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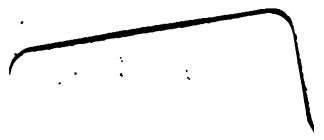


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THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT

ST. THOMAS'S, SARUM, ON SUNDAY, APRIL 21st, 1833,

BY THE

REV. PETER HALL, M. A.,

LATE CURATE OF ST. EDMUND'S, IN THAT CITY.

WITH

A PREFACE,

CONTAINING

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S DISMISSAL
FROM HIS CURACY;

AND

COPIOUS TESTIMONIALS,

FROM

THE REFORMERS AND OTHER EMINENT DIVINES

OF THE

Church of England,

TO THE

FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."

Heb. x. 23.

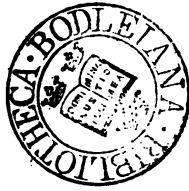
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681-



CONTENTS OF THE PREFACE;

SHEWING THE AUTHORITIES QUOTED UNDER THE RESPECTIVE
HEADS OF DOCTRINE.

- I. 1.—CORRUPTION OF HUMAN NATURE.—Nowell's Catechism. Hooker. Beveridge. (p. viii to xiii.)
2.—FREE-WILL.—Nowell. Jewell. Scougal. (p. xiii to xv.)
- II. 1.—JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH.—Jewell. Martyrs' Confession. Nowell. Hooker. Usher. Reynolds. Barlow. Burnet. (p. xv. to xxi.)
2.—WORKS BEFORE JUSTIFICATION.—Luther. Tindal. Fox. Nowell. Usher. Barlow. Hopkins. Leighton. Beveridge. (p. xxi to xxix.)
3.—FRUITS OF FAITH.—Nowell. (p. xxix to xxx.)
4.—CHRIST ALL IN ALL.—Reynolds. (p. xxx to xxxi.)
- III. 1.—OPERATION OF THE HOLY GHOST.—Barrow. (p xxxi to xxxii.)
2.—ORDER OF SALVATION.—Tindal. (p. xxxii to xxxiii.)
3.—REGENERATION.—Usher. Barlow. Hopkins. Leighton. Beveridge. Tillotson. Wilson. Pearson. (p. xxxiii to xlii.)
5.—BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.—Cranmer. Frith. Beza. Hooker. Andrews. Pearson. Burnet. S. Bradford. Arnold. (p. xlviii to lv.)
6.—REQUISITES FOR REGENERATION.—Latimer. Jewell. Beza. Musculus. Nowell. Heidelberg, or Palatine, Catechism. Diodati. Usher. Hammond. Charnock. Leighton. Burnet. (p. lv to lxiv.)

CONTENTS OF THE PREFACE.

- 7.—SEALING OF THE SPIRIT.—Usher. (p. lxiv to lxvi.)
- 8.—INFANT BAPTISM.—Hooper. Hopkins. Burnet.
(p. lxvi to lxvii.)
- 9.—PROSPECTIVE REGENERATION.—Barrow. Tillotson.
Blackall. Wake. Secker. (p. lxvii to lxxiii.)
- 10.—OTHER MEANS OF REGENERATION.—Hopkins. S. Brad-
ford. Paley. (p. lxxiii to lxxv.)
- 11.—SENSIBLE OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT.—Taylor. Paley.
(p. lxxv to lxxvii.)
- 12.—SUDDEN OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT.—Hooker. Scougal,
(Appendix.) Hopkins. Tillotson. Horne. Paley.
(p. lxxvii to lxxxix.)
- 14.—ASSURANCE OF FAITH.—Luther. Bucer. Melancthon.
Latimer. Hooper. Fox. Bradford. Jewell. French
Confession. Genevese Confession. Scotch Confession.
Palatine Catechism. Dutch Catechism. Nowell. Hooker.
Andrews. Hall. Taylor. Usher. Hopkins. Copleston.
Blomfield. Davys. Kay. (p. lxxxiv to cx.)
- 15.—ASSURANCE OF HOPE.—Coverdale. Jewell. Heidelberg
Catechism. Hall. Taylor. Usher. Scougal. Pear-
son. (p. cx to cxiv.)
- 16.—ASSURANCE OF UNDERSTANDING.—Philpot. Westmin-
ster Confession. Heidelberg Catechism. Scougal. Ap-
pendix to Scougal. (p. cxiv to cxvi.)
- 17.—ASSURANCE OF LOVE.—Luther. Wicliff. Hall. Tay-
lor. Barrow. Pearson. Butler. (p. cxvi to cxvii.)
- 18.—PERFECT TRUST AND CONFIDENCE.—Tindal. Bradford.
Ridley. Hooker. Leighton. Horne. (p. cxvii to cxviii.)

PREFACE.

IT is not usually considered necessary for a Preacher of the Word of God to recommend his labours to the world by an introductory apology. But when the annexed Discourse is known to have been delivered in a Church, with which the author had no immediate connexion, though officially attached to another in the same city; and when its unusual length,—occupying, with the utmost efforts at compression, nearly two hours in the delivery, and upwards of sixty pages in print,—is found to comprise an extent of subject, enough for a moderate series; some account may not unreasonably be required of the circumstances to which the performance in question owes its rise. They shall be stated in as few and simple words as possible.

For several years past, the writer has held the situation of Curate, to the important Parish of St. Edmund, Salisbury. Till within the last twelvemonth, he is not aware that his ministry, either in or out of the pulpit, has been disapproved. But of late, he freely and joyfully confesses that a great alteration has taken place in his own views and sentiments upon the subject of religion. Many have been since offended; and among the rest, he regrets to add, his benevolent and venerable Rector. The consequence has been his dismissal from the Curacy, on the charge of inculcating doctrines inconsistent with the Bible, and with the public interpretations of the Church of England.

To this removal from his office, conducted in a manner perfectly legal, he can have nothing to object: but where no specific accusation has been preferred against any thing which he

has taught, but only a general assertion of his disagreement with those authorities, a departure from which is at all events a departure from that communion, to which he was solemnly devoted in ordination; it appeared a most desirable course, if not a necessary act of self-defence, that he should both preach and publish, in one uninterrupted form, a summary of his tenets on those three topics, which constitute the distinctive characteristics of vital religion, and within which he believes that the main objections to all spiritual instruction are invariably comprehended. And having for some months past been removed from the pulpit of his own Parish, though he ceases only on this day to take some share in the other offices of public ministration, he was compelled to ask permission to address his brethren within the walls of a neighbouring Church. The result appears in the ensuing pages. The author neither asks nor expects indulgence, wherever he may have spoken unwelcome truths. Having ceased alike either to value the applause, or to shun the reproaches, of the world, he now desires nothing but the glory of God, in the promotion of His gospel, and the salvation of His creatures. If these are not objects to gratify his utmost hopes and wishes, he has yet to learn the mournful lesson, that the principles he teaches to others have hitherto wrought no practical effect on his own character and prospects.

