families of merchants and others. The States of Holland gave them a friendly reception, assigned them Churches to meet in, and subsisted the Ministers with a competent maintenance. Being thus encouraged by the Dutch Government, they advanced to forming their Church discipline. And here, to speak in their own language, they consulted the Scriptures without any prepossessions, they looked upon the Word of CHRIST as impartially and unprejudicedly as men of flesh and blood are like to do in any juncture of time that may fall out; the place they went to, the condition they were in, and the company they went with, affording no temptation to any bias. The principles upon which they founded their Church Government, were, first to confine themselves to Scripture precept and precedent, without any supplemental intermixtures of ancient practice or novel invention; secondly, not to be confined to their present resolutions, without room for attention upon further views and inquiry. Pursuant to these grounds, they hold a middle course between Presbytery and Brownism. The first they counted too arbitrary and decisive, the other too loose, floating, and indecisive. Their main distinction declared against the dependency of Churches.

They did not allow parochial and provincial subordination, and formed their congregations upon a scheme of co-ordinacy. The Presbyterians charged the Independents with an ambulatory, uncertain religion; to which they answered, they only kept themselves upon the reserve for further discoveries of truth. The congregation at Arnheim, where Goodwin and Nye were pastors, were better united than the others. Here, besides other Church ordinances, they proposed receiving the holy kiss, prophesyings in the congregation, honouring of widows, and extreme unction. All this they thought recommended by Scripture authority. But before they came to a resolution on these matters they had a prospect of better business in England, for now the hierarchy was broken, the inclosures of discipline pulled up, and the Puritan party encouraged by the two Houses at Westminster. The juncture being thus inviting, the Congregationalists quitted Holland and came for England. At their arrival, they immediately practised upon their scheme, and gathered Churches. The Presbyterians looked upon this proselyting as no better than encroachment. They complained their flocks were perverted and their settlement disturbed. They expected the Independents should resign their singularities and come under the Scotch regulation now sanctioned by the Parliament. On the other hand, these men excepted to the Genevan plan, refused

to be concluded by a majority, and moved for a toleration."*

Thus then we are enabled to trace them from their original name of Brownists, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, to that of Congregationalists in the time of Charles. For a time set aside and driven out of the country by the strong arm of the law in the reigns of Queen Mary and of the two Charleses; then at last in the troublous times of Charles II. returning, claiming equal share of power with the Presbyterians and other malcontents and republicans, gaining by degrees the ascendancy, enrolling among their congregations the names of the most turbulent and fanatic of the nation; and, at length, under the name of Independents, distracting the whole nation with a civil war that ended in the murder of the King and the abolition of the Church.

“ Sir Harry Vane, Oliver Cromwell, Nathaniel Fiennes, and Oliver St. John, the Solicitor-General, were regarded as the leaders of the Independents. The Earl of Essex, disgusted with a war of which he began to foresee the pernicious consequences, adhered to the Presbyterians, and promoted every reasonable plan of accommodation. The Earl of Northumberland, fond of his rank and dignity, regarded with horror a scheme which, if it took place, would confound himself

* Collier, book ix.

and his family with the lowest in the kingdom. The Earls of Warwick and Denbigh, Sir Philip Stapleton, Sir William Waller, Hollis, Massey, Whitlocke, Maynard, and Glyn, had embraced the same sentiments. In the Parliament a considerable majority, and a much greater in the nation, were attached to the Presbyterian party, and it was only by cunning and deceit at first, and afterwards by military violence, that the Independents could entertain hopes of success.”*

It is curious to observe in the history of religion, how invariably it is that measures of extremity produce the very results against which those measures are intended to guard. No sooner had the violent fanaticism of the Independents subsided in the country by the death of Oliver Cromwell, their great leader in the State, and the Church with all her prerogatives was restored with the recal of Charles II., than one of those indiscreet measures of severity, which was sure to be destructive of its own end, was resorted to by those in power. It was in the year 1662, that the Act called “*The Act of Uniformity*” was passed, and became the law of the land. The Church party had suffered such cruelties at the hands of the Presbyterians, as well as at the hands of the Independents, that they were determined, now that the tide had turned in their favour, to wreak their vengeance upon them. Many of the clergy,

* Hume, vol. vii. p. 560.

after the restoration of Charles, had remained in the possession of their livings, although it was known that they did not conscientiously conform to the full character of the Liturgy and formularies of the Church. They were, in fact, the natural residue of that party in whose hands things ecclesiastical had so long remained during the Commonwealth. Instead of suffering this residue of Clergy gradually to die out, and then to supply their place with those who could with the returning stream of loyalty and the true Catholic faith have reclaimed the people set under them in gentleness and peace, this Act of Uniformity brought down violently upon them the penalties of the law, for any differences of opinion which they might hold in opposition to that which prevailed in the returning Government. It was required that every Clergyman should be ordained by a Bishop, if he had not already received Episcopal ordination, that they should declare their assent *to everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer, and should take the oath of Canonical obedience*; and, in short, all the old persecuting and penal laws of Elizabeth were restored in their full vigour. The effect of this measure was that 1,900 Ministers then officiating in the Church were forcibly expelled—some authorities say 2,000. These ejected Ministers became, therefore, conspicuous as persons persecuted for faith, and attracted attention. Every effort was used to subdue them, or to silence them, but in vain. They

persisted in preaching and in administering the offices of public worship to those who followed them. Many did so; and these very men, who, if left untouched by the Act of Uniformity, would in a few short years have died out unnoticed, became the leaders and fomentors of every kind of schism; and joining themselves to the Independents, from whose ranks in the time of the Commonwealth they had sprung, once more became a formidable body.

The Act of Uniformity of 1662 brought, as its natural consequence, the Act of Toleration of 1689. The Independents flourished under the Act of Uniformity, and therein was laid the foundation of the strength and consequence which they afterwards bore. But no sooner had the Act of Toleration of William III. become the law of the land, than in proportion they gradually dwindled away.

Thus it ever is—penal Acts brought in to suppress the weak, require indulgent Acts to do away their mischief. Had the Church been clear of the Act of Uniformity, and not leant upon the arm of the State for the support of its cause, and had the Government possessed the wisdom to see that the things of God belong to God and not Cæsar, then, in great probability, the Church, working on in faith, and being herself tolerant to those who differed, without the calling in of the law, Dissent had been now at a discount, and the stakes of the Church enlarged throughout the

land. Why cannot Christians allow each other reasonable latitude of opinion? and, above all, why, if agreement of opinion cannot be achieved, do they, of necessity, have recourse to the arm of the flesh for the compulsion of a uniformity, which, if obtained, is only hypocritical, and if not obtained, is sure to lead to retaliation? Under the Act of Toleration, the Independents, with all other Dissenters, were left to their own free pursuance of their religious faith. The consequence was, that from the time of William III. down to the reign of George III., we hear very little of them—they declined in proportion as they were left unmolested.

Towards the middle of the 18th century, religion in general—that of the Church as well as that of Dissenters—became exceedingly corrupt and secular. Moral ethics and rationalism—an undue value set upon the evidences of faith, as such—a dry and meagre system of divinity, destitute alike of vigour and of spiritual vitality, distinguished the Divines of that period. As there was no fanaticism, so there was no life; as there was no enthusiasm, so there was no zeal; and the whole faith of CHRIST seemed well nigh to be evaporating under the cumbrous sententiousness of moral philosophy. At this period it was that Wesley and Whitfield, great preachers of their day, were raised up in the Church, and they went forth upon a crusade upon the deadness of the world, and lifted men's souls once more to

the faithfulness of evangelical preaching. Eventually, indeed—to our shame and grief be it spoken—they diverged and separated from the Church. It seemed as though the coldness of an Erastian establishment could not hold the truthful warmth of such devoted men; and the Church, instead of cherishing them within her bosom, and receiving with maternal care the over-pourings of their zeal to direct them in the right channel, despised, expelled, and abandoned them. What happened? The Church was dead as a mere establishment, but religion seemed to be assuming a new life outside of the Church. Where there might have been a legitimate revival of the faith with benefit to the Church, a blind adherence to Erastianism crushed and extinguished it. But being a revival of faith, it flourished outside of the Church instead of within it; and many followed the Wesleys and the Whitfields never more to sleep within the arms of their ancient mother. Coupled, however, with the zeal and the enthusiasm of the followers of Wesley and of Whitfield, who took the name of Methodists, there were several special doctrines of grace which many religious persons found it impossible to receive. They could not, therefore, unite with any of them. What were they to do? They took up with the small and decaying members of the Old Independents—those Independents no longer partaking of the fiery fanaticism of a political party, as in the times of

Cromwell, but merely adhering to the ancient principle of their foundation, namely, independence in congregational worship.

From that time to the present, the Independents, as a sect, have revived, and still continue to flourish. They have sent forth many good and learned men, of whom Dr. Doddridge and Dr. Isaac Watts are the most conspicuous. Their doctrines are very nearly identical with the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church, interpreted with a Calvinistic bias, and they approach as nearly as possible in their tenets and their practices to those of the lower part of the English Clergy. Had it not been, as I said before, that the Act of Uniformity came too suddenly upon consciences not sufficiently prepared, this sect had probably not been in existence at this day. Had it not been, again, that a great body of religionists in the middle of the last century stumbled at the Erastian stiffness of the Church establishment, and sought refuge in any congregational body where there was an appearance of religious feeling, (no matter of what kind), they even now would not have been in existence. It is not doctrine—at least, not in any great depth or determination of principle—which keeps them from the Church, but a hatred of the interference of the State in the things of religion. In discipline, indeed, they have a fundamental error in discarding the Episcopal order; but even this, probably, they do from the unfortunate associa-

tion of the Episcopal order with the Government of the day, and the appointment of the rulers of the Church by mere Ministers of State. It is, however, in the performance of Divine worship—and that in consequence of their principle that each congregation is independent of the rest—that we notice their principal characteristic. Some will imitate the Church in the use of vestments and in the form of a Liturgical Service; others repudiate them. Some will adopt even the Book of Common Prayer, or at any rate portions of it; others adopt the extemporaneous form. Each congregation is its own master.

We cannot have a better description of them as they now stand before the world than in the words of one of their own members:—

“In the celebration of worship we are free; neither is there any recognised form, non-compliance with which should expose to the charge of violating congregational usage. Hymns may be sung, unknown to our forefathers; and the order of the Bible, in the sublime language of our authorized version, might be used in our psalmody without exposing us to the charge of departure from scriptural simplicity. The organ in one Church may perform the part of a choir in another: some congregations may respond to the prayer offered by the Minister, while others may express their concurrence by their solemn

silence (!) Nay, even if some of our Assemblies were to feel an ancient Liturgy, which had been the vehicle of the worship of Christians through many centuries, uttered in common, to be more helpful to their devotion than mentally following the extemporary petitions of an individual, they might use it. Surely all such varieties, and many more that might be named, should be regarded as not in the slightest degree violating our unity, or transgressing the limits of our denominational polity."*

The Independents have many Colleges and Institutions for the training of their Ministers, and some have very wealthy endowments, among which are Homerton College, Middlesex, founded in 1730; Rotheram College, Yorkshire, founded in 1756; Highbury College, Middlesex, founded 1778; and Hackney College, Middlesex, founded 1802. In the year 1812 the first division was made in the census between the Independents and the Presbyterians — for before that time they were always classed together; and it appeared that there were in England and Wales 1,024 Independent Meeting Houses. In 1838 there were 1,840 Meeting Houses; and in the last census, of 1851, there were 3,244; that is, if we may trust the returns of that period, which is

* Address of Mr. Newman Hall to the Congregational Union. 1852.

very doubtful. There are, according to this return, in the United Kingdom throughout, about one million of persons professing the principles of Independency.

I have now spoken of their history, their origin, and their leading principles. That there is much good among them—that there is freedom from much of the doctrinal error which prevails among other Dissenters, and specially the Anabaptists, of whom I spoke last, is very clear;—that their origin, as well as their character, was at the outset political rather than religious, is apparent from the history of the Commonwealth;—that they now stand among the Dissenters of England, holding, I should say, the first place, from the learning and intelligence of their Ministers, and the respectable character of their followers, is also clear. Of the *errors of their schism*, and of the fatal points in their system, by which they are cut off from Catholic truth, we shall now have to speak.

Very often, when there appears to the outward eye perfect health and symmetry in the body—when there is on the surface no symptom of disease, but all the functions of life are performed with due regularity—nevertheless, there lies below the surface such organic wrong as to the experienced physician manifests an unhealthy constitution, and a life at variance with the laws of nature. So in the case of the Independents. It might seem that in their outward professions

of faith, their doctrines, and their preaching, all was sound and healthy, and their opinions on the greater articles of religion without any of that manifest heresy which belongs to other sects. It would seem that nothing could be very greatly wrong, when in a wide-embracing liberality every freedom of religious worship was tolerated, and congregations of enlightened men were suffered to meet wheresoever they pleased and howsoever they pleased; adhering to the orthodox faith as to the Holy Trinity and the Person of our LORD and the Blessed Sacraments, and the graces of the HOLY SPIRIT:—claiming only, as they would say, that which most good men would claim—independence of unjust control in things spiritual. It is, no doubt, upon this specious appearance of enlightenment and liberality, that the flourishing condition of the Independents is based. There is something enlarged and great, and in many respects catholic, in the idea of religion being not a thing of external management, but of the individual heart. There is something generous in the idea of permitting each congregation, as its own inclinations might dictate, to pursue its own plan of worshipping ALMIGHTY GOD uninterrupted by others; and thus, if we look no deeper, we might be urged to say—This certainly is good and wise; for since men can never in any great masses be brought to agree together in everything, why not suffer them to differ? and

since they cannot be bound by laws, in the origin and constitution of which they have had no part—why not suffer them to draw up their own laws for the time, and in the place, and under the feelings by which they may be accidentally moved, each independently of the other?

Such, without doubt, is the reason of that outward health and strength which attaches to the body of the Independents; but we must look more carefully beneath this superficial appearance, and examine carefully, whether there be not, according to the laws and principles of God's Word, some organic defect—some deep-seated mischief which belies and undermines the whole.

We must look, for this purpose, in the first place, to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and then to our Blessed LORD's teaching in His Own more especial revelation.

We all know that it was ALMIGHTY GOD's way to teach what was afterwards to come to pass in the Gospel, by types of the Old Testament and the history of the Jews. The first type or representation of the Church is said to be the Ark. The world is destroyed by the waters of the Deluge—but the Ark saves a certain portion. The world is lost and cast out by reason of universal sin—God commands a certain vessel, or ship, or building to be constructed, into which all who enter, as selected by Him, are to be saved. There is no other way by which they are

to be saved: no other ship, or vessel, or building made by *man's* devices or skill, by which any one can be saved. It is alone by the Ark of ALMIGHTY GOD. What is this Ark? and what does it contain? It is built and arranged upon a perfect system of order, and with a stringent respect to the obedience of those who come within it. All are together within it—all have one mind within it—all are incorporated and made one family within it. There is no discrepancy of action nor variety of opinion: they have one end to pursue, and one means of pursuing that end. The Ark is the Church.

The next type is the general history of the Jewish people, from the call of Abraham downwards. God did not call *two* people; He did not separate *two* families, but it pleased Him to select one—that one, a representative of the unity of His Church. The laws, precepts, covenants, sacrifices, and methods of worship which He devised for this people, have respect to them all as one. It is not permitted to a part of the Jews to differ from another part, and to be regulated by various forms of worship according to their own will. There was only one temple, towards which they all worshipped, and recognised therein the One Great God and Father and King of them all.

The next great type is the Jewish priesthood. One family was selected out of one tribe for the ordinary priesthood; and one line of that one

family for the office of High Priest—himself ever recognised as the type of JESUS CHRIST. In all the sacrifices, one form, one worship; in all the altars one incense of prayer, and one offering; in all the times of sin or of sorrow—in all the times of rejoicing or of praise, one voice went up before the throne of God, united, undivided, unseparate. This was, in type, the voice of the Church.

The next great type is the Jewish temple. Reared by the express directions of God, its structure, its organisation, its object was one. There were not many temples, but one. Towards that one all were commanded to pray; and in that one, *all*, at the several feasts of the Jewish law, were commanded to present themselves as participators and sharers of the great covenant of Abraham and the Law. And all these types are severally or unitedly adopted by the evangelical writers as descriptive of the Church of CHRIST. “Ye are the temple of God.” “Your body is the temple of the HOLY GHOST.” “Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the chief corner-stone; in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the LORD.” (*Ephes. ii. 19.*) “Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual

sacrifices, acceptable to GOD by JESUS CHRIST." (1 S. Peter ii. 5.)

As these types speak very plainly, so do the Prophets also. Daniel describes four great kingdoms; and then a fifth, which is to swallow up and absorb and make into one the other four; and this fifth kingdom is the kingdom of GOD, or the Church.

