





LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF ILLINOIS

2



*from the Printer*  
*to Hon. J. C. Talbot.*

*Casth. Journ. V. 1.*

*John G. Talbot }  
Robert Henniker } Esq.*

*July 15. 1857.*

A LETTER

TO

ARCHDEACON HARE.



A LETTER

TO

ARCHDEACON HARE,

ON

THE JUDGMENT IN THE GORHAM CASE,

FROM THE

HON<sup>BLE</sup> RICHARD CAVENDISH.

LONDON:

JOHN OLLIVIER, 59, PALL MALL.

1850.





## A LETTER.

---

MY DEAR ARCHDEACON,

AMONG the many trials incident to a time of controversy like the present, one not the least distressing is that we are often compelled to differ from those whom we love and honor. Still more painful is it to be forced not only to differ, but publicly to declare that difference. Such, however, is the position in which I most reluctantly find myself placed by the letter which you have lately addressed to me. I need scarcely say that I have been much consoled and gratified by the kind and affectionate tone in which you have spoken of myself in that letter. Indeed, the motives which impelled you to write it are evidently such that I cannot but feel that you have established a fresh claim on the gratitude, the respect, and the affection with which I have for so many years regarded you. If I could think that by openly avowing the great and serious differences which exist between us, I should run any risk of forfeiting your friendship, my reluctance to discharge what seems

to me a plain duty would be much increased. But as I know you too well to entertain any fears of the kind, I shall not scruple to set forth the full extent of our disagreement on a subject which threatens to bring upon the Church of England consequences so disastrous that I would most gladly abstain even from contemplating them as possibilities.

It is far from being my purpose to defend either the substance or the wording of the resolutions which called forth your letter from the strictures which you have passed upon them. I have no wish to make any presumptuous attempt to do that feebly which I have no doubt will be vigorously performed by some one of those among the signers who, as you truly say, stand in the foremost rank of our contemporary divines, if he shall deem it necessary to reply to your observations. Still farther is it from my intention to go through the judgment and give my reasons for dissenting from it in toto. Any such proceeding has been rendered wholly superfluous by the unanswerable letter of the Bishop of Exeter, and the equally unanswerable preface to Mr. Badeley's corrected impression of his speech. The object at which I shall aim is of a much humbler character. It will be simply to state the grounds on which I felt it to be my duty not to neglect the opportunity which presented itself of signing those resolutions, and on which I should be prepared to sign them at this moment, had I not already done so.

In the first place then, I must express to you the great satisfaction which it has afforded me to be told by you that on the general points at issue you did not differ from us. You say that when you put together the various passages in our symbolical books bearing on the question, you cannot come to any other conclusion than that our Church does plainly assert the regeneration of every infant. Nor, in your opinion, is this truth a mere abstract proposition. You believe it to be of great practical moment for our christian teaching and education. When, therefore, notwithstanding this your belief, you proceed to say that you are most thankful to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council for their wise decision, I really expected that you were about to maintain that the whole effect of that decision would be (as some by a strange effort of the imagination have endeavoured to persuade themselves) to put Mr. Gorham into the possession of certain civil rights. But no, you go on to admit that by this sentence the Church of England (not of course in her spiritual capacity, but so long as she shall remain in connexion with the State) will eventually be bound, and this, too, precisely in the manner and to the extent which I contemplated when signing the resolutions, namely, "In the same way as the law on other matters is held to be defined by the judgment of the courts, at least until some opposite or different judgment be obtained in a similar case, or unless steps be taken

to procure an alteration or amendment of the law by proper authority\*." It is only when you state the grounds on which, notwithstanding the important points of agreement between us, you see a cause of thankfulness and rejoicing in the same event which to us is a cause of the deepest sorrow and anxiety, that the very serious differences, which exist between yourself and those who signed the resolutions, start forward in a prominent and unmistakeable manner.

You are thankful to the Judicial Committee for their wise decision, "because they have done what in them lay to preserve the peace and unity of the Church, and to keep that large body of our so-called Evangelical Clergy within it, who might otherwise have deemed themselves compelled to retire, at least from its ministry." In assigning such reasons for your thankfulness, you are but acting in accordance with the instincts of a warm and generous heart, but you avowedly rest your satisfaction, simply and solely, on a ground of expediency. No one, I think, could be found so imbued with party spirit, as not to find matter of rejoicing in the preservation of the peace and unity of the Church, and in the fact, that sincere and devoted servants of their Lord and Master, should not feel themselves compelled to withdraw from

---

\* I cordially concur, too, with you in wishing that some measure could be adopted which would remove the misconception respecting the meaning of the word, regeneration, which deters some from accepting the Church's doctrine touching Holy Baptism.