Disagreements of this kind among professors of the same creed, are doubtless melancholy enough: melancholy, as indications of some unhealthy organ in the constitution of the Church; and still more melancholy, as tending to shake the confidence of weaker brethren, and overrun the face of Christianity with doubt, distraction, and error. Into the causes of their perpetual recurrence, there can be no occasion in this place to inquire: those who take a hearty interest in the religious advancement of mankind, can feel but little hesitation in assigning them to their proper origin. An occupation more appropriate to the present posture of his affairs, the writer has ventured to adopt, in attempting what he deems the most

effectual method, under Almighty providence, to restore the general tone of instruction in the Established Church to its original standard of purity; by directing an increased attention, first and foremost, to the oracles of divine revelation; next, to the interpretations authorised by the Church itself; and, finally, to the writings of those holy men, by whom the British Reformation was conducted, and who sealed with their blood the testimony they bore to the stability and efficacy of the Gospel. Of this design, the two former particulars are carried into execution throughout the following Sermon; where the authority of Scripture is shewn to have dictated, with uniform accuracy, the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies, to which, at one time, the information of the common people was almost literally confined. The others are exhibited in the present Preface; imperfectly indeed, but as amply as the form and price of a common pamphlet would allow; and with especial reference to those points, where the acknowledged guides of our Church are less explicit. To these have been subjoined a variety of quotations from Divines of standard excellence; designed to shew, that such as impugn the true and lively doctrines of Christ and His Apostles, must expect no support from those whom they are themselves accustomed to recognise as the ablest champions of their Church; and that if all who maintain those tenets unimpaired are to be ejected from the number of her friends, they will at least be found in such company as would confer authority as well as honour upon any other than the cause of Heaven.

In the sight of many it may be thought an evil symptom, when the authority of God is made apparently to depend, in any degree, on the zeal and fidelity of man. But who that ever takes up the works of our early theologians, and remembers the blessing that attended both their preaching and their living, can lay them down again without a humble but deep persuasion, that the Spirit of truth directed their exertions, and sanctioned the bequest to their posterity? These were the instruments em-

ployed, by the blessing of Almighty God, three hundred years ago, to reflect the light of knowledge on the superstitions of Popery ; and it is by a return to these luminaries we shall be most likely, through the same blessing, to disperse that concentrated darkness of Popery and Socinianism, of Pharisaism and Infidelity, by which the Church of England has been so long and so dismally obscured.

I. 1.—The first topic of controversy introduced to the reader of the annexed Sermon, is *the total Corruption of the Nature of Man*. It is a doctrine of extreme importance to all who would sincerely set to work at the great task of their salvation. But, happily, it is one so plainly declared in our Articles, so forcibly urged in our Homilies, and so faithfully carried out into the confessional devotions of our Liturgy, that a very few quotations may be thought sufficient for its further illustration and enforcement. The first of these shall be taken from the Catechism of Poinet, Bishop of Winchester, enlarged and reprinted by Dr. Alexander Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth ; approved by the same Synod which subscribed and warranted the Book of Articles ; recommended by the King's letters patent, and enjoined by the privy council ; and twice republished during the last half-century,—first by Bishop Cleaver, and afterwards by Bishop Randolph :—

“ Adam was the first parent of mankind : therefore God eudued him with those ornaments, to have them or lose them, for him and his, that is, for all mankind. So soon as he, therefore, was spoiled of them, his whole nature was left naked, in penury, and destitute of all good things. So soon as he was defiled with that spot of sin, out of the root and stock corrupted there sprung forth corrupted branches, that conveyed also their corruption into the other twigs springing out of them. . . . Thence came the horrible blindness of our minds, and perverseness of our hearts. Thence came that crookedness and corruptness of all our affections and desires.

Thence came that seed-plot, as it were, a sink of all sins, with the faults whereof mankind is affected and tormented. Of which evil, learned Christians, that have sought the proper and true name, have called it original sin." And again:—"By nature we are all subject to damnation, in which state if God do leave us, we have no cause to complain of Him."

In our next quotation, the hopelessness of any efforts of man to establish a claim to the mercy of God on the merits of his own righteousness, is enforced from the 7th Section of the "learned and judicious" Hooker's *Discourse of Justification*:—"Our very virtues may be snares unto us. The enemy that waiteth for all occasions to work our ruin, hath found it harder to overthrow an humble sinner than a proud saint. There is no man's case so dangerous as his whom Satan hath persuaded that his own righteousness shall present him blameless in the sight of God. If we could say, we were not guilty of any thing at all in our consciences (we know ourselves far from this innocency; we cannot say, we know nothing by ourselves; but if we could) should we therefore plead *not guilty* before the presence of our Judge, who sees farther into our hearts than we ourselves can do? If our hands did never offer violence to our brethren, a bloody thought doth prove us murderous before Him: if we had never opened our mouth to utter any scandalous, offensive, or hurtful word, the cry of our secret cogitations is heard in the ears of God. If we did not commit the sins, which daily and hourly, either in deed, word, or thoughts, we do commit; yet, in the good things which we do, how many defects are intermingled! God, in that which is done, respecteth the mind and intention of the doer. Cut off, then, all those things wherein we have regarded our own glory; those things which men do to please men, and to satisfy our own liking; those things which we do for any by-respect, not sincerely and purely for the love of God; and a small score will serve for the number of our righteous deeds. Let the holiest and best things which we do be considered. We are never better

affected unto God than when we pray; yet, when we pray, how are our affections many times distracted! How little reverence do we shew unto the grand majesty of God, unto whom we speak! How little remorse of our own miseries! How little taste of the sweet influence of his tender mercies do we feel! Are we not as unwilling many times to begin, and as glad to make an end, as if in saying, *call upon me*, he had set us a very burthensome task? It may seem somewhat extreme, which I will speak; therefore let every one judge of it, even as his own heart shall tell him, and no otherwise; I will but only make a demand:—If God should yield unto us, not as unto Abraham, if fifty, forty, thirty, twenty, yea, or if ten good persons could be found in a city, for their sakes that city should not be destroyed; but, and if he should make us an offer thus large,—search all the generations of men, since the fall of our father Adam, find one man that hath done one action, which hath past from him pure, without any stain or blemish at all, for that one man's only action, neither man nor angel shall feel the torments which are prepared for both:—do you think that this ransom, to deliver men and angels, could be found to be among the sons of men? The best things which we do have somewhat in them to be pardoned. How then can we do any thing meritorious, or worthy to be rewarded? Indeed, God doth liberally promise whatsoever appertaineth to a blessed life, to as many as sincerely keep His law, though they be not exactly able to keep it. Wherefore, we acknowledge a dutiful necessity of doing well; but the meritorious dignity of doing well we utterly renounce. We see how far we are from the perfect righteousness of the law; the little fruit which we have in holiness, it is, God knoweth, corrupt and unsound; we put no confidence at all in it, we challenge nothing in the world for it, we dare not call God to reckoning, as if we had Him in our debt-books; our continual suit to him is, and must be, to bear with our infirmities, and pardon our offences.”