Isaiah speaks of the Church as of a city of precious stones—"a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." And this idea is continually set forth by David in the Psalms—the prominent feature being, that a city must be one, united, and true to itself. "Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity in itself," (Ps. cxxii. 3); and we all know how from this the Church in her glory is called in the Revelations "*the New Jerusalem.*"

In the Song of Solomon we have the Church set before us in the light of a spouse; which figure is afterwards adopted by S. Paul. She is described as decked out in beautiful garments, and CHRIST is the bridegroom; and this unity and oneness is pictured in the fullest allegory—for as marriage joins two together, and they are one flesh, so the Church is one with her Bridegroom, who is CHRIST. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; I speak concerning CHRIST and the Church." (*Ephes. v.*) Unity,

oneness, identity of mind, of spirit, as well as of body, is here depicted; and so it is said again that in the Church so married and given to CHRIST, the Church is flesh of His Flesh, and bone of His Bones.

Thus much for types and foreshadowings from the Old Testament. Now let us pass on to our Blessed LORD. Does our Blessed LORD ever contemplate that any set or party of His followers should be cut off and divided from the rest? Does He ever contemplate that a person baptized into His Church should be able to set up a form of worship to suit himself? should be at liberty to refuse what the great body of Christians into which he has been admitted has thought good to do, and to invent separate plans of teaching for individual gratification? Surely, if we can see any one thing conspicuous in our LORD'S will, it is this—that there should be no discrepancy either of opinion or of action among those who should be baptized into His fold. He tells us in S. John x., that there is only one door by which any one can enter, and that is Himself; and that “he that entereth not by the door, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.” He prays, at the most solemn moment of His life, that His disciples may be one, even as He and His FATHER are one. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word, that they ALL MAY BE ONE, as Thou, FATHER,

art in Me, and I in Thee.”—(S. John xvii. 21.) He describes Himself figuratively as the vine, from which His disciples are to spring forth as branches, but of necessity deriving their life and nourishment from thus abiding in Him: “If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”—(S. John xv. 6.) If we go from our LORD to the first constitution of the Church after Pentecost, what is more conspicuous than the identity and oneness of the worship which guided those who came within her? It is said that “they continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine and *fellowship*, and in breaking of bread, and in *prayers*.” It is said that they “had all things *common*.” It is said that they “continued with *one accord* in the temple.” (*Acts* ii. 42, 46.) When we go forward again to the writings of the Apostles in their government of the Church, what again do we find? Whenever the slightest appearance of disunion shows itself, there immediately are applied the strongest reproofs and the most earnest remonstrances, as 1 *Cor.* xiv. 26: “How is it, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation.” And in ch. xi. of the same Epistle: “First of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.” And in the Epistle to the *Romans*, xvi. 17, “I beseech

you, brethren, mark them which cause *divisions* and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." And this is sealed by the remarkable descriptions of the Church given in *Ephesians* iv. and in the 1st Epistle to the *Corinthians*, xii. In the former, the Apostle distinctly says, "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one LORD, one faith, one baptism, one GOD and FATHER of us all;" and in the latter he says, "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is CHRIST. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

Now to tell us after this that Christians may separate from each other and form *different* bodies, have *different* hopes of their calling, have *different* baptisms, have *different* psalms, have *different* prayers, have *different* fellowships, have *nothing* in common, never meet with the same accord in the same temple; but be made to drink within the Church of JESUS CHRIST into *different* Spirits—to say this, is nothing one whit otherwise than to say we have different Lords and different Gods. O surely the very essence of the spirit of Christian communion *is* communion—and communion means agreement, oneness, identity of object pursued by identity of means. What is sin, in

regard of schism, if the toleration of an idea that Christians may worship God not in unity is not that sin? The *agreement to differ*, which is the veil of the present world dexterously thrown over schism, is nothing more or less than an agreement to uphold and defend infidelity. It is true that it is asserted that this agreement to differ is only in regard of externals and unessentials—but who is to say where these externals and unessentials begin and where they end? What the Apostles speak of as to unity is not only doctrine, but prayers, worship, psalms, sacraments, having *all things common*—doing *all things together*; breaking bread *in singleness of heart*—drinking into *one Spirit*. Oneness, in the mind of our BLESSED LORD, was not oneness in some things and difference in others—but oneness in everything. Differences to be sure in taste and sentiment, and even in opinion, there will be among men, but all are to be merged and lost in the community of the Church; every individual conceding his own will to that of the general body. We are to be one, even as He and His FATHER are one.

There can be no doubt then of the will of our Heavenly FATHER that the Church of His Blessed SON should be one and undivided. We have it in every possible figure, in every possible teaching, in that of a ship, a city, a temple, a kingdom, a house, a spouse, a net, a grain of mustard-seed, a vine, a human body. These all, with many

other illustrations of the like kind, set it forth beyond a doubt.

But it is contended by those who join the schism of the Independents, that all these passages of Holy Scripture which speak of the unity of the Church apply to a state of things very far removed from the earthly scene in which we now dwell. They draw a distinction between a visible and an invisible Church; and while they fully recognise the perfection of that oneness which is pourtrayed in the Holy Writings, they apply it only to that portion of the Church which is already perfect in heaven. By this means they are exempted from all consideration of those points of difference which they are compelled to recognise around them; for the invisible Church has only to deal with the internal spiritualities of faith, and cannot be touched by the earthly things which here interpose and destroy the unity of men.

It is quite true that we are bound to recognise this double idea of the Church—for many passages in God's Word describe her in so exalted a character that nothing in this world can ever reach it:—"The heavenly Jerusalem," "the city whose builder and maker is God," "Mount Zion," "the innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and Church of the first-born:"—these and such like expressions scattered throughout the Bible, more especially in the Prophets and in the Book of Revelation, do

assuredly manifest such a state of perfection as is not applicable to "the Church" when described under another aspect in the world. And thus there ever has been a double sense of the Church. In one sense it is militant, in another triumphant; in one sense visible, in another invisible; in one sense in heaven, in another on earth. But what, let us ask, was the object of our Blessed LORD's advent upon this earth? To give us ideal pictures of heaven, and that all? To set before us imaginary beauties which were so far out of our reach that we never could attain unto them? Does He call Apostles and send them forth? Does He pour upon them the gifts of His Spirit, and endue them with miraculous power? Does He say, "Go ye and make disciples of all nations?" Does He say to S. Peter, "Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it?"—without an idea that any appearance of such a Rock or such a Church was ever to be in this world, but that, after all, it was merely in heaven that this rock or this Church was to be visible? The very first and most prominent notion that we deduce from our LORD's founding a Church at all, is, that it is to do battle with the enemy of souls in this world. We are to tend onwards to the invisible Church, but it is *through* the visible; and for this purpose, things are described as material and tangible in this world, by which we are to be taught, guided, and led on to perfection in heaven.

Whatever, therefore, is said of "*the Church*,"—whatever is described of her attributes—whatever is asserted to be her duties—is said, not of the invisible Church, but of the visible. Hence there are in the Church, Ministers and teachers, men of authority and order; hence there are in the Church gradations of rank and obedience; hence there are in the Church a head, a body, and members; hence there are means of grace, as more especially Sacraments—visible and real things, which men are to use, touch, see, handle, eat, and drink, as of God. Now let us consider—supposing our LORD's meaning as to unity in the Church only referred to a state of things of the SPIRIT—that is to say, mental, doctrinal, intellectual, ethereal things; and that this abstract agreement on things heavenly was possible to co-exist with disagreements, and varieties, and separations in things earthly, then where would be the use of that elaborate preparation, that systematic building up of a plan by which the men of all nations, Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, bond and free, were to be incorporated and made into one body in CHRIST? Observe the machinery (so to speak) which is used for this purpose:—

1. *Ranks of Ministry.*—God hath set some in the Church; first, Apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles

then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. (1 *Cor.* xii. 28.)

2. *Ordination of Ministry*, as in deacons, (*Acts* vi. 6); Bishops, (1 *Timothy* iv. 14, v. 22); Apostles (*Acts* xiii. 2.)

3. *Discipline*.—As when our LORD directs that, in case of certain delinquents, information is to be given to the Church—“*Tell it to the Church;*” or in the case of the incestuous person, S. Paul directs that he is to be excommunicated—“to be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh.” (1 *Cor.* v. 5.)

4. *Rules for Divine Worship*, as in the case of women with heads covered, and to be silent; men with heads uncovered, and to teach (1 *Cor.* xi.); and the manner of the LORD'S Supper, with rebukes to some for deviation from apostolical order. (1 *Cor.* xi. 28.)

5. *Spiritual gifts*, to be exercised for the immediate profit of the Church in their order, as (1 *Cor.* xii.) *prayer, prophesying, or preaching, singing, expounding.* (1 *Cor.* xiv.)

6. But, above all, *the two great Sacraments*. For the first, Baptism, we have it over and over again commanded; and we see it over and over again used as a means of express admission into

the actual and immediate privileges of a community ; and for the second, the Holy Eucharist, we find in it the participation and continuance of life imparted and sealed by communion through the Church with JESUS CHRIST in His incarnation and His atonement. "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you." (*S. John vi. 53.*)

The very idea of a Sacrament is that of a material, tangible, and external sign, conveying an internal and invisible grace. If the Church were nothing more than a spiritual unity of souls, without respect of any visible incorporation here upon earth, then the idea of means of *sacramental* grace would be absurd, for grace would, in such case, be imparted to the soul by the direct hand of GOD, entirely irrespective of man as an instrument or channel. But if we have Sacraments at all, those sacraments are at once, in themselves, acknowledgments of a visible Church ; for first they must come through the hands of a ministry ; secondly, they must have material elements ; thirdly, they must have an external action. In the one there is water and the birth of the SPIRIT, by which we are made disciples and incorporated into His Church. By the other, there is the bread and wine, which is the Body and Blood of CHRIST, verily and indeed taken and received, which is the food of the soul both for

this world and the next, conveyed through the channels of the body; and that not only a spiritual communion, but also an actual and visible one—a communion with CHRIST'S Body in His incarnation and atonement—a communion with the brethren, as incorporated and made members of the same body—a communion with the Church, then and there visibly existing before us. And all this is expressly said to be the case by S. Paul himself, when, speaking of the Church as a body, and of us as members, and Jesus as the head, he says that all these works and all these ministrations are for the “perfecting of the Saints [Christians here on earth], for the work of the ministry, for the edifying [building up] of the Body of CHRIST, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of GOD, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST.” (*Ephes. iv. 12.*)

To say then that Christians, with all this apparatus before them of means devised for incorporation and unity, may live in separation, is to say that which is simply absurd—to say that the idea of unity is reserved merely for that blessed state in which we may be found hereafter in the society of the saints in glory, namely, the Church invisible, while here we may worship God individually, separately, and independently of each other, is to say that which cuts from under our feet the whole foundation of Holy Scripture.

That the Church has never attained that perfect unity for which our Blessed Lord prayed, and for which the scheme of the apostolic office was constituted, with the sacramental system appended—to say that the Church has never attained this perfect unity is one thing; to construct a scheme by which it may purposely be avoided, passed over, and defied is another thing. That the Churches, for instance, of the East and West, of England and Rome, should be separated and cut off from each other is a lamentable fact which we acknowledge; but while we acknowledge it, at the same time we confess that it is contrary to God's Word and a grievous sin, and pray that it may cease; but that men should deliberately plan and desire independence of congregational worship, independence of ecclesiastical rule, and independence of all agreement with the mind and the sympathy of other Christians, and yet imagine they are acting *according to the Word of God*, is a thing which, unless we saw it before us, we never should believe.

If a messenger were to present himself suddenly at the door of our dwelling with the announcement of some important news, we should demand of him from whence he came, and with what authority. If an ambassador were to find his way into a foreign court and deliver an announcement of peace or war, the Court to which he came would ask of him his credentials, that it

might know that he rightly spoke in the name of the Sovereign whom he pretended to represent. If a steward were found very busy in the arrangement of property or the collecting of debts, and were to demand of us payment of that which was claimed as due to his lord, we should wish to know for whom he acted, and we should ascertain whether, if we paid the debt, the payment would reach the lawful owner of the property.

Even so it is when we contemplate the Minister of religion. He is a messenger, (2 *Cor.* viii. 23,) and brings a message to our doors. Before the fact of his conveying a message has any weight with us, we must know that he comes from God, and has authority to speak in His Name. He is an ambassador, (2 *Cor.* v. 20,) and brings an announcement either of peace in the shape of forgiveness of sins, or war in the announcement of eternal condemnation—but the fact of the embassy is not in itself sufficient: before we incline to listen to it, we must ascertain that the ambassador has a rightful commission from God. He is a steward, (1 *Cor.* iv. 1,) and has certain trusts within his power; but before we permit him to deal with us in the arrangement of these trusts we must know that he has a legitimate right so to do, and he must show us this right as derived from the Person Whose steward he represents himself to be—namely, ALMIGHTY GOD.

This idea runs through the whole of the Scriptures. In no case do we ever find authority in

religion to teach or to preach, or to minister in any way in holy things, except it come with credentials from God. This was felt in the case of Moses when sent to deliver the children of Israel from bondage: "Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say to me, What is His Name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel—I AM hath sent me unto you." It was on the principle of being *sent of* God, and *commissioned by* God, (for the proof of which miraculous power was vouchsafed,) that Moses was to prevail with the people. And no otherwise in the case of his brother Aaron. He was called and specially set apart, he and his family, and his tribe, for the various orders of the Priesthood. And then it is said, as though this appointment of the Priesthood was acknowledged to serve as the type of all future appointments of God's Ministers, "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." (*Heb. v. 4.*)

Now this call of Aaron was not internal but external; not an inward movement of the spirit of an individual known only to himself, but an outward and visible demonstration by ceremonial signs on the part of and in the presence of the Church. In order to mark this the more, the

rebellion of Korah and his company, which is mentioned in the Book of Numbers, was signally punished. They rebelled against the appointed servants of GOD. They took upon themselves an office to which they had not been externally and visibly called, as Aaron and his family had been, and therefore the earth opened and swallowed them up alive. To this end was the punishment of Uzzah, in the Second Book of Samuel, who put forth his hand to touch the ark of God. He had no evil design in doing so, but, on the contrary, imagined he was doing what was right, but God smote him on the spot, simply because he interfered in divine things *without a commission*. To this end was Saul, though a king, reprovved by Samuel the prophet. Samuel was long in coming, and Saul thought it of great importance that a religious act should be performed, namely, a burnt-offering made to the LORD. Saul would not wait, but himself offered the burnt-offering. For this he was deprived of his kingdom, and the LORD sought another king in David. Why? Not because it was a thing wrong in itself to offer a burnt-offering, but because Saul was not the right person to do it—*not having a commission*. To this end Uzziah, in the Second Book of Chronicles, is mentioned for a warning. He was in other respects a good king, but he transgressed the law of the Priesthood in offering incense to God on the altar. It was a right thing in itself to offer incense, and a thing acceptable to God, but not in

him. Why not in him? Because he had *no commission*. And so “Azariah the Priest withstood Uzziah the King, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the Priests, the sons of Aaron, that are *consecrated* to burn incense. Go out of the Sanctuary, for thou hast trespassed.” And he was immediately smitten with leprosy, and thrust out. To this end again Jeroboam, when he rent the kingdom of Israel, which was before one, and took away the ten tribes in rebellion, because he had no priests of the lawful tribe, nor any with a commission to administer before the LORD, appointed “Priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.” And it was a sin unto him and his posterity for ever. Idolatry was the result—miserable dissensions and wars—loss of the true God, and the ultimate destruction of the whole of the ten rebellious tribes. (1 Kings xii.)

Thus we see, so far as the Old Testament is concerned, how strict and undeviating was the idea that none could minister in holy things, except he were called and commissioned thereunto by an external authoritative setting apart from God Himself, as in the case of Aaron and the Levitical Priesthood. But it might be said that the Christian religion is a very different thing from the Jewish:—that we, as Christians, have *spiritual* sacrifices to offer, not legal—that we are a “royal Priesthood, a peculiar people;”—that

we are every one of us "priests and kings unto God;"—that "we have an unction from the HOLY ONE, and know all things;"—that the "SPIRIT leadeth us," by the express promise of CHRIST, "unto all truth."