the sphere of their labours, provided only that so desirable an object were not to be attained by the sacrifice of that which they must value above peace, and without which, all peace and unity would be but empty names, I mean, by the sacrifice of any portion of revealed truth. On what grounds we believe that an acquiescence in the late judgment would involve so fatal a compromise, on a subject which admits of no compromise whatever, is a point which I shall touch upon shortly. At present I only insist upon the fact, that for persons who appreciate the gravity and importance of this judgment, to be deterred from the course which they feel it to be their duty to pursue by any such considerations as induce you to rejoice in it, would be, in very truth, the grossest breach of charity which they could commit. For what, if in their tenderness towards clergymen who have sought Holy Orders in the English Church, and continue to hold their preferments, although they cannot use the baptismal services except in a non-natural sense, they should altogether overlook the effect of the necessary teaching of such pastors on their flocks? If it be true that there is such a thing as one Faith once delivered to the Saints, as we believe, and that the Church of England would be giving up part of that Faith if she should submit to the recent judgment, how can we be indifferent whether or not that Faith be taught "whole and undefiled" to the poor of Christ's Church?

Surely if there be any one plain christian duty more binding than another on the rulers of the Church, it is to take jealous care that persons, the character of whose faith must so materially depend on the oral teaching of the Church, should not be robbed of any portion of their christian privileges. To overlook *their* eternal interests out of regard to the comfort and happiness of any number of clergymen, however excellent and devoted to their duties, would be morbid sentimentality.

Now it is under this feeling that I am wholly unable to regard the question, as though its object were merely whether certain opinions of Mr. Gorham's ought to be visited with civil penalties. You speak of the possible case of a Bishop who should desire to check the spread of Mr. Gorham's opinions, supposing they should spread: and again you say, that, so long as Mr. Gorham declares that he believes the Article "one Baptism for the remission of sins," he cannot legally be condemned, because he does not accept our interpretation of it. Ours may be the legitimate interpretation, his an erroneous one; but this, you say, is a matter for theological discussion, not for the interference of the law. You speak, too, of the maxim of our jurisprudence, that the accused is to have the benefit of every doubt, of the patience and forbearance manifested by our judges at the trial of even notorious criminals; of the principle, that it is better that ten guilty persons should be acquitted, than a single

innocent one condemned. You remind us that even Rush had every possible indulgence granted to him by the exemplary judge, who yet shewed, when passing sentence, that he had the fullest conviction and a righteous horror of his crimes. Now, not to revert to the important consideration which I have already advanced, that such a way of arguing leaves out of view the most sacred interests of the congregations entrusted to the care of Mr. Gorham and those who agree with him, I assure you that I know of no persons who would not deprecate the infliction of civil penalties, in the cause of religion, as earnestly as yourself.

But the question is not as to the moral guilt or innocence of Mr. Gorham, nor whether he *intentionally* denies the doctrine of our Church and an article of the Creed. If it were, God forbid that we should any of us forget that in such matters as these, it is not the province of any human being to set himself up as a judge over his brother. Had the parallel between Mr. Gorham and Mr. Rush been more complete, and had the judges been called upon to decide a case of moral delinquency, I for one, should have had no desire that Mr. Gorham should have met with less indulgence than was granted even to that great criminal.

Not only am I unconscious of any wish to injure Mr. Gorham, but I sincerely wish him every possible good. Although every one who is acquainted with the circumstances of the case, must admit that the

examination was forced on the Bishop of Exeter, who could not have failed to institute it without failing at the same time in his bounden duty as the chief pastor over Christ's flock in his diocese : yet if it be true that Mr. Gorham be, as you describe him, a man of high-minded integrity as well as of remarkable ability, who for nine and thirty years has been serving faithfully and laboriously in the ministry ; let him receive any compensation which the government or his partisans may think fit to bestow, let those secular honours and emoluments be conferred upon him, which Her Majesty has authority to dispense. But let not the character of the Church of England as a teaching body be entirely changed because Mr. Gorham is worthy of commiseration. Supposing a penniless scholar were possessed of the highest attainments in literature and science, but laboured under the very unfortunate delusion that to break one of the commandments was not only not blameworthy, but highly conducive to virtue, should we not think it rather too bad if in compassion to his penury, the Lord Chancellor were to impose him as tutor on some defenceless ward of Chancery ? And this may suggest to you why I cannot sympathize in the satisfaction which you express, because the Court of Appeal plainly admitted that Baptismal Regeneration was the doctrine which was favoured by the formularies of the Church. I have heard men say, is it not enough that the Court of Appeal itself im-



plied that belief in baptismal grace was the Church's rule and unbelief its exception? This might do well enough, if it was proposed to impose penalties on those who thought amiss: it would be a natural argument for toleration. But how can this principle be applied, when the question is whether the Church of England shall be compelled to give spiritual mission to one who teaches error? In the case which I just supposed, would it be any alleviation of the evil, that while assigning a vicious tutor, the Lord Chancellor professed himself fully alive to the importance of appointing one who was virtuous?