Again, in that which follows, from the *Sermon on the Nature*

of Pride, by the same excellent Divine, the extremity of man is beautifully contrasted with the means and mercies of his Saviour :—“ Seeing that the heart of man is not right exactly, unless it be found in all parts such, that God, examining and calling it unto account with all severity of rigour, be not able once to charge it with declining or swerving aside, (which absolute perfection when did God ever find in the sons of mere mortal men ?) doth it not follow that all flesh of necessity must fall down and confess,—we are not dust and ashes, but worse ; our minds, from the highest to the lowest, are not right ; if not right, then undoubtedly not capable of that blessedness which we naturally seek, but subject unto that which we most abhor, anguish, tribulation, death, woe, endless misery ? For, whatsoever misseth the way of life, the issue thereof cannot be but perdition. By which reason, all being wrapped up in sin, and made thereby the children of death, the minds of all men being plainly convicted not to be right ; shall we think that God hath endued them with so many excellencies,—more, not only than any, but than all the creatures in the world besides,—to leave them in such estate, that they had been happier if they had never been ? Here cometh necessarily in a new way of salvation, so that they which were in the other perverse, may, in this, be found straight and righteous : that, the way of nature ; this, the way of grace : the end of that way, salvation merited, presupposing the righteousness of men’s works ; their righteousness, a natural ability to do them ; that ability, the goodness of God which created them in such perfection : but the end of this way, salvation bestowed upon men as a gift ; presupposing, not their righteousness, but the forgiveness of their unrighteousness, justification ; their justification, not their natural ability to do good, but their hearty sorrow for their not doing, and unfeigned belief in Him, for whose sake not-doers are accepted, which is their vocation ; their vocation, the election of God, taking them out from the number of lost children ; their election, a Mediator in whom to be elect ; this mediation, inexplicable mercy ; His

mercy, their misery, for whom He vouchsafed to make himself a Mediator."

To these shall be subjoined a most eloquent and affecting passage from the fourth Article of Bishop Beveridge's *Private Thoughts*:—"I believe that I was conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity; and that, ever since, I have been continually conceiving mischief, and bringing forth vanity.—This article of my faith I must of necessity believe, whether I will or no; for if I could not believe it to be true, I should, therefore, have the more cause to believe it to be so; because, unless my heart was naturally very sinful and corrupt, it would be impossible for me not to believe that which I have so much cause continually to bewail; or, if I do not bewail it, I have still the more cause to believe it; and, therefore, am so much the more persuaded of it, by how much the less I find myself affected with it. For, certainly, I must be a hard-hearted wretch indeed, steeped in sin, and fraught with corruption to the highest, if I know myself so oft to have incensed the wrath of the Most High God against me, as I do, and yet not be sensible of my natural corruption, nor acknowledge myself to be, by nature, a child of wrath as well as others. For I verily believe, that the want of such a due sense of myself argues as much original corruption, as murder and whoredom do actual pollution. And I shall ever suspect those to be most under the power of that corruption, that labour most, by arguments, to divest it of its power. And, therefore, for my own part, I am resolved, by the grace of God, never to go about to confute that by wilful arguments, which I find so true by woful experience. If there be not a bitter root in my heart, whence proceeds so much bitter fruit in my life and conversation? Alas! I can neither set my hand nor my heart about any thing, but I still shew myself to be the sinful offspring of sinful parents, by being the sinful parent of a sinful offspring. Nay, I do not only betray the inbred venom of my heart, by poisoning my common actions, but even my most

religious performances also, with sin. I cannot pray, but I sin; nay, I cannot hear or preach a sermon, but I sin; I cannot give an alms, or receive the sacrament, but I sin; nay, I cannot so much as confess my sins, but my very confessions are still aggravations of them; my repentance needs to be repented of; my tears want washing, and the very washing of my tears needs still to be washed over again with the blood of my Redeemer. Thus, not only the worst of my sins, but even the best of my duties, speak me a child of Adam; insomuch that, whensoever I reflect upon my past actions, methinks I cannot look upon my whole life, from the time of my conception to this very moment, to be but as one continued act of sin. And whence can such a continued stream of corruption flow, but from the corrupt cistern of my heart? And whence can that corrupt cistern of my heart be filled, but from the corrupt fountain of my nature?"

2.—The unavoidable accompaniment of total corruption in the nature of man, is the absence of *free-will*; or the necessity of the Holy Ghost, both to engender good desires, and to cooperate in their execution. On this, as on the former subject, the authorities of the Church of England are so copious and decisive, that very little support need here be added to their testimony. To return, then, to Dean Nowell's Catechism:—"The image of God in man is, since the fall of Adam, by original sin and by evil custom so darkened, and natural judgment so corrupted, that natural man doth not sufficiently understand what difference is between honest and dishonest, right and wrong." And again:—"Faith is the gift of God, and a singular and excellent gift: for both our wits are too gross and dull to conceive and understand the wisdom of God, whose fountains are opened by faith; and our hearts are more apt either to distrust, or to wrongful and corrupt trust in ourselves, or in other creatures, than to true trust in God. But God, instructing us with his Word, and lightening our minds with his Holy Spirit, maketh us apt to learn these

things that otherwise would be far from entering into the dull capacity of our wits ; and sealing the promises of salvation on our souls, He so informeth us, that we are most surely persuaded of the truth of them. These things the Apostles understanding, do pray to the Lord to *increase their faith.*”

A work of no less consequence is the famous *Apology* of Jewell, Bishop of Salisbury, published at the same period with Nowell's Catechism, under the same sanction, and ever regarded as a fair representation of the doctrines of the Church it represents. In the *Defence* of that *Apology*, written in reply to Harding, the Jesuit, occur the following observations:—“ As touching the freedom of will and power of ourselves, we say, with Augustine, ‘ Oh ! evil is free-will without God.’ Again, ‘ Man misusing himself and his free-will, lost both himself and his will.’ Again, ‘ What do men so much presume of the possibility of nature ? It is wounded, it is mangled, it is troubled, it is lost. It behoveth us rather truly to confess it, than falsely to defend it.’

“ Again, ‘ Free-will, once made thrall, availeth now nothing but to sin.’ Again, ‘ That we live well, that we understand aright, we have it of God : of ourselves we have nothing, but only sin that is within us.’

“ Therefore, to conclude ; Augustine saith, ‘ We will, but it is God that worketh in us to will. We work ; but it is God that worketh in us to work, according to his good pleasure. This is proper for us both to believe and to speak. This is godly, this is a true doctrine,—that our confession may be humble and lowly, and that God may have the whole. We live more in safety, if we give all unto God, rather than if we commit ourselves partly to ourselves, and partly to Him.’ ”

Another passage, not less forcible, may be found in a volume of universal reputation, by the Rev. Henry Scougal, a Scottish Divine, entitled, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* ; first brought into notice by Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, in the year 1671, and constantly reprinted for cheap circulation

by “ The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge :—“ Religion in the souls of men is the immediate work of God, and all our natural endeavours can neither produce it alone, nor merit those supernatural aids by which it must be wrought. The Holy Ghost must come upon us, and the power of the Highest must overshadow us, before that holy thing can be begotten, and Christ be formed in us.”

II. 1. The next great topic brought under consideration is *The Justification of Man, by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ*. Though here, again, the Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, all concur in so explicit a support of the declarations of holy writ, as to render a lengthened succession of testimonials from other sources unnecessary. Of the few which it may be thought advisable to adduce, the first shall be taken from Bishop Jewell's *Apology*, before referred to :—“ We say that man is born in sin, and leadeth his life in sin, and that no man can truly say his heart is clean ; that the most holy man is an unprofitable servant ; that the law of God is perfect, and requires of us a full and perfect obedience ; and that we cannot in any way keep it perfectly in this life ; and that there is no mortal who can be justified in the sight of God by his own deserts ; and therefore our only refuge and safety is in the mercy of God the Father, by Jesus Christ, and in the assuring ourselves that He is the propitiation for our sins, by whose blood all our stains are washed out ; that He hath purified all things by the blood of His cross ; that He, by that only sacrifice which he once offered upon the cross, hath perfected all things : and, therefore, when He breathed out His soul, He said, IT IS FINISHED ; as if by these words he would signify, —now the price is paid for the sins of mankind.”