It is very true. The spiritual privileges of individual Christians are very great; and, together with their privileges, so are their responsibilities; but these in no way affect the question of ministering in holy things, nor take away the notion of an order of men cut off and set apart from the rest of the body for this purpose. If cut off and set apart at all, then cut off and set apart by some who have authority so to do. Now, it is said distinctly in the New Testament, that the HOLY GHOST hath made certain select and appointed persons to be "overseers over the flock to feed the Church of God." (*Acts* xx. 28.) Here then is evidently one order above another, and with an office charged—"to feed the Church." It is said, "Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." (*1 Tim.* v. 17.) Here again is the mention of *ruling*, as though some were set apart to have authority over others. And again, it is said—"Are *all* apostles, are *all* prophets, are *all* teachers?" (*1 Cor.* xii. 29); evidently inferring that there were some endued with special gifts which others had not.

But to this also it may be conceded that it is very true—that it is necessary for the sake of

order in society, that there should be a distinction of office among Christians, even as in common life there is a distinction of professions and trades; — that common political economy demands for the sake of society that there should be a division of labour among the different parts of it; and just as there is a draper, or a grocer, a tailor, or a shoemaker, so there should be a Minister of religion. To this it must be replied, by looking again to the text of S. Paul—“No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is *called of God, as was Aaron.*” Now no one would say that a man becomes a draper or a grocer, a tailor or a shoemaker, because he is *called of God* to become so. Here are two things requisite in the appointment of the order of the Ministry which are not in any wise contemplated —(it would be absurd if not blasphemous to contemplate it,)—in any other order of men:—1, an internal vocation of the HOLY GHOST—*called of God*; and 2, an external divine appointment by certain ceremonial observances, *as was Aaron.* Neither one without the other, but both. And thus, if we look to our Blessed LORD Himself, and His Own first selection and sending forth of His Ministry, we shall find these conditions invariably observed. With regard to the internal vocation of the HOLY GHOST, we can never pronounce on that, because, being a thing invisible and known only to the heart within, we must leave it between the individual and God. This

only we can say, that in the case of the Apostles, and those immediately commissioned by our LORD, it follows, by the fact of His Own selecting power, that the call to those persons was an inward one of the HOLY GHOST.* And then what followed? Invariably an outward call also—a mission—a laying on of hands—an external divine demonstration. Even in the case of our very LORD Himself—He did not commence His public ministry without a public call, but remained hidden and unknown until the appointed time, and then there came an external and visible commission from His Heavenly FATHER:—"This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." And thus, being in the first instance Himself in His human nature sent of God, He begins to send others, but not before; and the authority which He had received He imparted, but none other. He chose the Seventy, and sent them forth with a special commission, two and two, into every city and place, using these remarkable words—"He that

* The case of Judas Iscariot may at first seem a difficulty in the way of this assertion, because in the result he was proved to be a traitor. But there is no reason to imagine but that in the first call to the apostleship Judas was as sincere as his brethren. All more or less fell in the infirmity of nature—specially S. Peter. It only happened that in Judas's case he fell without repentance. When it is said that the Ministers of religion must have a call from God, it cannot be meant that such a call either makes them infallible or impeccable.

heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me." (S. Luke x.) He chose twelve, and to them he gave more especial power, saying to them upon His final departure from the world—as though leaving them to be His Representatives on earth—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." But in what sense was this true, "*unto the end of the world?*" Our LORD departed from this world, the Apostles departed from this world—S. John was the last of the Apostles, and by the end of the first century he also was gone. With whom then was this promise fulfilled, that He would be with them *unto the end of the world?* With those surely whom the Apostles had appointed to fill their own places. Who were these? Read the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, and there you find them. First Matthias, chosen into the place of Judas—openly elected and appointed with laying on of hands—a method of appointment similar to that which our LORD had adopted in the case of the Twelve; then S. Paul and S. Barnabas, then S. Titus and S. Timothy; and then, in order that the succession might never fail, we find in one of the Epistles to the latter,

that this ordaining and appointing of elders was to continue for ever: "The things that thou hast heard of me, commit thou to faithful men, *who shall be able to teach others also,*"—exactly fulfilling the words of our LORD—"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Now this is what we call the *Apostolicity* of the Church. Just as before we found unity or incorporation to be necessary for the existence of a Church, so now we find this apostolicity—by which is meant *an appointment of Ministers by succession from the Apostles*. This seems quite clear: but now comes the question appertaining to the present subject of discussion. Do the Independents follow this rule? *Have the Independents an ordained succession of teachers and ministers coming from the Apostles?* If they have not, they fail, and are cut off from the body of CHRIST. It is in the *apostolicity* as well as the unity of the Church that their great error consists. Let us examine what they say on this head.

In the first place, they agree fully and implicitly in the question that there should be an ordained body of men to teach and preach, and they resort to forms and ceremonies for their ordination. Owen, who is one of their chief writers, lays down the principle that "none can or may take this office upon him, or discharge the duties of it, which are peculiarly its own, with authority, but he who is called and set apart thereunto, according to the mind of JESUS CHRIST. . . . The

general force of the rule of S. Paul (*Heb.* v. 4) prohibits the undertaking of the office without a divine call." *

We must observe the two remarkable expressions here adopted—1st, “*according to the mind of JESUS CHRIST;*” and 2nd, “*without a divine call.*” The principle, indeed, in these phrases is granted; but the question still remains open, what *is* the mind of JESUS CHRIST, and what *is* a divine call? In other words, how are we practically to fulfil what is here theoretically asserted?

And on this turns the whole difference between the sect of the Independents and the Church. The Church says, the “mind of JESUS CHRIST” in this matter is explained and set forth by an undeviating and unbroken tradition founded upon Scripture, to the effect that there is no power to call and set apart Ministers of religion, save that which has come down from the LORD Himself and His Apostles through the Bishops, who alone have derived it from them, and hold it now. Whereas the Independents say, the power of calling and setting apart Ministers of religion is vested in the several congregations. Each congregation may select and appoint—each congregation is to choose their own minister, and when the choice is made, he is to be set apart, by the prayers and the imposition of hands of those who are the Presbytery, or Elders. It may be as well,

* Owen's Gospel Church, ch. iv.

perhaps, to give the reader an idea of what an Ordination among the Independents really is, and there fortunately is an account of one lately published—it is an account of the Ordination of Mr. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham. There is first an introductory discourse on the nature of Ordination, in which is set forth a denial of all grace or spiritual virtue, or gift of the HOLY SPIRIT therein, in these words:—

“By ordination we do not understand the communication of any official virtue, grace, or influence in any sense.” “We do not believe that ordination imparts any authority before unpossessed, either to preach the Gospel or administer the Sacraments.” “We do not believe that the New Testament restricts the preaching of the Word, or the administration of the Sacraments, to those who have been ordained, whether after the Presbyterian or the Episcopal form . . . but it consists of two parts.”

And here follows the description of what it is.

“The initiative is taken by the Church, [by this is meant the *congregation*], and consists in their free choice of a given individual to be their Bishop [Minister.] When they have performed that part of the ordination, which is expressed by lifting up the hand, or election; then they call upon the Elders of other Churches [congre-

gations] denominated in the New Testament the Presbytery, or Assembly of Elders, publicly to recognise the man of their choice, and to set him apart to his work, by prayer and the imposition of hands. Supposing the individual thus presented for ordination is of approved character, gifts, and graces, and that the other Pastors can give him a hearty welcome, they express the same unitedly, by that which is specifically called the Act of Ordination, which *essentially consists in following up the choice of the Church [congregation] with their sanction and their prayers.*

“ This completes the ordination. The imposition of hands is not designed to express the bestowment of authority or power by the ordainers, nor do they thereby intend to say that they impart the HOLY GHOST, or any supernatural endowments. According to our understanding of the New Testament, an ordination of a pastor cannot be valid without both those parts, except under the rare condition that no concurring Elders can be found.”*

Now let us consider. This doctrine of Ordination amounts simply to this—1, that each congregation chooses its own Pastor; and 2, that when he is chosen, he receives a sanction from the Elders. And that is all. It is expressly denied that there is any *grace* conferred, or any

* “ The Ordination Services of the Rev. R. W. Dale, &c. &c.” Hamilton & Adams.

influence, or any authority. It is expressly denied, that when they use the form of imposition of hands they mean to confer anything by it ; while they expressly assert that this “act of Ordination *essentially* consists in following up the choice of the Church [congregation] with the sanction and prayers of the Elders.” The essence then and virtue and moving power in the Ordination of an Independent Minister is the choice of the congregation, and there is nothing else for any other party to do than to sanction publicly the “man of their choice.”

But is this the “mind of JESUS CHRIST” referred to by Dr. Owen? Was the “mind of JESUS CHRIST” to “sanction the choice of a congregation?” or was it not rather Himself to choose, and Himself to *send*? Was the mind of JESUS CHRIST, and of the Apostles (who are involved in Him), to suffer the flock to choose their shepherd—the ruled to choose their ruler—the taught to choose their teacher ; or was it not rather to send directly and immediately from their own persons those whom they called? Was it the mind of JESUS CHRIST and the Apostles involved in Him, to say, “When we send you forth we do not give you any authority—we do not confer upon you any grace. No: it is our mere sanction—it is only our hearty welcome—it is only our prayers?”

Surely we have but to look at the cases above mentioned, of the call of the Apostles and of the

Seventy, of S. Matthias, of SS. Paul and Barnabas, and of SS. Titus and Timothy, to see this. There is no idea of a Minister of God being given to a flock or congregation who were willing to receive him of choice, but rather of an aggression upon those who did not desire him nor seek him, nay, but would in some cases repel him. "Go your ways," said our Lord; "Behold, I send you forth *as lambs among wolves.*" "Into whatsoever city ye enter and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets, and say, Even the very dust of your city which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you." This does not look like a congregation choosing its own pastor. The ordination of S. Matthias comes nearest, perhaps, to an election; but even there it was surely not the choice of a congregation selecting one to be set over themselves but an appeal by lot to ALMIGHTY GOD, and the issue left with Him for the whole Church. They prayed and said—"Thou, LORD, Which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two THOU hast chosen." In the case of SS. Paul and Barnabas, while they (the Apostles, and prophets, and teachers) ministered to the LORD and fasted, the HOLY GHOST said, "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them." In case of S. Titus, in his call to be Bishop of Crete, we hear nothing of a choice by the congregation, but S. Paul says—"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set

in order the things that are wanting and ordain Elders in every city as I had appointed thee." S. Paul, not the congregation, appointed S. Titus, and S. Titus was so appointed by him that he might—not the congregation, but Titus himself—"ordain Elders in every city." And as to there being no gift, no grace, and no authority in the laying on of hands, what says S. Paul to S. Timothy, his own son in the faith, whom he had ordained Bishop of Ephesus? He says thus (2 *Timothy* i. 6)—"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee *by the putting on of my hands.*" Surely any candid person must acknowledge that the "mind of JESUS CHRIST," and the mind of the Apostles and the Church, tends all through GOD'S Word to show us that the Independents are utterly wrong and unscriptural, as well as most assuredly they are opposed to the traditions of the Church, in both of the principles they maintain—1, in choosing pastors by the congregation; and 2, in denying grace imparted by ordination.

A number of voters in a borough meet together to elect a Member of Parliament. When they have elected him, he goes through certain forms and ceremonies—takes certain oaths—receives certain sanctions, and becomes that which he was elected to be—a Member of Parliament. But suppose the electors of the borough were to go a little further, and say, Why should we not quite as well elect a teacher of religion for our

borough, as we have already elected our Member of Parliament? If we are fit to be judges in the one case, we surely are in the other; for we know the Scriptures quite well, and have no doubt as to the doctrines which we think right, and should like to hear. And suppose thereupon a form of prayer for the ordination of Ministers were to be drawn up, and the elected Minister were thereby set apart and become the teacher of religion for the borough, what should we say of this proceeding? Would it be in fulfilment of the "mind of CHRIST," when He said, "As My FATHER hath sent Me, so send I you?" Is not the very thought of such a thing a profanation? and yet I fear, with all due consideration for the sincerity of intention with which the Independents may be actuated, their election of their own Pastors—which, by their own showing, is "*essentially*" *their ordination*, must come nearly to the same thing. Here stands a Minister and teacher of the Word of GOD—one who is to rule—one who is to have authority—one who is to "reprove, rebuke, exhort"—one who is to guide by the unction of the HOLY SPIRIT the lost souls of men—and yet this teacher is distinctly set forth before the congregation with a denial that he has received any grace—with a refusal that he has any authority—with a rejection of any claim to be anything further than they themselves are, save by the fact of his being "*the man of their choice.*" We say to such an one, when he

comes before us to teach us, From whence do you come, and who gave you authority to teach and minister in holy things? The answer is—*“The congregation chose me.”* By what power are you set apart to preach the Word of God? Can you show any credentials that you come from that God Whom you represent? The answer is—*“The congregation chose me, and the elders prayed over me, and laid their hands upon me.”* But who gave the congregation and the elders a right or commission for these purposes? They have exercised their right from time to time. They do what the congregations and the elders before them did. For how long a time? We can trace our custom up to the time of Oliver Cromwell, and some say even to Henry VIII., when the Reformation began. But who gave those congregations at that time existing—either those under Mr. Brown, (the Brownists), or those under Mr. Robinson, who are more properly called the Independents—who gave them the authority to choose and ordain their Ministers in this way? They assumed it themselves. Well then, if that be the case, how can they come under the direction of the Apostle—*“How shall they preach except they be SENT?”*

Compare all this with the solemn and authoritative commission which is given to the Clergy of the Church by the Bishop—which Bishop has received his authority to do so from another Bishop, which Bishop again has received it from

another, and so on and on up to the very Apostles themselves. Compare, I say, the position of a Minister of the Independents and *his* claim, with the position of a Clergyman of the Church, who comes with an authority committed to him in these solemn words :

If a *Deacon*,

“Take thou authority to execute the office of a Deacon in the Church of GOD committed unto thee ; in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen.”

If a *Priest*,

“Receive the HOLY GHOST for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of GOD, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven ; and whose sins though dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of GOD, and of His Holy Sacraments, in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen.”

If a *Bishop*,

“Receive the HOLY GHOST for the office and work of a Bishop in the Church of GOD, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands, in the Name of the Father, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen. And remember that thou stir up the grace of GOD which is given thee by this imposition of our hands, for GOD hath

not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and soberness."

In what has been hitherto said concerning the sect of the Independents, two great subjects have been set forth on which their errors are based—1, the corporate unity of the Church; and 2, the Apostolic succession of the Priesthood. It is clear that in neither of these points are they in unison with Holy Scripture, or with the primitive usage of the Church in the first ages of Christianity. But while they evidently fail, and must see that they fail, when trying themselves honestly by God's Word, yet it is singular to perceive how adroitly they defend themselves by arguments of great speciousness and apparent weight.

It is necessary, in the proof of any truth, to be maintained, that the *whole*, not a part, is to be proved. A likeness, or similarity in *some* things, is not sufficient to prove a truth. It must be an identity in *all* things. But the Independents are guilty of both these errors in argument in many ways. For instance, they are shown from God's Word, that the Church must of necessity be one body; and that congregations of separate Meetings in separate places cannot be according to the will of CHRIST; but they get rid of this by doing away with the name of congregation, and call each Meeting "*a Church*," as if the *name* which they give their Meetings could alter the meaning of the *thing*. They are shown that it is

absolutely essential for the right exercise of the Ministry, that there should be *authority*—they acknowledge it ; but they reply, We have authority as well as you, for we practise the “laying on of hands :”—not seeing that the fact of laying on of hands is, in itself, nothing, unless we know who the persons are who lay on hands—*i.e.*, whether they themselves have authority thus to do.

Again, when they are told of Apostolic succession as a note of the true Church, and that no Ministers of Christ can possibly venture to exercise their office of preaching or of administering sacraments, except they can show a linear descent from the Apostles ; knowing they cannot do this, they turn round and say, Well, we can show it at any rate as clearly as you ; for *your* Church (meaning the Church in England) can only date from the Reformation after all. Or they turn round and say—Well, what is this Apostolic succession of which you speak ? It is a mere idea—an empty dream. Suppose it be proved that your Bishops have come down from the Apostles, through whom have they come ? Through the corrupt and idolatrous “mother of harlots,” to wit, *Rome*. Look at the Popes of that wicked Church—see how many monsters of iniquity have stained the papal chair. Look at Alexander VI. for instance, and then say what sort of value can be attached to the idea of descending through such a pollution as that.

Or again, when they are told of the “laying on

of hands," that it is not *any* "laying on of hands" that will suffice—that it must be by the order of Bishops—that it is vital to the existence of a corporate body, being CHRIST'S, that it should have its members in unison with the Head, and that only can be in the manner and by the means which that Head has appointed—*i. e.* by the Bishops as the successors of the Apostles—then such an idea as this is scouted and ridiculed. *Bishops!* Who are they—from whence do they come, and how are they made? Not by the Church. And on what account are they appointed? Not for sanctity or learning—not for fitness or eminence in any way—not for any of those gifts of the SPIRIT for which S. Matthias or S. Barnabas, or even those of the Apostolic ages succeeding were appointed. No; but because they are tutors, or schoolmasters, or brothers, or sons of some chief minister of the Crown, or have been notorious for some service done to the State in politics and elections. Talk to us of *such* episcopal ordination as being vital to the appointment of the Ministry! At any rate, our ordination is as good as *that*.