The question then, which really arises, is whether if there be such a thing as the Catholic Faith and the Church of England really hold it as she professes, Mr. Gorham and those who agree with him are henceforth to be at liberty to teach opinions of their own contrary to that Faith, and that too on a point which you yourself admit to be of great practical moment. The passages which I have quoted from your letter would be overwhelmingly convincing if we could bring ourselves to admit one assumption, which I am sure you would be the first to disclaim, viz., that the Faith is a matter of opinion,—my opinion,—your opinion,—Mr. Gorham's opinion,—and that to decide which it is, is merely matter of intellectual discussion, just like any question of politics or science.

It would be in perfect consistency with such an

assumption that we ought to beware of using those “ominous terrible words,” heresy and heretic; words, by the way, not to be found in the resolutions which you censure. Why, if there be no such thing as the Catholic Faith, should we venture to call any opinion heresy? for, in that case, it would be only that the opinion of another does not agree with our own. And why should not others have as much right to their opinions as we have to ours? If there be no such thing as the Catholic Faith, why is any opinion on any subject to be called heresy?

And on such an assumption, the late judgment must be admitted to be a most fair and wise one. To declare a particular statement to be heresy would be wrong, if there be, and can be indeed, no such thing as heresy. No one would require evidence to induce him to believe that a jury had done right in acquitting an old woman of witchcraft, if he believed the crime itself to be impossible.

And this leads me back to your statement, that the purpose of this suit has been merely to visit Mr. Gorham with a civil penalty. No one would consider it a civil penalty to refuse the office of cook to an estimable and skilful person, whom, from some inexplicable idiosyncrasy, he knew to hold and act upon the opinion, that arsenic is a most agreeable and wholesome condiment. And how can the present case be regarded merely as the imposition of civil disability, unless

the Church's office, as a witness to the truth, be forgotten, and a heretic have as good a right as any one else to claim mission in her name ?

One effect of this way of looking at the Faith as a matter of opinion is, that it ascribes to the clergy so exaggerated an authority, as I am sure that you yourself would be the last to claim. But you must have observed that some who rail at the priestly office in general are the first to claim its privileges for themselves. For what is more common than to hear from the pulpit solemn warnings and admonitions to which we are adjured to take heed as we value our immortal souls ? Now, on what principle are we laymen called on to listen to such addresses to our consciences ? We cannot, however highly we may esteem the preacher's office, bring ourselves to look upon every one who fills it as specially inspired with a wisdom and a learning, which no layman can claim. You are possessed of great learning and ability, as well as piety, and therefore to whatever falls from you as an expression of your personal opinion we can listen with the deference justly due to it. But however gladly we would recognize the same qualifications in all other clergymen, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that they are not of every-day occurrence. I have indeed heard persons gravely argue on the supposition that those who value the apostolical succession, intended to maintain that every priest was instantly transformed into an infallible oracle of truth. Such a notion has probably

not found its way into so many minds as to make it important to dispel it. But really, if we discard it, unless there be some definite standard of doctrine, in accordance with which we must suppose that the clergy are bound to teach their congregations, I know not on what principle we are called upon to submit ourselves under such terrible penalties to the instructions which we receive in our churches. The authority to which you of the clergy yourselves submit, must be the basis on which you claim deference from your congregations. Now what right has the Church to impose such a standard of doctrine? You yourself tell us that it is the right of authority. But how does the Church possess this authority? If she be nothing more than a mere human institution, it would be impossible to perceive how she can lay claim to any authority whatsoever as binding on the consciences of her members. If she have nothing to refer to but human logic, she must maintain herself as she can against other disputants. But if, as we believe, she be in very truth the Body mystical of our Lord and Saviour, then we can understand how it is that, by reason of the indwelling of God's Spirit, she has, as our Articles express it, *authority* in controversies of faith. It is on this principle of authority, possessed in its proper measure by the Church of England as a particular Church, that her ministers possess the right of teaching and warning us of the laity. We conclude that they only tell us that