In his *Defence of the Apology*, we find a valuable collection of the sentiments of the Fathers on this early subject of theological controversy :—“ St. Paul saith, ‘ We be justified freely by His grace ; we judge that a man is justified by faith, without

the works of the law; we know that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ.'

"Ambrose saith, 'They are justified freely, because, working nothing and requiting nothing, they are justified by only faith through the gift of God.' Again, 'This was God's determination, that, the law ceasing, the grace of God should require only faith unto salvation.' And again, 'Only faith is laid or appointed unto salvation.'

"Basil saith, 'He knoweth himself to be void of true righteousness, and to be justified by only faith in Christ.'

"Theodoret saith, 'Not by any works of ours, but by only faith, we have gotten the mystical good thing.'

"Nazianzen saith, 'Only believing is righteousness.'

"Origen saith, 'Where now is thy boasting of thy good works? It is shut out.' Paul saith, that 'The justification of only faith is sufficient.' So that a man only believing, may be justified, although he have done no good works at all.

"Hesychius saith, 'The grace of God is given only of mercy and favour, and is embraced and received by only faith.'

"I leave a great number of others, that have written the like, as well Greeks as Latins. Instead of them all, Chrysostom saith thus, '*They* said, whoso stayeth himself by only faith is accursed.' Contrariwise, St. Paul proves, that 'Whoso stayeth himself by only faith, he is blessed.'"

The following declaration is extracted from a *Confession of Faith*, signed by the principal advocates of the Reformation, including Hooper, Philpot, Bradford, Rogers, Saunders, Coverdale, &c., in the year 1554: the document is given at large in the 8th volume of the *British Reformers*, recently re-published:—"We believe and confess, concerning justification, that, as it cometh only from God's mercy through Christ, so it is perceived and had of none who are of years of discretion, otherwise than by faith only; which faith is not an opinion, but a certain persuasion, wrought by the Holy Ghost in the mind and heart of man; wherethrough, as the mind is illumined, so the heart

is suppld to submit itself to the will of God unfeignedly; and so sheweth forth an inherent righteousness, which is to be discerned, in the article of justification, from the righteousness which God endueth us withal in justifying us, although inseparably they go together. And this we do, not for curiosity or contention sake, but for conscience sake, that it may be quiet; which it never can be, if we confound, without distinction, forgiveness of sins and Christ's justice imputed to us, with regeneration and inherent righteousness. By this we disallow the papistical doctrines of free-will, of works of supererogation, of merits, of the necessity of auricular confession, and satisfaction to Godward."

In Nowell's Catechism, the doctrine is given, as usual, in brief but adequate terms:—"We must flee to the mercy of God, whereby he freely embraceth us with love and good will in Christ, without any our deserving, or respect of works; both forgiving us our sins, and so giving us the righteousness of Christ by faith in Him, that, for the same Christ's righteousness, He so accepteth us, as if it were our own. To God's mercy, therefore, through Christ, we ought to impute all our justification." And again:—"There is no mercy due to our merits. By Christ alone we have access to the grace of God."

Hooker, on the contrary, in his *Discourse of Justification*, enlarges on the subject with more than common eloquence:—"If" justification "be" righteousness "in us, then is it ours, as our souls are ours, though we have them from God, and can hold them no longer than pleaseth Him; for if He withdraw the breath of our nostrils, we fall to dust: but the righteousness wherein we must be found, if we will be justified, is not our own, therefore we cannot be justified by any inherent quality. Christ hath merited righteousness, for as many as are found in Him. In Him God findeth us, if we be faithful; for by faith we are incorporated into Christ. Then, although in ourselves we be altogether sinful and unrighteous, yet, even the man which is impious in himself, full of iniquity, full of sin, him, being found

in Christ through faith, and having his sin remitted through repentance, him God beholdeth with a gracious eye, putteth away his sin by not imputing it, taketh quite away the punishment due thereunto by pardoning it, and accepteth him in Jesus Christ, as perfectly righteous, as if he had fulfilled all that was commanded him in the law. Such are we in the sight of God the Father, as is the very Son of God himself. Let it be counted folly, or frenzy, or fury, whatsoever, it is our comfort, and our wisdom : we are for no knowledge in the world but this, that man hath sinned, and God hath suffered ; that God hath made himself the Son of man, and that men are made the righteousness of God."

Again, " We say, our salvation is by Christ alone ; therefore, however or whatsoever we add unto Christ in the matter of salvation, we overthrow Christ." . . . But " we ourselves do not teach Christ alone, excluding our own faith, unto justification ; Christ alone, excluding our own works unto justification ; Christ alone, excluding the one or the other unnecessary unto salvation. It is a childish cavil wherewith in the matter of justification our adversaries do so greatly please themselves, exclaiming, that we tread all Christian virtues under our feet, and require nothing in Christians but faith ; because we teach that faith alone justifieth : whereas, by this speech we never meant to exclude either hope or charity from being always joined as inseparable mates with faith in the man that is justified ; or works from being added as necessary duties, required at the hands of every justified man : but to show that faith is the only hand which putteth on Christ unto justification ; and Christ the only garment, which, being put on, covereth the shame of our defiled natures, hideth the imperfection of our works, preserveth us blameless in the sight of God, before whom otherwise the weakness of our faith were cause sufficient to make us culpable, yea, to shut us from the kingdom of heaven, where nothing that is not absolute can enter."

The recent re-publication of Archbishop Usher's invaluable

Sermons, in a very cheap form, affords an opportunity for extracting a characteristic passage out of that on *Redemption by Christ*:—"If Christ be offered for us, yet, unless He offer himself to us,—unless any man have interest in Him,—it is nothing worth. Here then stands the mystery of the gospel: Christ, when He comes to offer himself to us, finds not a whit in us that is to be respected,—nothing. And that is the ground of all disturbance to ignorant consciences; for there is naturally in men pride and ignorance; they think they may not meddle with Christ, with God's mercy, unless they have something of their own to lay down. This is to buy Christ, to barter betwixt Christ and the soul. But salvation is a free gift of God: as the Apostle speaks, 'Christ is freely given unto thee, when thou hadst nothing of worth in thee.' Faith, when it comes, empties thee of all that is in thee. To whom is the gospel preached? to the dead, rotting in thy sins. Here is the point, then, when there is no manner of goodness in the world. 'In me,' saith St. Paul, 'that is, in my flesh, there is no good thing.' When I have been the most outrageous sinner, I may lay hold on Christ. Christ comes and offers himself to thee."

To these may be added, a conclusive answer to the Papists, from the *Three Treatises* of Bishop Reynolds, who presided over the See of Norwich in the reign of Charles the 2nd, and whose writings have lately been rescued from the neglect into which they had previously fallen:—"Our adversaries say, we are justified by grace, and yet by works, because grace enables us to work. We say we are justified freely, not by the works of grace, but by the grace which bestows our justification, and therefore our strength of working unto us. For surely God's free grace is more magnified in giving us, undeservedly, both righteousness and works, than in giving us works to deserve our righteousness."