Now these are no imaginary objections. It is precisely the way in which the Church is met by those who oppose her in the present day. For instance, here are two letters, in which this kind of objection is set forth, as coming from the Independents:—

“The Church cannot *prove* a continued descent

from the Apostles. There have been many breaks and two or three Popes at a time—each excommunicating the other. Or, again, supposing this not to have been the case, you say I must apply to the Apostolic Church. Must I apply to the Roman Catholic, or to the ‘Establishment?’ as I suppose you both claim a distinct Apostolic descent; and certainly if your Established Church claims that, the Roman Church can; as you can only claim your descent through that Church; and even in your own Church there are great divisions—one part of your Bishops holding that Baptism is Regeneration, and the other part denying it; the Roman Church holding that there are seven Sacraments, and acknowledging the Pope as head—you holding that there are only two Sacraments, and not acknowledging the Pope as head, besides other differences among you. Now your telling me to go to the Apostolic Church is saying nothing, as I should not know which division of it to believe.”

Or take another, in which the writer, not really and humbly seeking after truth, but offended by the idea of the ordinations of the Independents being treated as mere nullities—writes in the following strain:—

“ ‘Internal vocation’ means bringing up young men to the Church as a profession; in many cases because of a family living or influence, or because the young man is too soft for anything else, as a soldier or a lawyer.

“Independents profess, in every case, to follow the internal vocation, and before a young man is received as a student, there must be evidence of his piety, and some degree of fitness certified by a ‘Church,’ not a congregation.

“External divine appointment means episcopal ordination.

“Independents always practise the laying on of the hands of the brethren—not less scriptural surely—the ‘brethren’ being as good men as the Bishops, and those set apart by one mode, showing, say equally, the fruits of the SPIRIT, is it not fair to conclude that one way is as good as the other, if a tree is to be known by its fruits? Independents would rather have the ‘brethren’ to ordain than a Bishop, made so by favour of my Lord Palmerston or the racing Earl of Derby. Independents *do* think that the ‘Church’ is as likely to choose the right man as a patron of the usual sort, especially if he has bought it at an auction mart.”*

Now to what does all this amount? We are called upon to assert that, because there have been from time to time, and still are, abuses, corruptions, and weaknesses in the Church system, therefore the Church system is in itself wrong; and that another system of mere human device—in which it is supposed that there never can be any abuses, or corruptions, or weaknesses, ought

* These are specimens of letters actually received by the Editor.

to be substituted in its place. But let us consider. Has it ever been asserted, either in Holy Scripture when speaking of any national or local Church, or by the Church herself in any canon of authority, that every national or local Church is to be free from spot, or stain, or blemish? On the contrary, in the Book of *Revelation* we have an account of several national or local Churches so stained with imperfection that they were swept away from the face of the earth. They were parts, however, of one great Catholic whole, and the fact of their falling into errors individually did not militate against the promise of CHRIST, that the gates of hell should not prevail against that great Catholic whole, although they might against portions of her. So, too, with divisions between national Churches. It was seen from the first that unity would be broken—that men of ambitious spirit, as wolves, would enter in and scatter the flock—that the Church never would be safe from intestine heresies, and that party would rise up against party, and nation against nation. It was foreseen, and made a subject of warning by our LORD Himself. This does not, however, militate against the fact that the promise of CHRIST was given to His Church upon a certain and assured basis, and that His Priesthood was sent forth by His authority as a distinct order, and with a distinct promise—“As my FATHER hath sent Me, so send I you;” or that His prayer was made repeatedly, as the great object of His

heart's desire, that His Church might be one. Thus, if we find on the one hand that no promise was ever made of perfection, and absolute freedom from error, in every local spot, while there *was* a promise made of the building up of a corporate body—the Church, and a commissioned Priesthood to flow from His Apostles—why does the existence of error and imperfection, which was never denied to be possible, deprive us of the fact and the necessity of an Apostolic Church, which was ever asserted to be a mark of His Truth.

But these are remarks applicable to the *general* statement. Let us come to particulars. It is stated in five ways.

1st. That because there are divisions in different portions of the Church, such as between the Anglican and the Roman, therefore there is no Church at all, and the Independents have a right to do what they like.

2ndly. That because there have been gross cases of unworthy, nay, criminal Bishops, and specially in the see of Rome, upon which basis of descent the Apostolicity of the Church of England mainly depends, therefore all idea of Apostolic succession must be abandoned, and the Independents are right in appointing Ministers of their own choosing, after a manner of their own.

3rdly. That because young men are frequently called to holy orders, pretending to have an "inward vocation," when it is in reality nothing more than a desire to hold a family living, therefore the Independents are right in inventing another way of approving an "inward vocation" after a manner of their own.

4thly. That because there have been, and are, gross abuses in the manner of selecting and appointing the Bishops of the Church—namely, by the nepotism, or political partizanship, of the Ministers of the Crown, therefore the Independents are right in abandoning the ordination of Bishops altogether, and finding another of their own.

5thly. That because it happens not unfrequently that the Pastoral office of the Church, in the shape of an ecclesiastical benefice is set up for sale by the patrons thereof at an auction mart, therefore the Independents are right in setting up a Pastoral office of their own of a different kind, and free from the stain of such pollution.

We must take these points of objection in order. In regard to the first:—Unity between the Churches of the Greek, the Roman, and the Anglican obedience, is confessed to be broken. Upon whose shoulders lies the blame of this disunion it is difficult to say; but when all agree

that such disunion is a sin—when all agree in prayers and constant endeavours to restore the broken unity, such a fact does not surely justify a still greater breach of unity on the part of any members of one of those Churches. It is not consistent with common sense, or with Christian love, when we acknowledge an error to exist, immediately to go and make the error worse by adding another, and then justify the second by the first.

It is also acknowledged on the same ground, that there are parties within the Church of our own country—the high, the low, the Erastian, the Evangelical, and the like; but this weakness and confession of error is not mended by the fact of a great portion of the Church departing out of her altogether. Suppose that we differ in opinion within the Church on certain points even of great importance, it is surely somewhat a good sign that love so far prevails among the dissentients, that they do not remove violently out of each other's communion. How the Independents justify open schism by the fact of the existence of difference of opinion without schism, it is difficult to imagine. One would have thought rather that it would be a rebuke to them—inasmuch as it would suggest that they also, with their differences of opinion, might still have been embraced in the arms of the Church, had they not openly broken from her. The Independents make it their great boast that they have differ-

ences of form and ritual—differences of prayers and preaching, and on all minor points liberty of thinking and doing as they like in each congregation *independently* of each other—and yet they say they are in union with each other. Now if this be their boast, how can they, of all persons in the world, bring it as a charge against the Church that there should be many clergy and people who hold differences of opinion and yet remain in common communion? This seems, to say the least of it, somewhat inconsistent.

Take, again, the second objection. There have been on many occasions elections of unworthy, nay, criminal Bishops. Infamous men have filled the See of Rome. From the See of Rome our succession is derived; therefore, the idea of succession is absurd, because it is polluted. Well; did these objectors ever call to mind the descent of our Blessed LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST? Examine His genealogy in the Books of Holy Scripture—consider that from her that had been the wife of Uriah, as given in *S. Matthew*, and from David, as given in *S. Luke*, He took His descent—just as we know He receives the special title *The Son of David*. Now do we attach any kind of wrong—do we make any objection to the truth—do we in any way find fault with our LORD's personal doctrine, or authority, or purity, because of this stain, and many others which occur in His genealogy? It would be blasphemy

so to do. By the same rule then, we must judge the Bishops of the present Church, as to their ecclesiastical descent. Impurity, errors in conduct, nay, even sins, in those from whom we trace the succession of the Priesthood, does not hinder either the authority or the purity of any individual Bishop or Priest as he ministers among us at the present day. If the Independents could say that in *their* "laying on of hands" there never was an Elder, or other person exercising that pretended gift, free from sin or untainted by corruption, then they might ridicule the Apostolic descent of the Priesthood of the Church; but surely they prove too much when they refuse the Church's authority on such a ground as this. With such a principle granted, every kind of ministry must perish together, and *infidelit* must be the consequence.

As to the third objection—the sincerity or insincerity of the "inward vocation." In the Church, the question is asked of the candidate for Holy Orders thus:—"Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the HOLY GHOST to take upon you this office and ministration, to serve God, for the promoting of His glory, and the edifying of His people?" To which the answer is, "I trust so." Now it is very awful to think that it is possible for any one to make such an answer as this at such a time as the receiving Holy Orders, with a lie in his mouth before God; and it is a

great responsibility on the part of any one, on the score of charity, to assert that it is likely in any case that it should be so. It is perfectly true, we know, that many of the younger sons of our nobility and gentry who have in their families valuable benefices, do seek holy orders, and do hold such benefices; but who will dare to assert that they have done despite to the HOLY SPIRIT in taking Holy Orders? This is an awful charge. Can that man have the love of JESUS CHRIST in his heart who makes it? Who can know the inner mind of a man but the man himself? Charity would say, let all be judged by ALMIGHTY GOD, and not by us.

The fourth objection is, to the manner of selecting and appointing our Bishops. It is confessed with shame—confessed with somewhat of indignation, that the Erastianism of the Church in England is, in this respect, most grievous. Whether it be the Crown, or whether it be the Prime Minister, is of no great matter, but this blot in our Church system is indeed confessed; and we know how, practically, it comes to pass that the Sees of our ancient Bishoprics are continually filled, according to the turn of the politics of the day, by this or that friend, tutor, brother, or son of the prevailing Ministers of the time, without any consideration whatever of the requirements of the Church, or any acknowledgment of the necessity of certain qualifications in him who

is to take upon himself so great an office. This leaning of the Church upon the State—this feeding the flocks of the Church by Pastors chosen out of temporal and carnal motives, is the great sore which degenerates her life and paralyzes her energies,—which throws a deadness upon her ministrations and demoralizes her whole bearing ; and until it is cured, or shaken off by the secret strength which we hope is still within her, the Church of England will never achieve any great degree of success in the propagation of the Gospel, nor obtain any very deep hold upon the affections of her people. This is confessed. But what then ? Let us suppose our Bishops, under this system which we deplore, ever so unlearned, ever so unworthy, ever so deficient in the requirements of their calling, that does not militate against our duty to receive them, and to submit to them when once set over us, as set over us in the LORD *by His Will*. We may lament the manner of their election as contrary to the Spirit of CHRIST, and as an unjust aggression of the temporal upon the spiritual power ; but we must wait patiently for the remedy till such time as it may please God to send it.

In the same manner must we treat the fifth objection—the buying and selling of ecclesiastical benefices. No one could for a moment defend so odious a perversion of the meaning and character of the Pastoral office. Nay, even in the Church

as at present constituted, this buying and selling, if not in the eyes of the law, yet certainly in the eyes of truth, falls under the sin of simony. "Thy money perish with thee," might as well be said now to him who puts to sale at the auction mart a benefice which is to provide a Pastor for God's Church, as it was of old to Simon. It is another grievous curse upon the Church—one which has molested her in every age, and one from which, as long as covetousness forms part of our evil nature, must ever more or less degrade her. We acknowledge it—we grieve over it—we deprecate it; but it does not follow that because of it we are to abandon the Church, any more than the first disciples abandoned her when the covetousness of Simon was made known, which gave a name for ever to this grievous sin.

Consider then the whole question together—If among the Apostles, who were only twelve, there was one Judas—if S. Peter, the very rock upon which the Church was to be built, failed in the hour of need, and denied his LORD—if *all* the Apostles forsook Him and fled—if among the seven deacons one was afterwards found to give his name to a heresy and the perversion of a whole Church, of which S. John speaks in the *Revelation**—if, under the Apostolic miraculous

* The Nicolaitans in the Church of Pergamos.—Rev. ii. 15.

gifts of the HOLY SPIRIT, a man was baptized who was a hypocrite, and afterwards lived to be the father of the most pestilential heresy that ever disturbed the Church*—if S. Paul and S. Barnabas, men full of the HOLY GHOST, and appointed to rule the Church by special revelations, were compelled to part asunder by a disagreement about a thing which seems to us a trifle—if, in the very first commencement of the Apostolic mission, a dispute arose concerning a matter of discipline which could only be terminated by calling together the whole Apostolic body to consider it—if, on the very same point, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, S. Paul, found it necessary solemnly to rebuke the great Apostle of the Circumcision, S. Peter †—if, in the Epistles of S. Paul and the other Apostles to the various Churches we find the great bulk of their subject-matter to be a rebuke to those Churches for some deviation from true doctrine or some misconception of a precept, or, even worse, some violation of good morals and holiness—if, I repeat, under the immediate blessing of the ever-present HOLY GHOST, under an aspect fresh from the very Presence and anointing hand of the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself, all these blots, and stains, and imperfections, and mistakes of every hue were continually found,—is it to be expected, can it be thought possible, that the Church of the

* Simon Magus.

† Gal. ii. 14.

present day, degenerate and weakened as she has become by the lapse of corrupt ages, should be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, which surround her on all sides, both from without and from within? Is it to be a ground of flying away from the precincts of God's fold, that the wolf is known to be round about and within it? Should it not rather be an argument to abide stedfastly, and give every aid of help against the wolf? We should rather say to the Independents, as one of those sects who contain, although in schism, a considerable amount of vital truth among them—"You should not have deserted us when we were weak, but should have combined with us against the common enemy. It was both cowardly as well as selfish to abandon the post of danger, and to desert the ship when labouring in a storm. It would have been more brave, more truthful, and more generous to abide in the ship with the faithful brethren, and to bring her safe to land."

There are many principles and truths among the Independents which are valuable—many in which they would find the sounder portion of the Church most fully to agree with them. Their hatred or the slightest perversion of sincerity in the appointment to the Pastoral office—who cannot but admire it? Their stedfast resistance against State aggression, and the interference of Cæsar in the things of God—who that loves the Great Head of the Church cannot but join in it? Their desire for freedom, and greater latitude in

each congregation and place for variety of form and ritual—who would not prefer it (if kept within bounds,) to the dry and cold stiffness of the Church, which confines and restricts all men, no matter of what country or national habit, to one meagre line of uniformity, stamped and sealed by that which to every lover of JESUS CHRIST is the most odious of bonds, an Act of Parliament? Who does not with them fire up into a just indignation for the honour of his LORD, when he finds the Church, which is described as a kingdom ruling over all, polluted by the nepotism and manœuvred by the craft of a political minister raised into power on the shoulders of an ignorant popularity which is to last for a day? Who does not feel shame within him when, dwelling on the glorious promise of Scripture that the Church should be CHRIST'S Own "Spouse," His "Bride," His "Beloved"—that she should be "bone of His bone," and "flesh of His flesh;" that she should have "kings and queens for her nursing fathers and nursing mothers," he finds in practice infidel legislators discussing her doctrines, and political lawyers planning her discipline? and when we claim the time-honoured name of a *Church*, find ourselves described by the degradation of an "Establishment!"

Surely the Independents feel and know that in these miserable things the Church suffers with her LORD, but never can rejoice. Then we should call upon them, not to stand any longer aloof

from us in our contest with the common enemy, but rather to rejoin and reassure us with the strength of their presence among us. On their own principles they would have been compelled, if they had lived in those ages, to make a schism even from the Apostles. If not from them, then why from us? Why not bring to the Church the vigour of their just opposition to what is wrong, without opening to the enemy of souls fresh opportunities of injury? Why not fight within the ranks, as well as without? Why not join to amend and to restore, instead of weakening and pulling down? If they, and such as they, holding in just abomination the tyranny of the State, the nepotism of Governments, and the covetousness of the nobility, were to join with us in an honourable league against those instruments of Satan, we should soon see an end of Erastian Bishops and sales of ecclesiastical benefices at auction marts. We should present the Church before the sight of our one common LORD and SAVIOUR a little more like that which He meant and prayed for her to be, as far as human things can go, "without blemish and without spot."

Quakerism.

QUAKERISM.