which is in accordance with the doctrines of the Church to which they belong. The same principle of authority existing in the universal Church, has led to the formation of those catholic creeds to which our Church requires all her members to assent. On what other principle can she demand, not only from every one of her ministers, but from every one of her members on his admission into the Church by baptism, and during his whole future existence in this mortal life, a profession of faith in those creeds? Now, if we believe that there is such a thing as the Catholic Faith as expressed in the catholic creeds, we must also believe that there is such a thing as heresy. We believe that heresy is the denial of the faith; and that the faith is not the mere letter of the Holy Scriptures or of the creeds, but the meaning of those creeds held in the consciousness of the Catholic Church, more or less explicitly, from the beginning of her existence, implied in the Holy Scriptures themselves, and shaped and moulded into an explicit form as the Church has gone on her way, by the action of the minds of holy men directed and enlightened by the indwelling Spirit—the Pentecostal gift. To deny any part of this faith implies that the Catholic Church—the habitation of the Holy Spirit—has erred in bearing witness respecting some vital point concerning the faith. But if she has erred in her testimony on one such point, she may have erred in her testimony on any and every such point. Thus

the Faith is one, because it is a consistent body of belief, drawn out into form indeed by human intellect and expressed in human words, but exhibiting the meaning and intention, not of man, but of Holy Scripture, the work of God the Holy Ghost.

This is “the principle of authority on which the Faith rests ;” and as to deny or abandon one article of the creed would deny either the authority of the Divine Spirit, or the fact of His indwelling, such denial does destroy that “divine foundation.” To him who denies one article, that foundation no longer exists, however firm it is in itself. Such denial is heresy. We should indeed beware of using such a word *falsely* in proportion as the charge is grave. Not to use it *at all* would be most reasonable if we thought it *imaginary* ; for why should we condemn a man who, after all, only interprets Scripture differently from ourselves ? We ought indeed to be *slow* to say that a man is a *murderer*, but that is no proof that the *word*, *murder*, is the real evil, and that we must above all things avoid charging a man with that crime whether *truly* or *falsely*.

To ascribe such authority to the Church is by no means derogatory to Holy Scripture. On the contrary, it is part of faith in our Divine Saviour himself, grounded on his own repeated word and promise, to believe that there is a body or society with which His truth is unfailing and perpetual to the world’s end. All the prophetic Scriptures are

full of the representation of such a society. This truth is recognised by our greatest divines. Bishop Beveridge says, "The Eternal Son of God having with his own blood purchased to himself an Universal Church, we cannot doubt but that He takes sure care of it, that, according to His promise, 'the gates of hell shall never prevail 'against it.' For which end, He, the head of this mystical body, doth not only defend and protect it by His Almighty power, but He so acts, guides, directs, and governs it by His Holy Spirit, that though errors and heresies may sometimes disease and trouble some parts of it, yet they can never infect the whole ; but that is still kept sound and entire, notwithstanding all the malice and power of men and devils against it. So that, if we consider the Universal Church, or congregation of faithful people, as in all ages dispersed over the whole world, we may easily conclude that the greatest part, from which the whole must be denominated, was always in the right ; which the ancient Fathers were so fully persuaded of, that although the word καθολικός properly signifies universal, yet they commonly used it in the same sense as we do the word orthodox, as opposed to an heretic ; calling an orthodox man a Catholic, that is, a son of the Catholic Church : as taking it for granted that they, and only they, which constantly adhere to the doctrine of the Catholic or Universal Church, are truly orthodox ; which they could not

do, unless they had believed the Catholic Church to be so. And besides that, it is part of our very creed that the Catholic Church is holy, which she could not be, except free from heresy, as directly opposed to true holiness." (*Sermons on the Church. No. 6.*) So, too, Bishop Pearson says, "To believe, therefore, as the word stands in the front of the Creed, and not only so, but is diffused through every article and proposition of it, is to assent to the whole and every part of it, as to a certain and infallible truth revealed by God." (*Exp. of the Creed. Art. 1—12.*)

Such, then, being the reasons why the creeds are binding on the Church and all her members, we cannot choose but think that for any Church to abandon the principle of authority on which she demands belief in them, must be an act of unfaithfulness to her Divine Head. You say that you are astounded at the conduct of those who have taken on themselves to assert, upon the strength of their own private judgments, that a certain proposition concerning original sin is an "essential part" of the article in the creed. You say, too, that it is plain that there is no manifest essential repugnance in Mr. Gorham's doctrine to this article in our creed, because, so far as you recollect, it was not even pleaded by the counsel against him. You must of course have read a very inaccurate report of that admirable speech of Mr. Badeley, of which



any one may now happily procure a corrected impression. For, as you will see if you will refer to page 205 of that book, he not only did plead the point, but he actually reserved it as the very strongest of all till the conclusion of his argument. He said, “ If Mr. Gorham holds, as I contend he does, doctrine which derogates from the effect of Baptism,—if he does not allow that Baptism of itself, and as Baptism, confers all these benefits which the Church has uniformly and universally attributed to it,—he is contradicting, not merely the Articles of our Church, not merely our services and the Catechism, but something more sacred even than they ; he is contradicting the Nicene Creed, and annulling one of its articles.” The judges of the Court of Appeal, indeed, took no notice of this argument, but neither did they take notice of any other argument of the Bishop’s counsel. As Mr. Badeley most justly says, “ For any thing that appears in this judgment, it might have been written just as well before the case was argued, or by some person who was unconscious of any thing that had been urged.”