But, among the most important volumes on the subject, viewed merely as an argumentative treatise, may be reckoned the *Two Letters concerning Justification by Faith only*,

written (in 1678) by Dr. Thomas Barlow, Lord Bishop of Lincoln, to a Minister in his Diocese, who had disputed the validity of that doctrine. From a reprint of this volume, put forth a few years since, the following extracts are derived :—

“ The doctrine of justification by faith, as explained in our Articles and Homilies, is, that faith only justifies; so that nothing else is required on our part: that it is the only means and instrument of our justification; that it is ordained of God, and appointed to this very end; and that faith alone receives, apprehends, and lays hold upon our blessed Saviour’s merits, by which we are justified: so that, by our Church’s doctrine, it is some way the work and office of faith only, all other works being shut out, to justify us.” (p. 43.)

Again :—“ And this is further evident, by what follows a little after in the same Homily: “ where the reason is given, why, in scripture, faith is said to justify without works, and what its office is in justifying, which belongs to no other works or virtues; and the reason is, in these words; because faith doth directly send us to Christ for remission of sins, and by it we do embrace the promises of mercy, and remission of sins, which thing no other virtues or works properly do. So that the office of faith in justifying, is to send us directly to our blessed Saviour, for remission of sins, and embracing the promises; ‘ and these things,’ saith the Homily, ‘ no other virtues or works doing, they are all shut out from what faith only performs, the office of justifying.’ ” (P. 46.)

Again :—“ In short, faith, as an act, a work or instrument, call it what you will, is that by which the merits of our blessed Saviour, for which alone we are justified, are applied and made ours. . . . Other works have no hand in the impetration or application of our blessed Saviour’s merits, and therefore neither have they any hand in our justification.” (P. 54.)

Again :—“ It is the judgment of our Church, that, whosoever denies justification by faith only, is not to be accounted a Christian man, nor a setter forth of Christ’s glory; but an

adversary to Christ and His gospel, and a setter-forth of men's vain glory." (p. 88.)

And again :—" ' I can shew you a man, ' (they are the words of our Homily,) ' who by faith, without works, lived, and came to heaven : but without faith, never any man had life. ' Then an instance follows, which St. Augustine, and many ancient and modern Divines since, have made use of to the same purpose, thus ; the thief who was hanged when our blessed Saviour suffered, did believe only, and the most merciful God justified him, &c. It is, you see, the express judgment of St. Augustine, and our Church, that in some case a man may be justified by faith only, when there are no good works at all, antecedent, concomitant, or subsequent, to concur with it in any way ; and, *ergo*, good works are no necessary condition, or *causa sine quâ non*, of our justification." (p. 108, 9.)

The subject may be closed with an authority which few will feel disposed to deny,—Bishop Burnet's *Exposition of the 11th Article* :—" Our faith and repentance are not the valuable considerations for which God pardons and justifies ; that is done merely for the death of Christ ; which God having out of the riches of His grace provided for us, and offered to us, justification is upon those accounts said to be *free*, there being nothing on our part which either did or could have procured it. But still our faith, which includes our hope, our love, our repentance, and our obedience, is the condition that makes us capable of receiving the benefits of this redemption and free grace. And thus it is clear, in what sense we believe, that we are justified both freely, and yet through Christ, and also through faith, as the condition indispensably necessary on our part."

2. That all *works performed before justification* are necessarily *sinful*, is a doctrine so inevitably consequent on that of justification by faith only, and so clearly defined in our 13th Article, that not many professors of the Church of England would go so far as publicly to withstand it. At the same time,

it is a doctrine which strikes so deeply at the root of man's deserts, that very few are found of sufficient boldness to preach it without equivocation or reserve. That it was not thus in the days of the Reformers, may be proved at once, from the authority of Martin Luther's *Enarrationes* on the Gospels and Epistles:—"No one is able to keep the law, unless he be totally renewed. Be assured, therefore, of this; that mere reason can never either understand or fulfil the Law, even though it may be acquainted with what the Law contains. . . . The Law requires, that nothing should be even *disagreeable* to you, which is agreeable to God; that you should *willingly* observe all His precepts and all His prohibitions, throughout the whole of your life and conversation. But there exists not the man who stands uncondemned for his breach of that Law, which God requires to be observed. Such is the trouble and affliction in which we are involved; nor are we in the least able to extricate ourselves. This, then, is the first knowledge of the Law,—to know that it is impossible for human strength to observe it. God requires the heart; and, unless our works be done from the heart, they are of no value in His sight. Works, indeed, you may do in outward appearance; but God is not satisfied with them, unless they spring from the soul and from love, which can never be the case, unless a man be born again of the Spirit."

Again, from that of Tindal, in his *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*:—"A good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and a bad tree bringeth forth bad fruit. There seest thou that the fruit makes not the tree good, but the tree the fruit; and that the tree must be good, or be made good, before it can bring forth good fruit. As Christ also saith, *Either make the tree good and his fruit good also, either make the tree bad and his fruit bad also. How can ye speak well, while ye yourselves are evil?* So likewise is this true, and nothing more true,—that a man, before all good works, must first be good, and that it is impossible that works should make him good, if he

were not good before he did good works. For this is Christ's principle; and, as we say, a general rule. *How can ye speak well, while ye are evil?* So likewise, how can ye do good, while ye are evil? This is, therefore, a plain and a sure conclusion, not to be doubted of, that there must be first in the heart of a man, before he do any good works, a greater and a more precious thing than all the good works in the world, to reconcile him to God, to bring the love and favour of God to him; to make him love God again, to make him righteous and good in the sight of God; to do away his sin, to deliver him and loose him out of that captivity wherein he was conceived and born, in which he could neither love God nor the will of God. Or else, how can he work any good work that should please God, if there were not some supernatural goodness in him, given of God freely, whereof that good work must spring?

Even as those whom thou readest of in the Gospel, who were possessed of the devils, could not laud God till the devils were cast out. That precious thing which must be in the heart, before a man can work any good work, is the Word of God, which, in the Gospel, preaches, proffers, and brings unto all that repent and believe, the favour of God in Christ."

And again, from that of "Father Fox," the Martyrologist, in his Discourse *Of Justification* :—"See of how great concern it is, that a person should first be reconciled to God; for, unless he be received into God's favour, it is not possible that his works should please Him at any time."

The *Catechism* of Nowell is at least equally explicit:—"In good works two things are principally required; first, that we do those works that are prescribed by the law of God; secondly, that they be done with that mind and faith which God requireth; for no doings or thoughts, enterprised or conceived without faith, can please God. It is evident, therefore, that all works whatsoever we do, before that we are born again and renewed by the Spirit of God, such as may properly be called our own works, are faulty. For whatsoever shew of gayness

or worthiness they represent and give to the eyes of men, sith they spring and proceed from a faulty and corrupted heart, which God chiefly considereth, they cannot but be defiled and corrupted, and so grievously offend God. Such works, therefore, as evil fruits growing out of an evil tree, God despiseth and rejecteth from Him."

Archbishop Usher, in his 4th Sermon, representing *All men by Nature dead in Sin*, observes, in allusion to Rom. iii. 3:—"The drift of the Apostle in this is to shew, that these things are not spoken of some heinous sinners only, but there is not one to be exempted. Many men, when they read such things as these in the Scripture, read them but as stories from strange countries. What, are we dead in sins, not able to stir one foot in God's ways? Bad we are indeed; but dead, rotten, and stinking in sins and trespasses? What, as bad as the world, the devil, and flesh can make us? What, children of wrath, firebrands of hell? Few can persuade themselves that it is so bad with them. Therefore take this home to yourselves; think no better of yourselves than you are; for thus you are naturally. Therefore consider, if thou wert now going out of the world, what state thou art in,—a child of wrath, a child of Belial, or the like. Set about the work speedily; go to God; pray, and cry earnestly; give thyself no rest, till thou know this to be thy condition; let not thy corrupt nature deceive thee, to make thee think better of thyself than God saith thou art. Now, that we may the better know to whom these things belong, know it is thou and I. We all have been, or are, in this state, till we have supernatural grace; and therefore we are declared to be children of wrath, and children of disobedience, till regenerated."