IN the year 1624, just one year before the accession of Charles I. to the throne of England, was born one GEORGE FOX, at Drayton, in Lancashire. His father was a weaver, and he was himself brought up to the trade of a shoe-maker. Very early in life, even while he was yet an apprentice, he manifested a very peculiar turn for religion—would stray away from his master many days and nights together, wandering about the fields as a hermit in a leathern doublet, and sitting in the hollow of trees, meditating upon his Bible. It was a period in the history of England when law, order, and religion were perhaps at their lowest ebb; when the King, in the exercise of his prerogative, had unhappily wounded the feelings and alienated the affections of a great portion of his people; when the Archbishop and Primate of the Church, though nobly striving to maintain the ancient observances of Christianity, fell under the displeasure of the Puritans,

and ultimately was brought to the scaffold, suffering martyrdom for his faith; and when the Parliament, contending with the King on questions of the liberty of the people, was urged by the evil spirits of the time to rebel against their anointed Sovereign, and defy him by force of arms. Such was the period when George Fox, abandoning all consideration of the secular matters of this world, issued forth through Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and travelling up and down the country, preached to the people in the streets, fields, and market-places, that men should no longer give heed to Churches and Priests, to Creeds and Bibles; but *should receive the inward divine teaching of the Lord, and take that for their rule; that they should no longer trust to any thing or person as a guide of truth, but solely to the inward light of faith within them.*

The times seemed peculiarly suited to the enthusiasm of such a doctrine—for the places of public worship were at that time open to teachers of every denomination; and each sect in turn would expatiate on their own creed. Civil and Religious Liberty was the universal cry. The Church, with all her offices—her Prayer-Book, and her Liturgy, was set aside, Episcopacy abolished, and every man did what was right in his own eyes. There was no reason, therefore, why George Fox should not preach what he liked, as well as the Independents, Anabaptists, and Puritans, who flocked on all sides around him.

According to his own doctrine of "*inward light*," it was revealed to him that the LORD had forbidden him to take off his hat to any one, and that he was never to use the complimentary language of *you* in speaking, but *thou*; that he was not to use titles of the world, or call any man master or lord, and that he was never to swear or take an oath. All this he supported by passages of Scripture, such as these: "Swear not at all." "How can ye believe who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh of God only." "Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay," and so forth.

Encouraged by the numbers who now began to follow him—for where is the enthusiast who does not obtain followers—George Fox was not content with the liberty conceded to him of believing and preaching what he pleased, but he must needs make aggressions upon others. At Nottingham, where the minister of the Church was preaching upon the text of S. Peter, "We have a more sure word of prophecy," and was teaching the people that from this all doctrine was to be tried by Holy Scripture, Fox, interrupting the preacher, stood up and said, "Not so—It is not the Scripture, but it is the Holy Spirit, by which opinions and religions are to be tried. It is the Spirit that leads people to all truth." In like manner he disturbed the preachers in Mansfield, Market-Bosworth, Derby, and several other places. For these acts of interruption, and violating the

worship of others, he was brought before the magistrates, beaten, stoned, and put into the stocks. On one occasion at Derby—being asked why he had gone into the church to disturb the congregation—his reply was, “God had moved him to it—that God did not dwell in temples made with hands, and that all their preaching, baptisms, and sacrifices, would never sanctify them, but that they ought to look to CHRIST *in themselves*, and not unto men, for it is CHRIST alone that sanctifies.”

But neither prisons, nor stocks, nor stoning at all daunted the newly rising sect. Soon they proceeded further, and appeared at times of public worship in emblematical and typical dresses—calling the authorised clergy by the name of hirelings, deceivers of the people, and false prophets. Some went through the towns and villages naked, some starved themselves to death, some undertook to raise their friends from the grave; in short, all the usual effects of a perturbed imagination under the influence of religious fanaticism, very soon displayed themselves. On one occasion, Fox being brought before the magistrate, Squire Gervas Bennet of Derby, he fell suddenly into some of these religious demonstrations, and began to tremble and shake under his excitement. With a loud voice and vehement emotion of the body, he bade the magistrate “*tremble at the word of the Lord.*” Whereupon the magistrate, suiting the word to the usual

emotions of the body which they displayed, gave to Fox and his followers the derisive name of QUAKERS, and from that day to the present, the followers of George Fox have been usually designated by that name. It is a name of derision, and one which they themselves repudiate and only employ on occasion of necessity, that which they themselves use is "The Society of Friends." The word "*Friends*" being taken from the Acts of the Apostles, xxvii. 3, where it is said, that "Julius the Centurion courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his FRIENDS"—and also the passage of 3 St. John, 14,—“The FRIENDS salute thee. Greet the FRIENDS by name.”

Such is the origin of this remarkable sect—one more specimen, in addition to those already cited, of the wanderings of the human mind when it casts aside the tradition of ages and dissents from the Church. In all probability, George Fox and his followers would have returned to the obscurity which they merited, or indeed would never have seen the light at all, had it not been for the external peculiarities which they adopted in dress and manners. It was by this that they mainly achieved their notoriety. To insist on the internal witness of the Spirit; to despise all rule and authority; to be led by visions, ecstasies, and revelations, was nothing new in the annals of fanaticism. We have found it already in the Anabaptists and the Irvingites, and we shall find it also

in the Methodists, and in many other sects. To be judged by any evidence external to ourselves, is to acknowledge that truth may exist in opposition to self; but to say that our own light within is the only evidence of truth, is of course to shut out every man's opinion but our own. And yet this is the delusion of all sectarians, and of the Quakers more especially, because they carry it so far as to despise not only the Church, but holy Scripture itself in comparison with it. If therefore the Quakers in their first origin had claimed their title to form a sect on this ground only, they would have claimed nothing new. To oppose the Church, tradition, and antiquity was nothing. The Quakers did more. They opposed the world also. In opposing the Church they would not in those days have suffered, but when not only the customs of Religion but the customs of Society also fell under their interdict, when the common courtesies of life in language and conversation were refused, and the Courts of Law, in demanding the oath of a Christian man, set at naught; then came such a collision with all that was around them, that persecution and suffering were the immediate results; and with persecution and suffering, their sure fruit, notoriety and increase of numbers.

It was in the year 1652 that the Quakers set up a separate assembly in Lancashire, and in 1654 they opened a meeting in the house of

Robert Dring, in Watling Street, London. They were now under the dominion of the Protector, Oliver Cromwell, but the license of Republicanism did not give them any more toleration in their peculiarities than the discipline of the Church had done. One of them in a letter to the Protector says, "that though there are no penal laws in force, obliging men to comply with the established Religion, yet the Quakers are exposed upon other accounts; they are fined and imprisoned for refusing to take an oath, for not paying their tithes, for disturbing the public assemblies, and meeting in the streets. and some of them have been whipped for vagabonds, and for their plain speeches to the magistrates." Nor does it seem, from all accounts, that such treatment was other than they deserved, for it was no part surely of true Religion to do as they are now described as doing. A female came into Whitehall Chapel perfectly naked, in the midst of public worship, the Lord Protector being himself present. Another came into the Parliament House with a trenchard in her hand, which she broke in pieces, saying, "Thus shall ye be broke in pieces." Another came with a drawn sword and stood at the door of the Parliament House, and wounded several persons, "crying out that he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to kill every man that sat in that House." The most extravagant among them was James Naylor, who had before been an officer in the army, a great

speaker among them. They styled him in awful and blasphemous language, "The Everlasting Son of Righteousness!" "The Prince of Peace!" "The only-begotten Son of God!" "The fairest among ten thousand!" Some of his friends kissed his feet while in prison at Exeter, and when he was released he made a public entry into Bristol, imitating the manner of our Blessed LORD's entrance into Jerusalem. One walked bareheaded before him, another led his horse; others spread their scarves and handkerchiefs along the road, crying continually with horrid blasphemy the very words used in the sacred entry of our LORD into the holy city. Surely for such acts as these—outrages against everything holy and sacred—the Civil Law was right in taking just vengeance. It was no *toleration* to suffer such horrid profaneness. Liberty of faith could not claim for such a blasphemer exemption from punishment. Accordingly he was brought before the magistrates as a civil offender, placed in the pillory, publicly whipped, and then again imprisoned. The following is the account given by Neale, in his History of the Puritans.

"The committee asked him why he came in so extraordinary a manner into Bristol? To which he replied that he might not refuse any honours which others, moved by the LORD, might give him. Being further asked whether he had reproved the persons who gave him those titles and attributes, he answered—'If they had it from

the LORD, what had I to do to reprove them? If the Father has moved them to give these honours to CHRIST, I may not deny them; if they have given them to any other than to CHRIST, I disown them.' He concluded his defence thus: 'I do abhor that any honours due to God should be given to me, since I am a creature, but it pleased the LORD to set me up as a sign of the coming of the Righteous One, and what has been done to me passing through the town I was commanded by the power of the LORD to suffer to be done to the outward man, as a sign; but I abhor any honour as a creature.'" *

He suffered two years' imprisonment, and then at length recanted, so far at least as to acknowledge that the Divine salutations which he had received at Bristol were wrong.

"All those ranting wild spirits which gathered about me," he says, "at that time of darkness with all their wild acts and wicked works against the honour of God and His pure Spirit and people, I renounce. And whereas I gave advantage, through want of judgment, to the Evil Spirit, I take shame to myself."

He died shortly after this, a strange spectacle indeed of the fanaticism of an ungoverned mind, and a specimen of the wild religion of that ungodly time; when as it seemed, between the Puritans with their gloomy hypocrisy, and such blasphemous assertions of the inward move-

* Neale's Hist. of Puritans, vol. iv. p. 154.

ments of the HOLY GHOST as are here depicted, there seemed no middle course.

Nor was George Fox, the original founder of the Quakers, any more than James Naylor his follower, altogether free from instances of wild extravagance, nor from suffering persecution. Not that he was guilty of any such atrocious blasphemies as James Naylor, but he was continually rendering himself obnoxious to the government of the Protector. More especially in those points peculiar to the Quakers of refusing the common courtesy of taking off the hat, and of taking the oath demanded in courts of justice, he and his immediate followers were continually brought before magistrates, fined, and imprisoned. This principally occurred in Bristol and other parts of the West of England. "It was well remarked by Hugh Peters to Oliver Cromwell that he could not give George Fox a better opportunity of spreading his principles in Cornwall than by imprisoning him there."* It was true. In consequence of it, his principles did spread, and by the time that Charles II. was restored to the throne, in the year 1660, the Quakers presented so numerous a body that they gained access to the King; and the King in a conversation with one of their leaders replied: "Of this you may be assured, that you shall none of you suffer for your opinions of religion, so long as you live peaceably; and you have the word of

* Gough's History of the Quakers, p. 217.

a King for it; and I have also given forth a declaration to the same purpose, that none shall wrong or abuse you.”*

In consequence of this assurance, for some short time in the reign of Charles II., the Quakers had a respite from persecution, but it was only for some short time. There was an insurrection made by one Venner against the Government; and though in truth the Quakers had no concern in it, yet suspicion resting upon them, they were visited again with every kind of persecution. The operation of the Conventicle Act, which was passed in 1664, though levelled at the whole body of Dissenters, yet fell with peculiar severity upon the Quakers. It was represented to the King that not less than four thousand two hundred persons who had filled the prisons since the Restoration, were Quakers. Neale, in his “History of the Puritans,” gives a list of the most eminent of those who suffered, both men and women, one of whom was Mrs. Margaret Fell. On the apprehension of George Fox, their leader, she published a narrative of their sufferings, and appealed to the King, waiting personally upon him, and describing them in the following manner:—“They were,” she says, “an innocent, peaceable people, who did no injury, and administered no occasion of offence, except in keeping their religious meetings for no other purpose than worshipping God in that way they were persuaded was

* Gough’s History, vol. i. p. 440.

most acceptable to Him, and edifying one another in His fear, which being to them a conscientious matter of duty to God, they could not violate it, in compliance with the ordinances or laws of man, whatever they might suffer." A description which might indeed be true of the Quakers of the present day, but certainly not of those enthusiasts who, under George Fox and James Naylor, violated all the decencies of public worship in those who did not agree with them, and who dared to blaspheme, as Naylor had done, the sacred person of our Blessed Lord.

In 1666 the Quakers received a great accession to their strength by the reception within their community of the celebrated William Penn. He was a person of rank and ability, son of Sir William Penn, a British Admiral. He was educated at Christ Church, Oxford, as a Gentleman Commoner, which betokened his wealth and respectability of birth. He was first attracted to the Society of Friends by the preaching of one Thomas Loe. The first effect of this was that Penn withdrew from his usual attendance at the College chapel; and when an order came from the Head of the College that the students and members of the College should wear the surplice, Penn and his associates at once refused, upon which they were expelled from the University. Admiral Penn was a great favourite with Charles II., and had every probability of high advancement at Court for his son, but this

untoward event damped all his prospects. In vain the Admiral urged and remonstrated. Young Penn would by no means be induced either to give up his associates or his principles. Other points failing, at length the father limited his demand to the single act of taking off his hat in the presence of the King; but the son steadfastly refused even this. "He would not," he said, "pay even this limited degree of hat-worship." At which the father was so much incensed that he turned the young man out of doors.

In 1668 Penn published his first work, entitled "Truth Exalted." This was followed by another work — "The Sandy Foundation Shaken," in which, though asserting his faith in the Holy Trinity, he yet objected to the words used in its description by the Church of England. For this he was committed to the Tower; and during his imprisonment, which lasted nearly seven months, he wrote and found means of publishing his Tract, called "No Cross No Crown." This was his most popular work. He was subsequently again committed to Newgate for preaching in what was designated "a riotous and seditious assembly." Soon afterwards Admiral Penn died, completely reconciled to his son, and left him estates to the amount of £1500 a year. This did not withdraw him from the Society of Friends. On the contrary, it enabled him with greater power than ever to defend and uphold them. In

the House of Commons he succeeded in passing a bill to the effect that the affirmation of Quakers should be received in law instead of an oath. This bill was lost in the House of Lords, but it was the foundation of that which afterwards became the law of the land.

But the principal event in Penn's life, and that which will carry his name down to posterity, was his connexion with America. There was a tract of country on the west side of the Delaware, granted by Charles II. to Penn and his heirs, in consideration of a debt due from the Crown to Admiral Penn for money advanced in the service of the Navy. Penn was constituted absolute proprietor and governor of this Province, and from him it took the name of Pennsylvania. Under the authority of governor he invited settlers to embark with him for the new colony; and naturally enough in connexion with Penn they were principally Quakers. He founded the city of Philadelphia, a name evidently bearing the mark of Quakerism (brotherly love); and having spent about two years in arranging the government of the colony, he returned to England in the year 1684.

It is clear that from so eminent a man, and at the same time from the fortunate coincidence of circumstances by which he was thrown into connexion with the whole continent of America, the Quakers derived great accession both in numbers and respectability. And not only from his rank,

and from his authority as Governor of Pennsylvania, but also from his writings, which were invariably temperate and judicious. From this period we may date the cessation of much that was before objectionable and fanatical in their system, and their toning down gradually into what they have become at the present day, a quiet and a harmless people.

Together with the cessation of what was really objectionable, came also a cessation of the persecutions to which they had been subject. Charles II., who had given them his word as a King that they should not be persecuted, had falsified that word; but now upon the accession of James II. a better prospect of universal toleration awaited them. The Quakers addressed the new Sovereign with a homely simplicity and truthfulness, natural to their principles. "We are come," they said, "to testify our sorrow for the death of our good friend Charles, and our joy for thy being made our Governor. We are told thou art not of the persuasion of the Church of England, no more than we. Therefore we hope thou wilt grant us the same liberty which thou allowest thyself; which doing, we wish thee all manner of happiness." And this was fulfilled. For the King, while he was anxious to grant toleration to the Roman Catholics, was compelled in consistency to grant toleration to all others who differed from the Church as then by law established. He passed therefore what was then called "The

Toleration Act." Under this, the Quakers enjoyed, in common with all other dissenters, a freedom of opinion and license of worship to which they had hitherto been strangers. And this was still further amplified and strengthened by the Act of William and Mary, in 1696, which finally gave them full liberty of conscience, and allowed, with very few exceptions, their affirmation instead of an oath in the Courts of Law.

From that time to the present, marked out from the world by dress and manners, the Quakers have remained a quiet and inoffensive people, not producing many men of eminence or note, but still presenting to the world in an ostentatious simplicity, a perpetual testimony of many of those virtues of homely and domestic life, which seem well-nigh to have been forgotten among the other sections of the Christian faith. Their number in the last Census was about 14,000, their places of meeting were 371, being a decrease since 1800 of 42.

They are not therefore considered an increasing sect; on the contrary, as the younger branches of the Society advance into the world, it is observable that the strictness of the Quakers' system is less and less appreciated, both in dress and manners, until by degrees the whole external formality of their youth departs, and they are found, as other men are, in the bosom of the Church. They are mostly confined at present to certain

great towns and localities. In some places, they have of late years become altogether extinct.