In addition to the passages from Bishop Bull and Bishop Pearson, adduced by Mr. Badeley on this point of the Nicene Creed, I will refer you to Hooker, (Ecl. Pol. v. 64,) who calls Baptism “ the well-spring of New Birth, wherein original sin is purged.” I may also call your attention to the quotations from ancient writers and councils to be

found in Bishop Beveridge's Discourse on the Articles, art xxvii. After citing Origen, who says, "Young children are baptized with the remission of sins," and St. Augustine\*, who, he says, spends a whole chapter in proving, "That by the price of the blood of Christ in baptism, children are washed, freed, and saved from original sin propagated from the first parents," he proceeds to refer to the second council of Milevi. It is well known that baptismal grace was never denied in primitive times except by the Pelagians. The second council of Milevi was held in order to condemn the new opinions concerning original sin, then recently broached by Pelagius, and among the Bishops present at it, was that great father of the Church, St. Augustine, to whom are generally attributed the important declarations contained in its decrees. I will give the whole of that from which Bishop Beveridge has drawn the extract which he cites: "Whosoever denies that infants newly come from their mother's wombs are to be

---

\* A recent german writer has remarked that St. Augustine does not so much deduce the necessity of infant baptism from the truth of the doctrine of original sin, as the truth of this doctrine from the universally acknowledged necessity and practice of infant baptism. He quotes a number of passages to this effect; for instance, "The very sacraments of Holy Church shew sufficiently that even new-born infants are freed by the grace of Christ from the service of the devil." (de pecc. orig. 45.) Nothing can more clearly shew that if "the remission of sins" had not been held to apply to the remission of original sin in the case of infants, the practice of infant baptism would never have been adopted. See *Hefling. Das Sacrament der Taufe*, v. i. p. 121.

baptized, or says, that although they are baptized for the remission of sins, still they derive from Adam nothing of original sin which is to be expiated by the laver of regeneration ; whence it must follow that in their case the form of baptism for the remission of sins must be understood, not truly but falsely, let him be accursed. For the Apostle's words ' By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,' are not to be understood otherwise than as the Catholic Church everywhere diffused has always understood them. For on account of this rule of Faith, even infants, who cannot themselves have as yet committed any sin, are therefore truly baptized for the remission of their sins, in order that what they have derived by generation, may be cleansed by regeneration\*."

Indeed so clearly does Mr. Gorham deny the article in the Nicene Creed, even in the opinion of his defenders, that one, certainly not the least able among them, has recently written a letter in a

---

\* Item placuit, ut quicumque parvulos recentes ab utoris matrum baptizandos negat, aut dicit, in remissionem quidem peccatorum eos baptizari sed nihil ex Adam trahere originalis peccati, quod regenerationis lavacro expiatur : unde sit consequens, ut in eis forma baptismatis, in remissionem peccatorum, non vere sed false intelligatur, anathema sit. Quoniam non aliter intelligendum est, quod ait apostolus : " Per unum hominem peccatum intravit in mundum, et per peccatum mors, et ita in omnes homines pertransiit, in quo omnes peccaverunt," nisi quemadmodum ecclesia catholica ubique diffusa semper intellexit. Propter hanc enim regulam fidei, etiam parvuli, qui nihil peccatorum in semetipsis adhuc committere potuerunt ; ideo in peccatorum remissionem veraciter baptizantur ut in eis regeneratione mundetur, quod generatione traxerunt.--*Mansi Concil.* Florent. 1760. T. iv., p. 327.

newspaper\*, in which he says “ I am free to confess that as this article of the Creed is usually read, I do not see how the Bishop of Exeter’s argument is to be answered.” He therefore gravely proposes that the words of the original should be newly translated, so as to give them a sense contrary to that in which they have always been held throughout Christendom.