While, in the Sermon following, the general condition of those still in the flesh, still under the law, is denounced, in opposition to the false liberality of unbelievers:—"Strange conceits men have now-a-days, and a strange divinity is brought forth into the world! that if a man does as much as

lies in him, and what he is of himself able to do; nay, farther, though he be a heathen, that knows not Christ, yet if he doth the best he can, if he live honestly towards men, according to the conduct of his reason, and hath a good mind towards God, it is enough: he need not question his eternal welfare! Whereas, if he be not under grace, under Christ, he is accursed."

The famous Treatises of Bishops Hooker and Barlow proceed throughout on the supposition of this great truth, which is so interwoven with their whole argument, that it will be difficult to obtain more than one disjointed paragraph from the latter:—"The Article expressly says, that good works are fruits of faith, by which a lively faith, and so our justification, may be as evidently known as a tree by its fruit. Now, as good fruit does not constitute, but pre-suppose and declare the tree to be antecedently good, so, in the judgment of our Church, our good works are not causes or conditions which constitute a man just, but effects and evidences, which demonstrate him to have been before actually justified. This truth, that good works pre-suppose the man who does them antecedently just, has evident ground in Scripture, which will justify our Church's doctrine in this Article, and in our Homily, where it is more fully declared, thus,—'Let us do good works,' says the Homily, 'and thereby declare our faith to be lively and Christian.' And, a little after, 'True faith ever brings forth good works.' Saith St. James, *Shew me thy faith by thy deeds*. Thy deeds and works must be an open testimonial of thy faith, otherwise thy faith is a phantasy, and but a faith of devils. So that our Church and St. James agree in this, that good works are evidences and declarations of a lively faith, and preceding justification; and so cannot constitute, but only, *ex post facto*, declare a man antecedently just." (p. 34-5.)

Bishop Hopkins (who held the See of Derry during the latter portion of the 17th century, and whose works have lately been reprinted), in his *Nature and Necessity of Regeneration*,

—one of the most eloquent as well as pious Essays of our old Divines,—expresses himself with all the quaintness and animation peculiar to the age in which he lived:—“Whatsoever an unregenerate man doth, it becomes sin to him. And that, whether you consider his religious, or his civil and ordinary actions, If you take the most splendid and gorgeous duty of an unregenerate man, when it is performed with the most pomp, when his affections are most upon the wing, when he is in the highest elevation of soul; yet this glittering duty is nothing else but the steam and reeking of corruption, and so becomes offensive unto God, there being nothing of grace in it to perfume it. Hence the Psalmist speaks, *Let his prayer become sin*: and, says the Wise Man, *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord*; the best duties of unregenerate men are no better, in God’s account and acceptance, than abomination, the *cutting off a dog’s neck*, or as the *offering up of swine’s blood*, or whatever else the soul of God doth most abhor. And how then might such unregenerate men wish themselves rather stocks or stones, senseless and unacted things, than such as they are, men of vigorous and active principles; since every imagination of their hearts, and every motion of their souls, is only evil before God! There is nothing, that such men do, in the whole course of their lives, but, in the last day, it will be found in God’s register-book among the catalogue of their sins,—yea, even their commendable and necessary actions. *The plowing of the wicked*, says the Wise Man, *is an abomination unto the Lord*: this man eats and drinks, plows and sleeps, and hath done so many thousands of such and such natural actions; but he hath done them in a state of unregeneracy, and therefore they stand all upon the account for so many thousand sins. Nay, he hath prayed so often, and heard so often,—prayed so many prayers, and heard so many sermons, and done many good works; but yet, all this while, he was in an unconverted estate: these, therefore, are set down in God’s day-book, in black; and they are registered among

those sins that he must give an account for; not for the substance of the actions themselves, but because they come from rotten principles, that defile the best actions which he can perform. His eating, as well as his gluttony; his drinking; as well as his drunkenness; his converse, negotiation, and trafficking, as well as his covetousness, and inordinate love of the world; are set down and reckoned by God for sins; and such sins as he must reckon for with God. I speak not these things to discourage any, that may suspect themselves to be in an unconverted estate, from the performance either of the duties of religion, or the necessary and civil affairs of this life: you cannot possibly sit still and do nothing: your thoughts will be working; or, if you do sit still and do nothing, yet your idleness will be a sin. But I speak this only to shew the absolute necessity of regeneration; for, without this inward principle of grace, no action, how moral, how specious, how religious, or necessary soever, but will be catalogued down in God's day-book among the number of men's sins."

"See here, then," he afterwards proceeds, "the miserable shipwreck of all the hopes of carnal men: who regard not what they are, but look only, and that too with a too favourable eye, upon what they do; and, with the boasting Pharisee, make large inventories of their good works. They fast twice a week, and give alms often: they are frequent in prayer, and constant at the ordinances; and therefore they think, certainly, that they shall enter into heaven with the forwardest. But, alas! what is all this? God respects what thou art, as well as what thou dost; and if all your duties proceed from an unchanged, unrenewed heart, he neither accepts them nor regards them. Thou, perhaps, thinkest that thou hast laid up a great mass of treasure for thy soul against the time to come; whereas, at the last day, it will be found to be but great heaps of dung and filth. Nay, let me tell you, should you pray till your knees took root in the earth, could you nail your eyes to heaven, could you melt your hearts into tears, and vanish away into

sight, yea and spend every moment of your lives far better than ever you spent the best, and yet should you remain un-sanctified and unchanged, all this would be of no account with God; but instead of—*Well done, good and faithful servant*, you would meet with that unexpected demand,—*Who has required these things at your hands?* Consider seriously and sadly of this, you, who think that you have many duties upon the file in heaven, as so many evidences of your right and title unto heaven. As you would not have all these to be lost, and utterly in vain, so look to it that they proceed from hearts that are truly sanctified and renewed: without which, they will be of no avail at all in God's esteem."

The remarks of that great and good man, Archbishop Leighton, in the Preface to his Sermon, entitled *The Sinner a Rebel against God*, though somewhat more general, are not less indicative of his deliberate sentiments upon the question:—"How true is that word of our Saviour, who is truth itself, *Without me ye can do nothing*,—severed from me, as that branch that is not in me. They who are altogether out of Christ, in spiritual exercises, do nothing at all. 'Tis true, they may pray and hear the Word, yea, and preach it too, and yet, in so doing, they do nothing,—nothing in effect. They have the matter of good actions, but it is the internal form gives being to things. They are but a number of empty words, and a dead service to a living God. For all our outward performances and worship of the body are nothing but the body of worship, and therefore nothing but a carcase, except the Lord Jesus, by his Spirit, breathe upon it the breath of life. Yea, the worshipper himself is eventually dead, till he receive life from Jesus, and be quickened by His Spirit. . . . And such being without Him, they can do nothing in his service."