All the other sectarians whom we have as yet described have set forth some sort of definite creed. They have as a body, meeting together, in solemn deliberation, announced to the world what it is that they hold in regard of faith, and wherein they differ from the great stream of catholic order and truth, from which they have, upon principles of conscience, diverged. But not so the Quakers. George Fox their founder, Robert Barclay, and William Penn, the most eminent men among them, have, as individuals, set forth in their writings certain articles of faith, but even these differ from each other, and can only be taken as accidental statements. The Quakers, *as a body*, have no articles of faith, and those who become members of their communion are not required to make any subscription or confession. Their creed is left entirely to themselves individually.

Hence it has happened that no religious community has suffered so much in the mis-statements of others, in regard of their religious belief. They have been accused of denying the doctrines of the Holy Trinity, of the Divinity of our Lord, of the Resurrection of the Body, of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and many other points which the Church throughout the world has ever held vital to salvation; but all

these assertions have simply arisen from the very fact of there being no public formularies to which men might appeal, and from the accidental writings or assertions which indiscreet or ignorant persons among them may have put forth. For instance, there was one Hannah Barnard, who held a questionable doctrine on the Divinity of our LORD, which she published in various pamphlets and writings, but she was disowned by the Society; and there was one Thomas Foster, who wrote on the subject of "Christian Unitarianism," in which, as in many other publications, he evidently denied our LORD's Divinity, but he was also disowned. This shows that although they do not positively set forth articles of faith, still there are certain deviations from orthodoxy, which even their liberality will not tolerate. † The truth would seem to be, that they abhor and wish to set aside all the scholastic, dogmatic, and definite terms of faith used by the Church, while they at heart preserve a sense of the truth which those terms inherently involve; and hence, though they may be orthodox in the main, they may frequently appear as denying what in reality they do not mean to deny. † Robert Barclay published a "Confession" and "Catechism," in which he asserts his faith in a Resurrection, using the words of Scripture, but carefully abstaining from anything further in explanation of it; and in speaking of the Divine nature of CHRIST, he declares it as an abstract truth; but in defining

the nature of worship, he asserts that *worship* is due to the Father only. He abstains from quoting any texts or passages which the Church usually brings forward, as authorizing our devout prayers to and worship of CHRIST, as the SON of GOD, and GOD; and in his greater work of "The Apology" he is entirely silent on the doctrine of the Trinity. If "Barclay's Apology" therefore is to be taken as an authorized summary of the Quakers' creed, doubt might be thrown on their orthodoxy on those greater points held dear by Christians in general; but if it be taken, as they say it is, as the expression only of an individual, and of one who merely abstains from asserting his faith in the dogmatic words of the Church, rather than of one who purposely denies his belief in the Divinity of our LORD: then it may be considered as a document not affecting the general body. William Penn was certainly the most eminent man of whom, in the commencement of their Society, the Quakers could boast, and one whose writings are held in the greatest repute. Penn was accused of erroneous doctrine, because he would not join with the violent Calvinists of his day, but rather repudiated their tenets. He vindicated himself in a pamphlet, entitled "Innocency with her Open Face," in which he says:—

"As for my being a Socinian, I must confess that I have read of one Socinus, of (what they call) a noble family in Italy—who abandoned the glories, pleasures, and honours of the Great Duke

of Tuscany's court at Florence, and became a perpetual exile for his conscience, but I was never baptized in *his* name, and therefore deny that reproachful epithet; and if in anything I acknowledge the verity of his doctrine, it is for the truth's sake, of which in many things he had a clearer prospect than most of his contemporaries—but not therefore a Socinian, any more than a son of the English Church because I justify many of *her* principles, since the Reformation, against the Romish Church.”

But to make the matter clearer, and remove all doubt as to his orthodoxy, he sums up the following words, in that which he calls his “Confession.”

“I sincerely own and unfeignedly believe (by virtue of the sound knowledge and experience received from the gift of that holy unction and divine grace inspired from on high), in one holy, just, merciful, almighty, and eternal God, who is the Father of all things; that appeared to the holy patriarchs and prophets of old, at sundry times and in divers manners; and in ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, the everlasting wisdom, divine power, true light, only SAVIOUR, and preserver of all; the same one, holy, just, merciful, almighty and eternal God, who, in the fulness of time, took and was manifest in the flesh, at which time He preached, and His disciples after Him, the everlasting gospel of repentance, and promise of remission of sins and

eternal life to all that heard and obeyed : Who said, He that is with you, in the flesh, shall be in you, by the Spirit ; and though He left them, as to the flesh, yet not comfortless, for He would come to them again in the Spirit : for a little while, and they should not see Him, as to the flesh ; again a little while, and they should see Him, in the Spirit ; for the LORD JESUS CHRIST is that Spirit, a manifestation whereof is given to every one to profit withal ; in which Holy Spirit I believe, as the same almighty and eternal God Who, as in those times He ended all shadows, and became the infallible guide to them that walked therein, by which they are adopted heirs and co-heirs of glory ; so I am a living witness, that the same holy, just, merciful almighty, and eternal God is now as then (after the tedious night of idolatry, superstition, and human inventions, that have overspread the world) gloriously manifested to discover, and save from all iniquity, and to conduct unto the holy land of pure and endless peace ; in a word, to tabernacle in men. And I also firmly believe, that without repenting and forsaking of past sins, and walking in obedience to the heavenly voice, which would guide into all truth, and reestablish their remission, eternal life can never be obtained : but unto them that fear His name, and keep His commandments, they, and only they, shall have a right to the tree of life ; for whose name's sake I have been made willing to relinquish and forsake all the vain,

fastidious, enticing pleasures, alluring honours, and glittering glories of this transitory world, and readily to accept the portion of a fool from this deriding generation, and become a man of sorrow, and a perpetual reproach to my familiars; yea, and with the greatest cheerfulness, obsignate and confirm, with no less zeal than the loss of whatsoever this doating world accounts dear, this faithful confession, having my eyes fixed upon a more enduring substance and lasting inheritance, and being most infallibly assured, that when time shall be no more, I shall, if faithful hereunto, possess the mansions of eternal life, and be received into everlasting habitations of rest and glory."

In this Confession, as far as it concerns the Holy Trinity and the divine nature of our Lord, although the actual words of the Church are not employed, still the essence of the true faith is carefully maintained: and if this be an exponent of the Quakers' doctrine on those heads, (which we may fairly allow it to be,) there is no reason to join in the common cry against them of Socinianism. The only error is that, as a body or religious community, they abstain from declaring openly their faith; and therefore it is impossible to say that, as a body, they hold the truth. Charity, however, "which thinketh no evil," may bring us to this conclusion, that until they do, as a religious body, *deny* the truth, we may hope and assume that they hold it, and

that they err more from want of precision in declaring, than purposed intention of rejecting, the Catholic faith. They have dwelt on the single idea, that it is only necessary "with the heart to *believe*," and have forgotten that great truth with which S. Paul accompanies it—"that with the mouth *confession* is made unto salvation."

But, however we may thus in charity defend them on the charges of Socinianism and denying the doctrine of Holy Trinity there are many other points upon which no such defence can be set up. The whole foundation of their various errors, perversions and exaggerations of truth, lies in the fact of their assertion that every man is to be guided by the "*inward light within him*." This "inward light" is of course considered to be the interposition of the Holy Spirit; and this is to be vouchsafed in the faith as well as in the daily conduct of life. So far does this idea lead them that even in the consideration of Holy Scripture, though they do not deny its inspiration, and obligation upon man—yet in its application and understanding they assert that the "inward light" is to be the sole guide. "Holy Scripture," says Robert Barclay, "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, &c." He could not well say otherwise—but then he adds: "Nevertheless, because it is only a *declaration* of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, it is not to be esteemed the *principal* ground of all truth and knowledge, nor

the *primary* rule of faith and morals; but a *secondary* rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from Whom it has all its excellence and certainty." That is, in other words, to say that the Spirit or "inward light" of every man is the primary rule—the Scriptures being taken as a subsidiary rule, subject to the Spirit or "inward light." Now the Catholic Faith is, that Holy Scripture, being God's Word, and the offspring of the Spirit, we must certainly have God's Spirit for its interpretation; just as it is said, "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." But then we add that the *Church*—her traditions; her gifts of grace to be guided unto all truth; her promise received from her Lord, that He would be with her unto the end of the world—*she* is the interpreter and guide. The Quakers say—No: every man's own "inward light" is the interpreter and guide.

From this, of course, immediately flows, as an unavoidable consequence, a total denial of "*The Church*" as any authority in faith. We say that we believe in the Holy Catholic Church to direct our faith. The Quakers say, We believe in every man's "inward light" to direct his faith; and from thence again arises, as an unavoidable consequence, the impossibility of any common agreement, or any common confession—the impossibility of any common order, or common worship,

or common prayer. In fact, the whole of their religion is thus necessarily shut up in the breasts of individuals, to be developed by what *they* call the "inward light," but what we should call accidental impulse.

Hence again it comes to pass that the doctrines of holy places, holy men, and holy things are all equally denied. There is no such thing among the Quakers as a Church, or House of God, containing special sanctity in itself—no such thing as any special day set apart for public worship—no such thing as Ministers of God set apart for the services of this worship, and above all, no such thing as a religious ordinance or Sacrament conveying grace. All these are necessary consequents of the idea of the "inward light" being the sole guide and director of men's minds, to the exclusion of all external agency.

Now we cannot but consider the Society of Friends in most gross error on all these points. For let us consider—

1. If Almighty God sanctified by His special Divine Presence the Tabernacle of Moses and the Temple of Solomon; if the word of God is full of the most explicit directions as to the construction and order and various uses of that holy building, if we find the consecration of that building specially commanded, and the most minute directions given for it, and if we find the Shecinah or God's Presence resting on the Altar

of the most Holy Place, signifying His Blessing, and constant communication with His people, through that medium—it follows as a matter of course that holy buildings, set apart for the worship of God, are agreeable to the principles of His teaching and His will; and this more especially when we find the same principles illustrated by the practice of our Blessed LORD to worship and to teach both in the Temple and the Synagogue continually. In like manner—

2. With reference to holy days. If God appointed the Sabbath, as His special day of worship and rest—there at once we see His will in regard of a time to be set apart for such worship; if He instituted the Passover, the Pentecost, and many other such feasts, to commemorate the great deliverances of His people, and commanded them as ordinances for ever; and if our Blessed LORD in His human nature, our example and guide, set before us a continual observance of all these holy seasons—and if the Apostles and early Church following immediately on the steps of our LORD, and, of course, from personal intercourse knowing His mind without any doubt, met together and sanctified days and times, and special seasons of religious observance, and so handed them down by tradition to us—then surely it follows, that special days and times, as a principle, are agreeable to the teaching and the will of Almighty God, and obligatory upon us as

Christians. But no—say the Quakers—we reject all this. It is the “inward light” of the Holy Spirit which is alone true worship. They do indeed, seemingly by compulsion denying their own rule, meet together at certain times, and have certain places wherein to meet, but that merely for convenience. They consider as obstructions to true worship, all forms and ceremonies, and outward bindings, or rules. “Worship,” says Barclay, “is not confined to time and place.” They do meet together as a testimony of their dependence on their Heavenly Father, but when so meeting, they consider it their duty patiently to wait for the arising of that life within them, which by subduing worldly and carnal thoughts, produces an inward silence, believing even a single sigh, arising from a sense of infirmity and sin, to be more acceptable to God than any performance, however specious and beautiful, arising in the will of man.” Consequently their religious meetings conducted with this view, very often terminate as they begin in a solemn silence. No word is said—no prayer is offered—no psalm is sung—no scripture is read—but the “inward light” within each man’s soul, is the only testimony of their worship—a testimony of which of course each individual is alone the judge.

3. Then, moreover, they deny the necessity and the validity of any special order of men to be

set apart for the ministry. This is very strange ; for let us consider, God's Word in the appointment of the priesthood of Aaron, and the ministry of the Levites ; God's Word in the appointment of the Twelve, and of the Seventy, by the voice of our Blessed LORD ; God's Word in the appointment of the first Deacons, and the succession following from Timothy and Titus by the Apostles, and the continuation of ordination and of laying on of hands of the Presbytery following therefrom, both for general and for special occasions—all this must stare them in the face. Nevertheless, the Quakers' doctrine is, that each individual man, nay, each individual *woman*, although S. Paul says : " Let your women keep silence in the church "—each individual man, and each individual woman, according as they are moved by the " inward light " and gift of the SPIRIT, without any outward form or setting apart, is to minister by preaching in the congregation ; that no one can be set over the other, or rule others, or minister for others in any way whatsoever, for all in CHRIST are equal. " As by the light, or gift of GOD, all true knowledge in things spiritual is received, so by the same, as it is manifested in the heart, every true minister of the Gospel is ordained and prepared for the work. Moreover, they who have this authority may and ought to preach, though without human commission or literature ; " * that is, the gift of the SPIRIT must

* Barclay.

be received immediately from CHRIST, through the revelation of the SPIRIT in the heart, agreeably to the declaration of the Apostle: "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of CHRIST." "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God may in all things be glorified through JESUS CHRIST."

This is their argument; but then they altogether forget, when they quote these passages, that in no case of such calling of the HOLY GHOST was the laying on of hands and mission by the Church *in addition*, ever omitted. What the outpouring of such an imaginary light conveyed here and there in a congregation may be; what the effect, when silence is broken, of any man or woman setting forth God's will, as they are moved by sudden impulse, without any learning, or literature, or order, or commission, it is not difficult to conceive. Whether it is likely to lead to the edification of the people, we must leave to their own experience honestly to say.

4. But moreover, if time and place, if Holy Orders and commissioned men, are set aside, it will readily follow that all doctrine of Sacraments is also set aside; and thus accordingly we

find that neither Baptism nor the Supper of the LORD are recognised by Quakers as containing any validity or grace whatsoever. They believe that as "there is one LORD and one faith, so there is one Baptism," which is "not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards GOD." But this Baptism, they say, is not of water—not any outward ordinance—not a thing done by man—but is an internal movement of the SPIRIT, and that alone. It is the SPIRIT transforming and renewing the heart, and bringing the will into conformity to the Divine will. If pressed with the example of S. John the Baptist and of our Blessed LORD; if pressed with the special precept of our LORD to His Apostles, "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them," they reply, that John's baptism was a figure commanded for a *time*, and not meant to continue for ever, and that our LORD's precept regarded the spiritual teaching of the Gospel—the baptism by *fire*—which is the HOLY SPIRIT, and not the baptism by water, even as S. John himself points out prophetically: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the HOLY GHOST and with fire." But here again, although partially true in one portion of their doctrine, that Baptism must, as a matter of course, be a baptism of the SPIRIT, even as our Lord says to Nicodemus: "Except

ye be born again ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of God ;” they forget that the same Voice says, explaining this—“ Except ye be born of WATER and of the SPIRIT, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” And they utterly ignore the whole practice of the Church throughout all time, a practice derived from the Apostles, specially inspired for the teaching of the Church, and carried on for fifteen centuries without a deviation ; a practice illustrated by their own hands, as in the case of S. Paul himself, of Cornelius, of the jailor and his household at Philippi, of Lydia and her household ; in fact, the baptism of water being in no instance omitted in the case of those who were converts to Christianity, however much, even with outward manifestation of miraculous powers, they were moved by the SPIRIT within.

Then again, respecting the Communion of the LORD'S Body and Blood. It is with them entirely and wholly a spiritual and internal imagination. However much our LORD is represented as commanding us to *eat bread* and to *drink wine*, and of course is not denied by them to have done so, still there is no such thing with them as a celebration of this ordinance in any shape or form whatever. The “breaking of bread” is with them a mere participation of the Divine nature through faith in CHRIST, and an obedience to the power of the HOLY GHOST, by which the soul is enabled to feed on the flesh and

blood of our crucified and risen LORD internally, and in that manner strengthened and nourished. "The breaking of bread and drinking wine by our LORD at His last Paschal Feast, and the command to His disciples to do likewise, was only figurative. The true Christian's LORD'S Supper is described in the Revelation: 'Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him and he with Me.'"*

Here, again, they grasp one side of the truth, but omit the other. It is true that any external act of mere eating bread and drinking wine without the SPIRIT'S gifts within would be valueless; a formal participation without an internal grace: and so it is quite true that in this Sacrament we must feed on our Blessed LORD, as our *spiritual food*, in faith and by the power of the HOLY GHOST; but that is to be done not *without*, but *with* the external act, as commanded by our LORD; for otherwise, how do the Quakers account for the fact of the Apostles, eight days after the resurrection, "*breaking bread?*" How do they account for one of the main signs of their Christian fellowship being this—that the disciples continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship and "*breaking of bread?*" How do they account for this great sacrificial act forming the main part of Christian worship wherever Christians met together, either openly

* Barclay.

or secretly, for centuries? How do they account, moreover, to take one instance out of many, for that special rebuke of S. Paul in one of his Epistles to the Corinthians, wherein he alludes to the eating and drinking of the Holy Supper as sinful in them because of their profanation of it? The profanation in that eating and drinking of course alluding to an outward act. "He that *eateth* and *drinketh* unworthily *eateth* and *drinketh* damnation to himself."