Independently, however, of such evidence, there is one consideration sufficient to assure me, that, as a member of the English Church, I have not been guilty of any very outrageous or extravagant abuse of the rights of private judgment, in maintaining that the remission of original sin to all baptized infants, is an essential part of the Article in question. It is this. In our Baptismal Service, remission of original sin to infants is unmistakably spoken of as one of the special benefits conferred in and by that Sacrament. In the first prayer, the congregation prays, “ wash and sanctify this child with the Holy Ghost, that he, *being delivered from thy wrath*, may be received into the ark of Christ’s Church, &c.” In the next prayer occur these words, “ We call upon thee for this infant, that he, coming to thy Holy Baptism, may receive *remission of his sins* by spiritual regeneration.” Now the concluding part of the service plainly affirms that the blessings prayed for are granted by Almighty God. Again in the catechism, in answer to the

---

\* See letter in Record of April 22, signed M. HOBART SEYMOUR.

question, "What is the inward and spiritual grace of Baptism?" it is said, "A *death unto sin*, and a new birth unto righteousness: for *being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath*, we are *hereby* made the children of grace." Thus we were perfectly warranted in asserting, not on the strength of our own private judgment, but on the strength of the judgment of the Church of England, that the remission of original sin to all baptized infants is a benefit conferred in and by baptism; and to that, therefore, according to the Church of England, the Article in the Creed must have had reference. In truth, the weight of your censure ought to fall on such persons as, on the strength of their own private judgments, have taken on themselves to dispute the meaning of the Article which our Church evidently recognises as true, catholic, and essential. You say, indeed, that, "if Mr. Gorham actually denied the 'one Baptism for the remission of sins,' the case would be decided *ipso facto*. But so long as he declares that he does believe in that Article, he cannot be condemned legally, because he does not accept our interpretation of it." Now, on this principle, how can you object to call Socinians orthodox Christians? Many of them do not, I believe, object to use the Apostles Creed. None of them object to the use of the words "Son of God" in reference to our Lord, but they do not accept our interpretation of these words. They only attribute to them a meaning

which is at variance with that which has ever been held by the Catholic Church to be their essential meaning.

But, you tell us, the proposition which is selected as the heresy sanctioned by the sentence of the Judicial Committee, is not even mentioned in it. Now, in the first place, I have heard lawyers assert that the effect of the judgment is, that every opinion contained in Mr. Gorham's book may be henceforth maintained with impunity by every clergyman of the Church of England. The statement of his opinions in the judgment would, in that case, be merely part of the argument by which it was sustained. Mr. Gorham was pronounced by his bishop unfit for the cure of souls, because he claimed to hold and teach the opinions contained in it; and he was pronounced by the judges fit for the cure of souls, though he did make such a claim. But even if this be not so, it would seem impossible to deny that this very proposition is virtually included in the statement of the judgment. For if "in no case is regeneration in baptism unconditional," how can there be any certain benefit at all in the case of infants? Now you admit that "our Church does plainly assert the regeneration of every baptized infant," and we have seen that in our Church Services and Catechism, the "remission of sins" to infants is inseparably connected with "spiritual regeneration;" but, according to Mr. Gorham, the reception of any benefit in the case of

infants depends on certain qualifications already existing in them, respecting which we are utterly at a loss to know whether they exist or not. Therefore, if we admit his premises, we can have no reason whatever for thinking, with respect to any baptized infant, that he is delivered from the wrath of God, and that he has received remission of his sins.

We have been frequently accused of want of charity, of bigotry, and I know not what other qualities of the like nature, because we are not content that clergymen holding such opinions as Mr. Gorham holds should be allowed to teach in the name and with the authority of the Church of England, although they have been tolerated in the same Church for the last three hundred years. Now, in the first place, the fact on which these accusations are built, is mis-stated. Whatever may have been the case before the Savoy conference, (and certainly the misquoted citations from our divines, which were adduced in the judgment, will not have convinced many persons that it was such as the judges represented it to be,) there can be no question that on that occasion the doctrine of the Church of England on the subject of Baptism was fully declared. Persons holding opinions of the same class as Mr. Gorham's sought at that time for an alteration in the baptismal services, expressly on the ground that they could not minister in the Church of England if compelled to use them.