To go no further, Bishop Beveridge dwells almost perpetually on the sinfulness as well as darkness of man previously to justification. On the former point, a passage may

be taken from his *Sermon on Good Works*, where, having first recapitulated whatever need be said of innate corruption, he proceeds:—"Neither is it possible it should be otherwise, so long as we continue such as we came into the world; for, our nature being defiled with sin, all our actions cannot but be so too. Hence it is that we are so often commanded in Holy Scripture to *depart from evil*, and to *cease to do evil*, because naturally evil is always present with us; and if at any time we be so assisted by the grace of God, as not to sin, we may justly be said to depart from evil, and cease to do that which was wont to be our continual employment."

Of the latter, a beautiful illustration occurs in the 8th Article of his *Private Thoughts*:—"So that I believe it a thousand times easier for a worm, a fly, or any other despicable insect whatsoever, to understand the affairs of men, than for the best of men, in a natural state, to apprehend the things of God. No; there is none can know God, nor, by consequence, any thing that is really good, but only so far as they are partakers of the Divine nature. We must, in some measure, be like to God, before we can have any true conception of Him, or be really delighted with Him; we must have a spiritual sight before we can behold spiritual things, which every natural man being destitute of, he can see no comeliness in Christ, why He should be desired; nor any amiableness in religion, why it should be embraced."

3. The absolute necessity of *Personal Holiness* is a doctrine which mankind are not wont systematically to oppose; but, with regard to its absolute dependence as a *fruit of saving faith*, a few sentences from Nowell's *Catechism* may not appear superfluous:—"Good works do stand upon faith, as upon their root. So far, therefore, is faith from withdrawing our hearts from living uprightly, that, contrariwise, it doth most vehemently stir us up to the endeavour of a good life; yea, and so far, that he is not truly faithful, that doth not also to his power shun vices and embrace virtues, so living always as

one that looketh to give an account." Again :—" The dutiful works of godliness which proceed out of faith, working by charity, are indeed acceptable to God, yet not by their own deserving ; but that He, of his liberality, vouchsafeth his favour. For, though they be derived of the Spirit of God, as little streams from the spring-head, yet of our flesh that mingleth itself with them in the doing by the way, they receive corruption, as it were by infection ; like as a river, otherwise pure and clear, is troubled and mudded with mire and slime, wherethrough it runneth." Again :—" It is faith that procureth God's favour to our works, while it is assured, that He will not deal with us after extremity of law, nor call our doings to exact account, nor try them as it were by the square : that is, He will not, in valuing and weighing them, use severity ; but, remitting and pardoning all their corruptness, for Christ's sake and His deserving, will account them for fully perfect." And again :—" Whatever is in us, or may be done of us, honest, pure, true, and good, it altogether springeth out of this most pleasant rock, from this most plentiful fountain, the goodness, love, choice, and unchangeable purpose of God. He is the cause : the rest are fruits and effects."

4.—Lastly, of Jesus Christ, our *all in all* throughout, it would be unreasonable to demand more satisfactory illustrations, than the two passages here adduced from Bishop Reynolds. The former occurs in his *Sermon on the Sinfulness of Sin* :—" The branch can bear no fruit, nor preserve nor ripen that which it hath, but by its unity with the root. Light continues not in the house, but by its dependence on the sun ; shut out that, all the light is presently gone. Take water away from the fire, and its nature will be presently stronger than the heat it borrowed, and suddenly reduce it to its wonted coldness. So we can do nothing, but by the constant supplies of the Spirit of Christ. He that begins, must finish every good work in us. He that is the author,

must be the finisher of our faith too. Without Him we cannot will nor do any good; without Him, when we have done both, we cannot continue, but shall faint in the way. His Spirit must lead us; His arm must heal and strengthen us. As we have received Him, so we must walk in Him: without Him we cannot walk. God is the God of all grace: to Him it belongeth not only to call, but to perfect; not only to perfect, but to *strengthen, stablish, settle* us."

The latter is taken from his *Three Treatises*, before referred to:—When reconciled to God, "we stand not, like Adam, upon our own bottom, but are branches of such a vine as never withers; members of such a head as never dies; sharers of such a spirit as cleanseth, healeth, and purifieth the heart; partakers of such promises as are sealed with the oath of God. We live not by our own life, but by the life of Christ; are not led or sealed by our own spirit, but by the Spirit of Christ; do not obtain mercy by our own prayers, but by the intercession of Christ; stand not reconciled in virtue of our endeavours, but by the propitiation wrought by Christ; who *loved us when we were enemies*; who is both willing and able to save us to the uttermost." . . . "Infinitely, therefore, doth it concern the soul of every man to be restless and unsatisfied with any other good thing, till he find himself entitled unto this happy communion with the life of Christ."

III. 1.—We now arrive at the third, the most extensive, and certainly, in one respect, the most important division of the Sermon, as embracing topics more open than the rest to controversy, and less defined by the authority of the Church. Of the *effectual operation of the Holy Ghost*, as a general topic of belief, no doubt is entertained by any denomination of professors: and this portion of the subject may be dismissed with a single passage from that pious and elaborate Divine, Dr. Isaac Barrow:—"He reclaimeth us from error and sin; He supporteth and strengtheneth us in temptation;

He adviseth and admonisheth, exciteth and encourageth us to all works of piety and virtue.—He guideth and quickeneth us in devotion; shewing us what we should ask; raising in us holy desires and comfortable hopes; disposing us to approach unto God with fit dispositions of mind, love, and reverence, and humble confidence.—He is also our Intercessor with God; presenting our supplications, and procuring our good. He crieth in us, He pleadeth for us to God. Whence he is peculiarly called *Παράκλητος*, the Advocate; that is, One who is called in, by His good word or countenance to aid *him*, whose cause is to be examined, or petition to be considered.”

2.—And here it may be worth while to introduce a passage, exactly parallel to what occurs in this part of the Sermon, in reference to *the order of man's salvation*. It should undoubtedly be borne in mind, that the Spirit of God is not bound down to any order or any process of operation whatever. The object of a consecrated priesthood is to save, and not to methodise; to preach the word, and every line and letter of the word, as they find it, and not to fancy they can reduce the decrees of God into a more regular or more effectual system. Nevertheless, those who teach must rejoice in any means afforded them of ascertaining, more precisely, the rise and progress of religion in the souls of others; and those who learn will not be displeased with a further opportunity of examining the state of their own affections, as well as the ground and import of their hopes. The passage alluded to occurs in the *Lively Description of our Justification*, written in answer to Sir Thomas More, by William Tindal, Martyr, and Translator of the Holy Scriptures:—“Note now the order. First God gives me light to see the goodness and righteousness of the law, and mine own sin and unrighteousness. Out of which knowledge springeth repentance. Now repentance teaches me not that the law is good, and I evil, but is a light which the Spirit of God hath given me, out of which light repentance springeth. Then the same Spirit worketh, in mine heart, trust and confi-

dence to believe the mercy of God and His truth, that He will do as He hath promised, which belief saveth me. And immediately out of that trust springeth love toward the law of God again. And whatsoever a man worketh of any other love than this, it pleases not God, nor is that love godly. Now love does not receive this mercy, but faith only; out of which faith love springeth, by which love I pour out again upon my neighbour that goodness which I received of God by faith. Hereof ye see that I cannot be justified without repentance, and yet repentance justifies me not. And hereof ye see that I cannot have a faith to be justified and saved, except love spring thereof immediately; and yet love justifies me not before God. For my natural love to God, again, does not make me first see and feel the kindness of God in Christ, but faith through preaching. For *we love not God* first, to compel Him to love again; but *He loved us* first, and gave His Son for us, that we might see love, and love again, saith St. John in his First Epistle: which love of God to us-ward we receive by Christ through faith, saith St. Paul."