But these things will not bear argument. Once make that imaginary "inward light" the sole guide of faith; exclude the Church, and the testimony of historical ages; once make the inward impulses of each man's fancied inspiration the director of his actions and the test of truth to his own soul; once make himself answerable solely to himself for what he says, does, and believes—and then of course the anomalies of the Quakers' system are easily intelligible. In any other way they are matters of curiosity and of wonder.

We should have thought that the same "inward light" which guided the Quakers in their interpretation of the great doctrine of the Sacraments would have guided them in their general interpretation of holy Scripture throughout. But so strange is the perversion and inconsistency of the Quakers' mind, that where the Church from the beginning has taught one way, the Quakers

with their "inward light" have invariably found another. It would seem as if they purposely had pleasure in running in a direct opposition to whatsoever they found established, inventing the very opposite reasons for maintaining the very opposite points.

The Church gives us our rule for the institution of the two great Sacraments, simply on this ground, that our Blessed Lord appointed them, and that we are bound to follow literally His will; that will being conveyed to us in so many direct words: that is, we are bound to take the literal meaning of a plain literal command. The Quakers go upon the opposite ground, and say: No; these are spiritual, allegorical, figurative things. Baptism has nothing to do with water. It is the spiritual, internal embracing of CHRIST within. The eating and drinking of the LORD'S Body and Blood is not meant literally. It is the spiritual, internal participation of the merits of CHRIST'S death within the mind, and that is all.

Now we should have thought that the same leading idea of spiritualizing the words of Holy Scripture would have pervaded other questions of certainly less importance than these two great Sacraments, and that at least we should never hear of the exactly contrary principle, that God's words were to be taken literally, and exactly, in things of ordinary teaching; when here in the two most solemn actions of His Life, His words are denied to have any such literal or exact

authority at all. But strange to say, where the Church *does* pronounce that our LORD's teaching is figurative, the Quakers rise up and contradict her, and say—No: it is literal. Observe the contradiction. As in the two great Sacraments, where the Church says, our LORD's teaching is literal, the Quakers say, No, it is figurative; so in other inferior matters, where the Church says our LORD's teaching is figurative, the Quakers say, No, it is literal.

It is very plain that in all teaching of moral truth, as well as of religious doctrine, there must be in the teacher's mouth many words of illustration and figure, of description and allegory, which never could be meant to be embraced by the disciples in its very letter. In many instances the attempt to do so would involve an absurdity, in some cases an impossibility. For instance, when our LORD says: "If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out and cast it from thee.....if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee, for it is better for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell:" no one would be so absurd as to imagine that He meant we were *literally* to pluck out our eyes, or cut off our hands, but we should consider that it was an illustration, to signify, however dear our sins might be, we must part with them, even though with violence and loss to ourselves. Again, when our LORD says: "*Take no thought* for your life,

what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on ;” no one would imagine that our LORD meant to inculcate reckless idleness and improvidence, or to tell men they were not to work for their daily bread ; but that He meant figuratively or by comparison to illustrate the necessity of trust in God. Indeed He says this Himself afterwards, when He explains His own meaning ; “ Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and His Righteousness, and these things shall be added unto you.” Again, when our LORD says :—“ Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also ”—it would not be imagined that our LORD meant this literally, for He Himself when smitten by one of the officers of the High Priest did not do so, but replied : “ If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil : but if well, why smitest thou Me ?” It is plain surely, that the teaching conveyed is patience and gentleness under wrong ; a spiritual illustration by a strong figure to convey a moral principle, not a binding down to a literal act.

But the Quakers, with an inconsistency which every one sees but themselves, pick out certain precepts of our Blessed LORD, and of their own authority assert that they are binding to the letter, while at the very same moment they pass by similar precepts which rest upon similar authority, and say they are figures of speech. On what principle they do this, or with what internal light they are blessed above other men

to distinguish and pronounce between them as they do, it is difficult for ordinary men to perceive. Let us examine, however, what they say :—

1. In the first place, *in regard of Oaths*. They bring forward our LORD's precept, "I say unto you, swear not at all,.....but let your communication be yea yea—nay nay ; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Upon this they ground an assertion that to take an oath, or invoke the name of ALMIGHTY GOD, in Courts of Justice is unlawful. Now it is perfectly true and evident to a Christian man, that the common rash swearing of the ungodly and wicked which we hear in the streets and highways is an abomination before GOD, and an offence against His Law, which says : "Thou shalt not take the name of THE LORD THY GOD in vain." It is perfectly true, also, that even where according to the law of the land an oath is demanded, it is most frequently both administered and taken with levity and thoughtlessness, sometimes even amounting to blasphemy. All this is wrong and sinful, and wholly against the spirit and teaching of GOD's Word. But to say that to invoke the name of ALMIGHTY GOD is in no case lawful, and that there never can arise occasions between man and man where a solemn appeal to His witness is justifiable, is at once to contradict the whole spirit of man's condition in respect of GOD ; and,

it might be said, is positively an act of dishonour towards Him—a keeping Him out of sight—a setting Him aside, when He, our GREAT GOD AND CREATOR, ought to be the first and most ever present to our minds, in our dealings with Him and in our dealings with each other. Thus it was that the precept in the Book of Deuteronomy is given, vi. 13: “Thou shalt fear the LORD THY GOD, and shalt swear by His Name.” Thus it was that our Blessed LORD, when He had remained *silent* for a long time, and refused to answer, immediately that the High-Priest said, “*I adjure Thee* by the living God that Thou tell us whether Thou be the CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD”—then at once replied—“Thou hast said.” These words, “*I adjure Thee by the living God,*” are surely words which convey the most solemn and awful form of oath that can be conceived. God’s most holy Name is invoked. God is called upon as a witness in the transaction there pending between the High-Priest and our LORD—and our LORD replies, as bound under that oath or invocation. But would our LORD have done so if it had been contrary to His own teaching? Does it not show at once that He considered the invocation of God’s Name on such an occasion as that wherein He was engaged—*i.e.* His trial now approaching for life and death,—was not only permissible but right? And thus S. Paul says: “An oath for confirmation is an end of all strife.” Heb. vi. 16. So far then from an oath, or invocation of God

by name to witness what we do, being unlawful and contrary to Holy Scripture, it would seem conformable rather than otherwise to the spirit of its teaching. And certainly it would seem perfectly in unison with the spirit of our faith, that for us as God's children—His one great family and household,—whensoever those occasions should arise in which wrongs or injuries might be done one against the other, or whenever matters of fact might be disputed, that we should appeal directly to our one great Head, Ruler, and Father,—invoke His Name, and adjust what was wrong by making Him our witness in what we said. It is not the fact of an oath, but the occasion on which it is used, and the manner in which it is treated, to which we have to look. Great and solemn occasions, where men meet together for justice and for charity, justify the invocation of God's Name.

2. *In regard of peace and war.* The Quakers bring forward those many texts of our Blessed LORD wherein He says that we are to "love our enemies," "do good to them which hate us and persecute us," that if we are "smitten on the one cheek we are to turn the other also;" and from the Apostle S. James, who describes "wars and fightings as coming from our lusts that war in our members" (S. Jas. iv. 1); and from S. Paul's admonition that Christians are not to defend themselves against wrong, nor render evil for

evil, for "vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the LORD" (Rom. xii. 19); and from the whole tenor of the prophetic writings, which describe the time of the Messiah as the time of peace—"that swords are to be turned into ploughshares, and that there shall be none to hurt or kill in the holy mountain of the LORD." (Isaiah xi.)

The principle of all this is most undoubtedly clear and not to be disputed. That war, even for Christians against heathens, is an anomalous state, is a sinful state, cannot be denied; much more when war exists between Christians themselves; and therefore that every precaution, all forethought and wisdom, all forbearance and love, should be manifested between people and people, before they resort to the awful alternative of war, is what every one's common sense, to say nothing of the spirit and temper of the Gospel, would dictate. But war, national or civil war, is not a question of right and wrong only, it is a question of submitting to God's chastisement for national sins. Thus it was in the case of the Jews, God's own people. For the punishment of the Canaanites, He of His own authority commanded the Jews to make war upon their country, and to take possession of it, driving them altogether out of territories which according to common right were their own. Thus again in the wars which the Jews on their part suffered at the hands of the nations who surrounded them, such as the Ninevites, Baby-

Ionians, and Assyrians : in all these cases it was under God's own direction, that many acts both of aggression and of resistance were performed. But all along their history they are specially told that their wars are the punishments and chastisements which God sent upon them for their correction as a sinful and disobedient people. ALMIGHTY GOD classes war with the pestilence and the famine, and He says, these are My three great scourges for the sins of nations. It was no less so in the time of the early Christians ; for the siege of Jerusalem under Titus, and the sufferings of Christians in war serving in the Roman armies, are well known. If, then, we take this great view of the question, which is God's view, if we consider that when the rulers of nations are moved by political circumstances to involve their subjects in war, it is God's chastisement for their sins : does it become the duty of one portion or sect of that nation to say, we will not engage in it ? That would be nothing more or less than to say, we are exempt from suffering punishment at the hands of God. When the cholera sweeps away thousands of the people, or when the famine desolates whole territories of a country, or when the plague of small-pox or epidemic fever carries off its multitudes—the Quaker would not say, “ I will have no part in this ; I will not submit to God.” Why should he then say, “ I will take no part in war ? ” The sword is God's

chastisement to *him*, as well as to all his countrymen around him. He has no right selfishly to keep aloof. He has indeed a duty, but no more than other Christians, to seek peace and ensue it; to love his brethren; to harbour no revenge; to submit with patience to individual wrongs and hardships; to avoid altercation, contention, and strife. These are principles of moral, to say nothing of Christian duty; but when the great scourge of war comes upon the earth, and nation rises up against nation, he is to submit, as to a thing coming of God. He is to submit, in acknowledgment that it is a righteous judgment, and no more than *his* sins (though a Quaker,) as well as those of his countrymen all around him, deserve.

3. *In regard of paying tithes or taxes of any kind for the support of religion.* Here again the Quakers fasten upon one of those texts of holy Scripture which, literally taken, would indeed seem to support them; but understood with reference to the whole spirit of our LORD'S will, has no real bearing on the subject. Our LORD said, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Therefore, say the Quakers, tithes, or any money payment to the support of the Clergy of the Church, is wrong. "A man-made hireling ministry which derives its qualifications and authority from human learning and ordination is nothing" they say. Any one may preach—any one may teach—if moved by the Spirit, and

when so moved by the Spirit, there is to be no payment or remuneration. All is to be free, as in S. Paul's case, who laboured with his own hands, while as an Apostle he preached the Gospel to the world.

It is very true that in the time of the Apostles, and in our LORD'S own case, the preaching of religion was not a professional duty to be done for a professional price. Neither ought it to be so now. No right-minded man could possibly take so low a view of it. Neither was it an office sought for by worldly and avaricious men for a maintenance; a worldly speculation, or an investment of property. Neither was it a position of life by which men were to attain rank and dignity among the lords of the earth; to feed noble families; to uphold governments, by political votes; or to be called of men, "Rabbi, Rabbi." All this, every good Christian must readily and heartily concede—but then, abuses and abominations of wicked men are not to be saddled upon a principle which the whole spirit of the Bible sanctions and directs for the sake of order, and the proper dignity of the ministerial office. The setting apart and apportioning a tenth part of property for the maintenance of religion is a principle directly appointed in the Law, and nowhere abrogated in the Gospel. If the Priests of the Law were to be maintained by tithes and offerings in order that they might be an order of men, set apart for God's Sanctuary,

uninterrupted by necessary cares in providing daily bread; and if our LORD expressly said, that He came to fulfil the Law, not to destroy it; and if all through His own ministry and foundation of His Church He never did abrogate this principle; then surely it remains as a right principle to this day. His own case, and that of His Apostles, as miraculously sustained by special gifts of the Holy Ghost, is nothing to the point. Common sense and common political economy suggest that by a division of labour, all work is done better by each divided class or order of men than by a confusion of men, each doing different sorts of work imperfectly. This is recognised in temporal things—why not in spiritual? Is it likely that a tailor, or a shoemaker, a lawyer, or a physician, should become a better Pastor of CHRIST'S flock, just because, by being occupied in secular things, he could maintain himself without charge to his people? or is it more likely that men educated, trained, and ordained for the specific work of the Gospel, should perform those works with greater probability of edification to the people, although depending on their charges for temporal maintenance? If the latter, then the setting apart of tithes and offerings is a necessary obligation. It is true our LORD did say, "Freely ye have received, freely give;" but the Apostle Paul, speaking in his Divine Master's Name, has taught us over and over again that the duty of

the laity is to support their clergy. "Who goeth a warfare at any time of his own cost? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" 1 Cor. ix. Or again, "Do ye not know that they who minister about holy things live of the sacrifice, and they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?" This was the principle of the Law, and so alluding to it, the Apostle goes on and carries it by a direct precept into the Gospel. "*Even so hath the LORD also ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.*" By this text then we have most distinctly and emphatically the principle of tithes and offerings for the support of the ministry, appointed and ordained—and not by the Apostles' authority, let us remember, but, on the assertion of the Apostle, *by our Lord Himself*: "*Even so hath THE LORD ordained.*" To say then, as the Quakers do, that the payment of tithes is an unlawful thing, is simply untrue to Scripture, as well as contrary to common sense.

4. The next remarkable tenet of the Quakers regards their *rejection of all terms of courtesy in common conversation*, and coupled with this their rejection of the ordinary customs of men in taking off the hat, or making such other marks of obeisance or respect to their fellow men as society demands. The titles which it is our custom to give as marks of honour to those in high

offices, such as "your holiness," "majesty," "excellency," "your lordship," "your grace," and the like : all these titles are by the Quakers utterly denied to be lawful terms in which we may address our fellow-men. At the same time, however, by an inconsistency peculiar to themselves, they do not object to the titles or names of the offices which men bear abstractedly. They would say "king," or "earl," or "bishop," as a description of the *offices*—while they refuse to apply terms of dignity to the men who bear them. In the same manner, the using of such language as is common with us in the subscription of letters, is by the Quakers rejected as sinful, such as "your obedient servant"—because, they say, the use of such language leads either to hypocrisy or to falsehood, no one believing or meaning in his heart that he is an "obedient servant" of the person to whom he is writing—but sometimes even the very reverse, being in his own opinion infinitely his superior or master. In the same manner, generally in conversation, they object to the use of the plural number *you*, instead of the singular *thou*, on the ground that such is the language not of truth, but of compliment and worldly custom ; and they object to any kind of prostration or bowing of the body before men, because they say, these are the outward signs of adoration to be made only to God. In the same spirit, they object to using the ordinary names of the days and months of the year, because they

say, it is not right for Christians to use words derived from heathenism. Instead therefore of Sunday, or Monday, which words literally signify day of the sun, and day of the moon, alluding to heathen gods and goddesses—the Quakers say, the first day, second day, and so on—and instead of January, or February, or March, which names are derived from heathen gods or heathen customs, as January, from its being the month dedicated to Janus; February from its being the month dedicated to the februa, or expiatory sacrifices for the spirits of the dead; or March, from its being the month dedicated to the heathen god Mars; instead of those names, the Quakers say the first month, second month, and so on, through the year.

Now what are we to say to all these peculiar tenets of this remarkable community? How shall we reply to them? In the first place as to titles given to men; titles of dignity, and the use of courteous phrases of civility; the Quakers urge such a text as this, where our LORD is rebuking the Pharisees who loved to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. He says to His disciples, “But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even CHRIST, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father, which is in Heaven. Neither be ye called masters, for one is your Master, even CHRIST.” S. Matt. xxiii. 8. But can this mean *literally* that every name of respect, love, affection,

and dignity among men is to be dropped ; or does it not rather mean, in the spirit, to rebuke the pride and arrogance of those who assume these names unjustifiably ? Does it mean *literally* that all orders and ranks of men are to be merged in one universal equality without respect to office or superiority of attainment in any sense ; or does it not rather mean, in the spirit, to rebuke the time-serving and flattery of those who live contentedly in a degraded state, preying upon their betters for their own selfish ends ? Surely the dignity and integrity of a man may be preserved without obsequiousness, and yet at the same time without losing that Christian courtesy which S. Paul so beautifully taught both by his teaching and in his own person. That holy Apostle himself has laid down the rule for Christians : “ Be courteous ; ” and when brought before Felix, he did not scruple to use the words of politeness ; or, as we should say in common language, “ of the gentleman : ” “ We accept it always, and in all ways *most noble Felix* ; ” and when before Agrippa, he addressed him by his title : “ *O King Agrippa.* ”

Then with regard to the use of words involving heathen allusions, if the Quakers would be consistent they would carry on their objections to at least one-third of the English language. A Christian woman (Rom. xvi. 1) retained the name of Phœbe, a heathen goddess. Why should Christians now object to the word

January because it is derived from Janus ? The great Apostle himself changed his name from Saul, which was the Jewish name, to that of Paul, derived from a heathen magistrate ; and Lydia did not think it needful that she should be called by any other name than that she bore, as the seller of purple, while yet a heathen. Surely all these things are but childish matters, and utterly unworthy for wise and Christian men to hold as matters of dispute. Are not these rejections of the common courtesies of men, wherein no principle is involved, more apt to generate in the mind pride, self-conceit, and self-righteousness, than the spirit which they pretend to aim at. There is a “pride which apes humility.” There is a sense of superiority dwelling secretly in the mind, which refuses to do as other men do, for mere distinction’s sake. Let it be for principle, for righteousness, for God’s real glory, and he who despises the world is to be honoured ; but let “you” be changed into “thou,” or the common courteous words of general civilization be lost in the phraseology of a sect, and the danger is, that while before men there is an appearance of suffering for righteousness sake, before God it is little more than an exaltation of self.