Their petition was refused, and they eventually retired from the Church. The judges found it convenient to pass over this argument, but, nevertheless, the fact remains as it was before their judgment was given. Therefore, as a fact, these peculiar opinions have not been tolerated in the Church of England for the last three hundred years. In the middle of last century, the Church, (owing mainly to the shameless system of prostituting ecclesiastical patronage for political purposes, which was adopted after the accession of the House of Hanover,) was sunk in sloth and apathy. A revival of religious zeal took place, which, because it was not directed, as it should have been, by the responsible rulers of the Church, was all but compelled to assume a schismatical character. Then again started forth the wild and mischievous theories which must always spring from a denial of the regenerating grace of Baptism, when that denial is held in conjunction with zeal and earnestness. These notions were insisted upon with a fervour and a perseverance which, however mistaken, must always command respect. Some ministers of the Church, while they caught the fervour, became imbued with the error. So lax and imperfect has been the discipline of the Church of England, as administered by her bishops for the last fifty years, that they have for the most part been content to look on, without an attempt at discouraging the error as they might have dis-



couraged it, while, at the same time, they need not have interfered with the zeal manifested by its propagators further than to have directed it into safer channels. The dangerous condition of the Church at this moment forms the best commentary as to the consequences which must ever arise from such episcopal quietism.

Even if the fact were as it is attempted to represent it, the inference sought to be drawn from it would not bear examination. Imagine the case of a Bishop refusing institution on the ground of drunkenness and immorality, and the highest Court of Appeal deciding, "It has been proved that Mr. A. is an habitual drunkard and an open profligate. We are far from defending such habits, but we are not here to decide what is right and what is wrong, but what the Church of England has declared to be ground for objection. Now most passages which denounce these practices are devotional or exhortations, not laws. On the other hand, we can produce a catena to shew that there have been always drunken and profligate incumbents, and the rubric requires the Burial service to be read over all such, if not formally excommunicated. On the whole, without inquiring what learned men may deduce from Holy Scripture and the practice of the Primitive Church, we think that no principle of the established Church justifies Mr. A.'s rejection." How after such a judgment could the discipline of the English Church as regards drunkenness and

immorality be administered in the same way as formerly? So, too, it is in vain that we attempt to disguise from ourselves that the Church of England, so long as she remains in connexion with the State, must be affected by this judgment, unless it can be counteracted by a new decision. "The effect of the decision in Mr. Gorham's case," says Mr. Badeley, "is that every Bishop is now liable to have forced upon his diocese as many clergymen, holding the same opinions, as may happen to be presented to benefices; whatever his conscientious scruples may be, and however firmly he may believe that such opinions 'are erroneous and contrary to God's word.'" Henceforth, then, the discipline of the Church of England, as by law established, must, unless the mischief caused by the judgment can be undone, be administered on the understanding that a denial of an article of the Nicene Creed, an use of the most solemn services and addresses to Almighty God in a non-natural sense, and a system of teaching in accordance with such proceedings, that all these things on the part of her clergy are lawful, and may therefore be committed with impunity. How then, if she shall submit to this judgment, can the Church fulfil her office as a teacher and witness of the Catholic Faith?

I cannot but deeply regret that you should have, I will not say insinuated, because insinuation is a thing altogether foreign from your nature, but used expressions which may have suggested to your

readers that you thought the resolutions would be taken as a call to quit the Church of England and take refuge in the Church of Rome. I will only remind you that during the time that the resolutions were under discussion, one of the most eminent among their authors, one who has deservedly acquired a reputation as a worthy successor of the Hookers and Pearsons of former ages, took occasion in a noble sermon\*, preached before the University of Cambridge, on the subject of the Judgment, to address a forcible and touching appeal to his hearers not "to abandon at this crisis the mother who had borne them and nourished them with the sacraments of Jesus Christ." Those who signed the resolutions were not called on to take into consideration the Church of Rome, but the state of the Church of England, such as it would become if she should not resist the late judgment. If, as we believe, the Church of England, by acquiescing in it, would be abandoning an article of the Creed, they who warn her of the danger of submission are not certainly to be accounted untrue to their duty as members of her body. For if there is any thing which is likely to deter men from joining the Church of Rome, it must be that they perceive the danger of heresy to be appreciated among ourselves.

That such an abandonment of the article, "One Baptism for the remission of sins," would be at-

---

\* Human Policy and Divine Truth, a Sermon by W. H. MILL, D.D.

tended by such consequences as are pointed out in the resolutions, must result from the very nature of the case; and that the authors of them acted with no extravagant exercise of their own private judgments in drawing this conclusion, will appear from a statement which I am about to cite from a learned writer, whose competence to speak on the subject will not be disputed. I have specially selected his testimony, because it is well known that he wrote not only not with a roman bias, but with a very strong anti-roman bias. “If it be now inquired,” says Bingham, (*Antiquities* b. xvi. ch. i.) “what articles of faith, and what points of practice were reckoned thus fundamental or essential to the very being of a Christian, and the union of many Christians into one body or Church, the ancients are very plain in resolving this. For as to fundamental articles of faith, the Church had them always collected or summed up out of Scripture, in her creeds, the profession of which was ever esteemed both necessary on the one hand, and sufficient on the other, in order to the admission of members into the Church by baptism; and, consequently, both necessary and sufficient to keep men in the unity of the Church, so far as concerns the unity of faith generally required of all Christians, to make them one body and one Church of believers. Upon this account, the creed was commonly called by the ancients, the *κανων* and *Regula Fidei*, because it was the known ‘standard or rule

of faith,' by which orthodoxy and heresy were judged and examined. If a man adhered to this rule, he was deemed an orthodox Christian, and in the union of the Catholic faith; but if he deviated from it in any point, he was esteemed as one that had cut himself off, and separated from the communion of the Church, by entertaining heretical opinions, and deserting the common faith." The same principle that applies to particular persons must, of course, apply equally to particular Churches; and if any one were to maintain that the Church of England might deviate from the Catholic faith in any one point, and yet not cut herself off from the Catholic Church, he would certainly be guilty of the most extravagant exercise of private judgment of which the world has yet heard.

Such, then, being our convictions, no one has a right to brand us as seditious or peace-breakers, because we desire to ward off the fearful danger which is threatening us. You remind us that our Church declares that particular Churches may err in matters of faith. You agree, therefore, with us in thinking, that it is possible that the Church of England may err in a matter of faith. Would to God that it were possible to feel that there could be no danger, that the sins of our nation and of our Church, had not been so great as to render such a judgment undeserved! But never, till sad experience shall have convinced us, will we believe that, in this perilous crisis, the

Church of our fathers will be untrue to herself. We all remember that some twenty years ago, the Church was threatened with a confiscation of her property by the democratic party in the state. Our bishops, on that occasion, were not slow to stand up in manful defence of the Church's rights to the possession of property bequeathed to her by the piety of former ages. They did no more than their duty. Can it be possible that they will now present to astonished Christendom, the incredible spectacle of a hierarchy contending for the secular rights of the body over which they are rulers, but sunk in apathy, and keeping an ominous silence, when its faith is endangered? We will not believe it; we will not believe that the rulers over God's heritage, who have deliberately vowed, at the most awful moment of their lives, "with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's word," shall now, unmindful of the strict and solemn account they must one day give of their stewardship, not count all other considerations as dross in comparison with the one great duty which they are so plainly called to fulfil. If the State shall threaten them with the loss of their revenues and endowments, as consequent on the performance of that duty, we are confident that they will not be slow to fling back the implied insult, and say to the Church's oppressor, "Thy money perish with thee." Our hearts have already bounded

with joy and thankfulness as week after week, and day after day, has brought us tidings of the courage of our priesthood in protesting against the usurpations of the State, and repelling the slander which has been cast upon their beloved Church. We feel sure that they, remembering the saying, "He that loveth houses and lands more than me is not worthy of me," are prepared to give up all earthly possessions and comforts in defence of God's truth, are prepared, as one of them has nobly said, "to give up every thing but principle, to sell every thing but truth."

Still, we may well be awed and saddened at the prospect before us. A time of conflict such as that before us, must needs be a time of painful and severe trial. Many ties will have to be broken; many hearts torn asunder; works of piety and charity must suffer, nay they are suffering, a grievous interruption and hindrance until the victory shall be won. One benefit, however, we may all derive from such a state of things, if we will. When we are called to battle for God's truth, we shall be more than ever constrained to feel that we are but mere outposts, few in number it may be, and despicable in the eyes of the world, but bold beyond our numbers, because supported by chariots of fire and horses of fire round about the mountain of the Lord of Hosts, under which we stand. We shall call to mind more than ever that the visible Church depends on the invisible; not on civil

power, not on princes, or any child of man, not on endowments, not on its numbers, not on any thing that is seen. What we see is but the “outward shell of an eternal kingdom;” and on that kingdom we shall now be impelled more intently than ever to fix the eyes of our faith. The time of darkness, of disputing, and of anxiety, must soon cease to be to all of us now on earth. Meanwhile we may every one of us take comfort if only, amidst the clouds and the gloom which are daily thickening around us, we can learn to say from our hearts, “Thou art my lamp, O Lord, and the Lord will lighten my darkness.”

Believe me, my dear Archdeacon,

Ever your grateful and affectionate friend,

RICHARD CAVENDISH.

*Belgrave Square,*

*April 30, 1850.*

---

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have received the first part of Dr. Pusey’s work on the Royal Supremacy, in an appendix to which are some observations on your letter. You will, I am sure, do justice to the true spirit of christian charity and meekness which breathes through them, and join with me in the earnest hope that the efforts of the learned and pious author to dispel misunderstandings, and to promote peace in our Church, may be crowned with success.