The doctrines of the Quakers, so far as they are set forth in any form accessible to inquiry, have now been considered ; so also, those minor tenets

or customs which prevail among them, and by which they are in so conspicuous a manner cut off not only from the Church but also from every sect or subdivision of the Christian community. There remain for our consideration their discipline and internal government.

It would seem a matter of surprise, that a community having no creed should have any government, because one would imagine that the purposes of government in a religious community would principally tend to the preservation of their creed. The same surprise would be excited in the idea that where the doctrine of Sacraments is repudiated there should be any notion of membership, or excommunication, or of any of those forms by which Christians in general hold themselves bound to each other in a common society. The Church teaches that the Sacrament of Baptism is the initiative bond of membership; and that the Sacrament of the Eucharist is the preservative and continuation of such membership. But what is to be said of Christian discipline in reference to a Society which rejects both Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, as forming any part of their religious practice? What constitutes a member of the Society of Friends? What constitutes the cessation of his membership? What constitutes the continuation of it, or return into it, if once the membership is lost? We shall see the answer to these questions by referring to the govern-

ment of their Society, which we are now to explain.

In the first place, *membership* with the Quakers is merely an hereditary thing. Every child born of Quaker parents is at once a Quaker by being so born. It sounds however somewhat strange, that a Society which maintains that everything in Religion depends on the "inward light," and the movement of the Holy Spirit within the heart, should say that a new-born babe, merely by being born *in nature* of certain parents, should thus be a member of a Christian community. The doctrine of original sin is at once nullified, if a new-born child without any operation of cleansing, either external or internal, should possess a membership in CHRIST by the mere fact of its natural birth. It is evident, that hereditary membership in CHRIST is at once a denial of original sin, of baptismal regeneration, and of the necessity of the Atoning Sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST in expiation for man's sin; and this very fact standing alone proves the Quakers guilty, although they may not be aware of it, of a most grievous heresy.

But concerning the child once being made in this strange manner a member of the Society: does he continue the same? How is he brought up and trained? How is he taught of others? How is he governed and disciplined? How does the Society keep together as a body? Their government is formed upon the Presbyterian

model. There are four gradations of meetings, the preparative meeting, the monthly, the quarterly, and the annual; each of which has its peculiar functions and authority, and by these meetings the privileges of the members and their duties are determined. The preparative meetings, which occur within the precincts of certain circuits, are so called because their duty is to prepare the business of the monthly meetings. They generally consist of two or three Friends of either sex appointed to be, as it were, overseers of the flock. They take cognizance of any improper conduct in the members, and endeavour to regulate disorders of any kind which may occur, and admonish the unruly. If necessary, they report any case of disorder which they cannot control, to the monthly meeting, which is next in authority above them. The monthly meetings are composed of all the congregations within a definite circuit: they judge of the fitness of new candidates for membership, supply certificates to those who desire to move from one district to another, choose fit persons as Elders to watch over the congregations, and upon the reports of the preparative meetings, pronounce sentence of expulsion upon unruly members. They also make provision for the poor, and for the education of children, and give their sanction to parties intending to marry.

Next in order to the monthly meeting, is the quarterly, which consists of a number of monthly

meetings combined into one. To this the reports of previous meetings are referred for approval or confirmation. It is a sort of court of appeal from previous decisions, and if any member thinks himself aggrieved, here is his remedy. To this succeeds the annual meeting, which is again, as it were, a court of final appeal. This includes the whole, and contains within it the sole legislative power, investigates the state of the whole body, and regulates all matters which are finally brought before it for adjudication. There are yearly meetings in London, attended by representatives from different parts of Great Britain and Ireland, 2 in New England; 3 in New York; 4 in Pennsylvania and New Jersey; 5 in Maryland; 6 in Virginia; 7 in the Carolinas; 8 in Ohio; 9 in Indiana. A brotherly correspondence between these general meetings is maintained by letters transmitted from one to the other. The prevalence of the American names in the above list at once manifests the country wherein the Quakers prevail.

In addition to these ordinary meetings, which are regulated by time, there is another of a very peculiar character called "*The meeting of sufferings.*" It is composed of ministers, (if any can be so called), of elders, and members chosen at the quarterly meetings, and its object is to redress the injuries and grievances of those who may suffer in the maintenance of their principles. The refusal to pay tithes, and other taxes of a

religious nature, and their refusal to take oaths in courts of justice, have always rendered the Quakers subject to harsh dealing on the part of those in authority. In former years their suffering in these matters was very great; it is to this that the "Meeting of sufferings" evidently points. They grant relief, suggest ways of avoiding wrong, and otherwise advise in all cases of conscience.

These meetings are not confined, either for discipline or for government, to the male sex, for it seems the great principle of the Quakers to admit their women into every state both of spiritual and temporal management. Accordingly the women have overseers of their own appointment to extend Christian care and advice to their own sex; they have likewise their preparative monthly, quarterly, and annual meetings, in which they transact such business as appertains to the good order of their members; but they take no part in the legislative proceedings of the Society; and in difficult cases, or those of more than ordinary importance, they obtain the judgment of the men's meetings.*

Such is their government—evidently, at the first glance, of the same spirit as the times in which Quakerism first sprung into existence—*republican*. It cannot of course be any otherwise; for, there being no authorized or commis-

* Evans's Sketch of all Religions: Williams's Dictionary.

sioned ministry, no priesthood, or superiority of one over the other by human acquirements or external commission, all must be equal.* Whether this is in accordance with the primitive model of ecclesiastical discipline, they must consider who would look to the Acts of the Apostles as any guide for Church Government. There we find certainly not the people and the *women*

* In point of practice the Quakers do not agree with the system laid down for them in theory. The editor has been favoured with the following account from a clergyman engaged in the conversion of the younger branches of a Quaker family. It brings out in strong relief the absurdity of the idea of the free gift of the Spirit, placed in conjunction with a ministration based upon human authority.

“The Quakers do not practically carry out their expressed belief. I was at one time somewhat intimate with a Quaker family, who were my parishioners; the intimacy arising out of the desire of the younger members to join the Church, and the necessary instruction. In conversation with the parents one evening I asked what was to prevent me or any one else, not a member of the society, intruding into their assembly in the guise of one of themselves, and taking advantage of the long silence which sometimes prevails, to address them. I was answered that that was impossible, or if attempted, would result in the intruder's being silenced, as only certain persons accredited *by competent authority* were allowed to speak; the authority, if I remember rightly, being the quarterly meeting. I suggested, (being anxious to bring them to a perception of the incongruities of their system, that the approaching baptism of their daughters might not separate the family), that according to their principles, this was quenching the Spirit, but I found them impracticable—they said ‘it was a useful regulation’—and although the daughters were baptized, and I trust became true members of the Church, no impression seemed made on the parents.”

holding council together, and deciding on points of order or of discipline, but the Apostles and Ministers of CHRIST, and these alone. Consider these texts—"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls." Heb. xiii. 17. It was the Ministers of CHRIST, and certainly not the lay people assembling of their own authority, to whom the words of S. Paul are directed—"to take heed unto themselves, and to all the flock over which the *Holy Ghost had made them overseers.*" Acts xx. 28. The whole spirit of S. Paul's teaching in the figure of the body and the members shows how it was of necessity that there should be inequality, and that the lower should submit to the higher. Sympathy indeed was to exist, and all the members were to rejoice or to suffer together, but in government, the Ministers of God, as His own chosen servants, were to bear the rule—"Are *all* apostles, are *all* prophets, are *all* teachers, are *all* workers of miracles?" The meaning is plain: Each has his gift. And the gift of the Apostles, (continued to the Bishops their successors) was to rule.

But above all, we have the direct example and pattern in Church government, in that first Synod or Church assembly, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. The Apostles and Elders met at Jerusalem: the brethren of Antioch did not go up themselves, but they deputed S. Barnabas and S

Paul, and certain others to do so for them. There meeting together as Apostles and Elders, they in that capacity decided the affair. It was not a popular, but an Apostolic decision. And this principle has governed the Church throughout all ages.

Under the head of discipline will come the subject of marriage, which is another point on which Quakers, in opposition to Catholic teaching, hold most extraordinary opinions. It is said indeed by some, that the Quakers consider marriage to be "not a mere civil compact, but a Divine ordinance, and that it is the prerogative of God alone to join persons in that solemn covenant." This statement is very good in theory, but it certainly is very imperfectly borne out by the manner in which the idea of marriage is carried into effect practically. Those who intend to marry appear together, and state their intention to the monthly meeting, and they are either attended by their parents or guardians, or they produce a written certificate of their consent, signed in the presence of witnesses. The form of marriage then takes place in the following manner. At the conclusion of the meeting for public worship, the parties stand up, and taking each other by the hand, declare in an audible manner to this effect: "Friends—I, A. B., take this my friend, C. D., to be my wife, promising through Divine assistance, to be unto her a loving and faithful husband, until it shall please the

LORD by death to separate us." And then the woman in like manner says: "Friends, I take this my friend, A. B., to be my husband."

Now when we look at the very sacred character which is thrown over marriage in the Scriptures; when we consider that it has ever been held as a mystery, or sacrament (one of the lesser sacraments); when we consider how S. Paul resembles it to the Church, as the spouse of CHRIST; when we consider how all along in GOD'S Holy Word He has by His prophets ever illustrated, and our LORD in His parables has ever likened, GOD'S Kingdom, the joys of it, the rewards and delights of it, to a marriage—a marriage supper—a marriage song—a marriage feast—and then turn to this bald and meagre way of fulfilling that sacred compact, which Almighty God has directed for our comfort and happiness, and sealed with His heavenly Blessing—it does seem indeed almost a desecration of holy things. "The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a certain king, which made a *marriage* for his son." "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their LORD, when he will return from the *wedding*." "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins which took their lamps and went forth to meet the *Bridegroom*." "He that hath the Bride is the *Bridegroom*, but the friend of the *Bridegroom* which standeth and heareth him rejoiceth greatly, because of the *Bridegroom's*

voice." "And S. John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven, prepared as a *bride adorned for her husband*." "He saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the *marriage supper* of the Lamb." Here are a few, a very few, out of the constantly recurring allusions to a marriage. Is this the sort of thing which the Quakers make of that holy rite—no voice of prayer—no voice of joy or thanksgiving—no recognition of the presence of God—no Priest or holy man to bless or sanctify the sacred union? Is this the preparation of a bride adorned for her husband? Alas! what cold, and stiff, and formal, and unmoved hearts must those be, who when our Blessed LORD Himself worked His first miracle by turning water into wine at a marriage feast, thus make that holy rite a mere form — "*Friends, I take this my friend, C. D., to be my wife.*"

So far then we have spoken in disparagement of the Quakers' system of religion; their doctrines equivocal; their worship destitute of real life, under the guise of spiritual perfection; their denial of Sacraments; which is no more than a denial of God's most Holy Word; their customs and minor tenets in most things childish and unmeaning, and their government and discipline as a body within themselves utterly adverse to Catholic teaching and the Holy Scriptures. But are they without any redeeming point? By no means. It has been observed before, that there

is no heresy which has not a partial foundation in truth ; so there is no schism or sect which in its wanderings from the fold of the Church does not light upon some points of redeeming good. It is the grateful office then of charity to dwell upon these, and set them forth in this concluding history of the Quakers.

In the first place, then, the principle of the Quakers that war is not a lawful thing for a Christian man issues in a great practical truth when it forbids them to pursue lawsuits and litigation of any kind one with another. Their rule is that all disputes and controversies in temporal matters should be settled among themselves. Their quarterly meetings are their courts of law, and in this they rightly fulfil the spirit, without absurdly straining the letter, of the precept of the Gospel—" If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."

Again, in their method of dress : though perhaps in detail it may seem to us sometimes an exaggeration, yet in principle it is fulfilling that lowliness, and modesty, and freedom from ostentation, which we cannot say characterizes the great body of Christians in the common world. In conjunction with this is their rule of abstinence from all those games, sports, plays, and theatrical amusements, into which the general world so recklessly plunges, without a thought whether the Apostolic precept

is observed—"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." The Quakers assert, and surely they cannot be wrong in so asserting, that "everything ought to be rejected that wastes our precious time, and diverts the heart from that evangelical spirit which is the ornament of a Christian." What is it that we, as members of the Church, declare in our baptism, but this very same and essential truth, that under the discipleship of CHRIST we are bound to renounce not only the devil and all his works, but the pomps and vanities of this wicked world; and yet the unbaptized Quaker fulfils what the baptized Churchman, though so readily professing with his mouth, continually abandons and forgets. What vanities in dress, what pride and ostentation in establishments, in amusements, and every kind of worldly folly, does the Churchman in the higher ranks of life continually set before the world. We have only to glance at the advertisements of a daily newspaper to be astounded at the costliness, and extravagance, and vanity of men and women professing godliness, in this miserable world. Women's whole time and thought wasted in personal decorations and studies of the toilette and the ball-room—men's whole time and thought in the race-course or the hunting-field. The Quaker then, despised as he may be in his plain garb, homely language, and retired domestic simplicity of life, is a standing rebuke to those pomps and vanities of

the "*fashionable*" world, which in baptism are forsworn, but in real life are cherished and followed with impunity.

One more lesson, too, the Quaker may teach us. Real care and love for the poor. It is true that we have "charities," as they are called, in abundance. It is true that we see ever and anon long lists of subscribing names paraded in the columns of the newspapers; that we have hospitals, and asylums, and schools, and dispensaries; moreover, that in addition to all this, as if to show how utterly insignificant all these voluntary attempts are in comparison with the needs of the multitude, the law steps in and rears up throughout the land vast buildings of unions, and workhouses, under forced systems of parish relief, and to our shame *compels* the larger number of the richer inhabitants of the land by a forced contribution, or tax, to support their own poor. Now it is never known that a Quaker applies for reception into the parish union, or receives any relief at the hands of the parish overseer. In addition to their payment of the poor-rate for the supply of the general body of the poor, they have such regard for their own more immediate members of the flock, that they always supply among themselves all that is needed for them. This fact most certainly is an incontrovertible testimony, one way or another. It either shows that the great body of the Quakers, as to its lower members, is free from that ge-

neral habit of recklessness and debauchery, improvidence and drunkenness, which demoralizes so large a portion of the rest of the community ; or it proves, beyond question, that the richer portion of them, though they have erred in overstraining and exaggerating other portions of the Sermon in the Mount, have not studied in vain that precept which tells them, " When thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

These surely are points for our meditation ; they are subjects which ought to make us think ; they are reflections upon the general tone, habits, and ways of life in which so many of us indulge, living as we do, in most cases, beyond our means in selfish luxury, and so not having wherewithal to comfort and support those poor who, we have God's Word for it, " shall never cease out of the land." While we appeal then to the great body of those truly zealous, although, as I have shown, mistaken men, to set aside those peculiarities which unnecessarily distinguish them ; while we are convinced that they have added by their heresies in doctrine, and by their schism in separation, one more of those fatal drawbacks to the unity of the Church, which Jesus our Lord desired to see and died to produce ; and therefore while we pray for them, that ere long, with other schismatic bodies, they may rejoin the standard of the Brotherhood which they have deserted ; still with all this, we concede to them, that in these

latter points now set forth they are infinitely nearer that mode of life which the primitive Church enjoined, in company with CHRIST and His Apostles, than we are ; infinitely nearer, in self-denial, lowliness of spirit, simplicity of manners, and almsgiving for the poor, that early discipleship which, under the Apostles and the immediate gifts of the HOLY GHOST, our LORD sent forth to “preach the Gospel to every creature ;” and which went about from “house to house in singleness of heart, fearing GOD.”