3.—But to dwell more particularly on the matter of *Regeneration*, or the *new birth*. To this term it will be necessary to recollect that several very different ideas, independent of minor gradations and distinctions, have been assigned. Some have understood by it, a qualification for admittance into the visible Church: some, the bestowal of divine grace for the performance of Christian duties: some, a change of relationship, by which the children of the world become the children of God: and some, in the language of the Church Catechism, "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness,"—an operation by which, according to the Baptismal Service, "the old man is so buried, that the new man is raised up." To these remarks it may suffice to add, that the expression is invariably employed by the present writer, in its fullest and widest acceptation; and what that acceptation denotes, he would rather leave to be collected from the language of others, than attempt a definition of his own.

And to begin with the 5th Sermon of Archbishop Usher, where *the Description of a Dead Man* introduces the following remarks on *the Necessity of Regeneration*:—"Christ himself coming into the world, and preaching to Nicodemus, begins,—*Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* A man in his natural condition can never enter into heaven; for he is wholly carnal. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.* It is carnal, and must be born again: a little patching will not serve the turn. Thou must be new born, new moulded: a little mending is not sufficient: a man must be a new creature, and new made. So that this is the substance of this doctrine of Christ, that if thou be no better than moral virtue or civil education can make thee, if thou hast any thing less than regeneration, believe me thou canst never see heaven. There is no hope of heaven till then,—till thou art born again."

Bishop Barlow, while arguing on quite a different topic, introduces, as a matter of general consent, an allusion to the comprehensive character of Regeneration:—"Righteous operations, if St. John say truth, presuppose a new birth, or regeneration, and *consequently* our justification; it being impossible that any regenerate man should be still in his sins, impenitent and unjustified. And *ergò*, they cannot possibly justify, or truly be said to justify us, so as to constitute and make us just, *coram Deo.*" (p. 70.)

From the splendid Essay of Bishop Hopkins, it would be a culpable injustice to extract less than three of his most powerful appeals:—"It is no notion that I have now preached unto you: your natures and your lives must be changed; or, believe it, you will be found at the last day under the wrath of God. For God will not change or alter the Word that has gone out of His mouth; He hath said it,—Christ, who is the Truth and Word of God, hath pronounced it,—that, without this new birth or regeneration, no man shall inherit the kingdom of God. Whatsoever a man doth in a state of unregeneracy is sin; and, therefore, the change of

regeneration is absolutely necessary unto eternal life. Whatever such a man's whole life is, it is nothing else but a continued course of sin, without either interruption or cessation; and in this one particular lies a main difference betwixt a regenerate and unregenerate man. The regenerate man, through that corruption that is remaining in him, sins in every thing that he doth; but whatever an unregenerate man doth, is sin: there is the difference,—the one doth, as it were, tread awry in a right path, and the other runs out into a crooked and perverse one. And how, then, is it possible for such men ever to arrive at heaven, since every step they take leads down to the chambers of death and destruction? I spake somewhat to this before, in opening to you the misery of an unregenerate state and condition; and shewed you then, that the Scripture every where speaks of the civil actions and the religious duties of wicked men as sins: their plowing is sin; and so also is their praying: yea whatever they do is sin; they sin in doing evil, they sin in doing good. The principle from whence all the actions of an unregenerate man flow is corrupt; and when the fountain is corrupt, the streams also, that issue from thence, must needs be tainted."

Again:—"Unless the foundation be laid in a real change of grace, wrought upon your souls, all that afterwards you build is but hay and stubble; such as will only add fuel to your unquenchable fire. Think not, therefore, as many ignorant sottish people do, of balancing your evil deeds by your good: for, if you are in an unregenerate, in a natural state and condition, if in the same that you brought into the world, there is nothing but what is evil and sinful. And it is very sad to consider, that, when God and your own consciences shall come, at the last day, to take a review of your lives,—those lives, that have been full of actions, perhaps for forty, fifty, or threescore years together,—that then they shall be found to be but one continued series of wickedness, one sin succeeding another without the least gap made in it by one good and holy work. This is the

condition of every unregenerate sinner. And, therefore, if ever you hope for heaven, endeavour for regeneration: for this change is absolutely necessary, for the raising of any of your actions from being sinful to be holy."

And again:—"Beware that you do not flatter yourselves with any deluding hopes of heaven: you are, as yet, without any right to it. This is, indeed, a dreadful caution. What! to beat men off from their hopes of heaven? And, commonly, it proves as fruitless as it is dreadful. Men's hopes, of all things, frequently deceive them. They maintain themselves with little, especially the hopes they have of heaven; and they live either upon weak probabilities, or upon strong fancies. And hence the Scripture compares the hope of a hypocrite to a *spider's web*: men spin their hopes out of their own bowels, and settle themselves in the midst of them, and doubt not but they shall catch heaven itself in their foolish cobwebs. Should I come and ask you all, one by one,—Do you, and you, hope to be saved? Where is the person that would not, by his disdain at the very question, testify how high and how great his hopes are? Would not the drunkard, the swearer, the profane person, and the whole rabble of wicked and ungodly wretches speak as confidently of their salvation, as if they were born with sure proofs of heaven in their hands? What! are these men regenerate? or has the price of heaven fallen, and God become willing to part with it upon lower terms than the new birth? Art thou regenerated, that hatest God and godliness, and all those that bear the least resemblance to the divine purity? Art thou regenerated, that makest an impudent scoff at the name, and deridest the very title that fallen man hath unto happiness? Is it likely that the new nature should be hid under an old life? Regeneration is the ransacking of the soul; the turning of a man out of himself; the crumbling to pieces of the old man, and the new moulding of it into another shape: it is the turning of souls into children; and a drawing of the lively portraiture of Jesus Christ upon that very table,

that before represented only the very image of the devil. This mighty change is wrought by regeneration. Man's partaking of the divine nature is the greatest change that ever was wrought in heaven or in earth, unless it were God's partaking of the human nature. Art thou thus changed? are all old things done away, and all things in thee become new? hast thou a new heart, and renewed affections? and dost thou serve God in newness of life and conversation? If not, what hast thou to do with hopes of heaven? Thou art yet without Christ; and so, consequently, without hope. Sinners, what is it you trust to? Is it your own good works? This, indeed, is the common refuge of those that have fewest good works to produce. But, alas! what confidence canst thou repose in these, when *the very prayer of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord?* Is it the merit of Christ that you rely upon? Why, Christ becomes a Saviour to none, but to those in whose hearts He is first formed. Is it some slight and general notions of God's mercy that you trust to? It is true God is infinitely merciful; though He hath already damned thousands for their sins; and He will remain for ever infinitely merciful, when thou also art damned amongst them. It is in vain to press the mercy of God to serve your foolish hopes, against that inviolable truth of His, that hath excluded you out of heaven:—*Except you be born again, you can in no wise enter into the kingdom of God.* This is that irreversible sentence that is written on heaven-gates: no entering there, but by passing first through the new birth; no dogs nor swine must come into that Holy City; and such are all unrenewed persons; yea, the Scripture calls them *the children of the devil*,—*Ye are of your father the devil.* And, certainly, that God, who hath chased devils out of heaven, will never admit any of his rude offspring into it. And, therefore, let me exhort you not to flatter yourselves into hell and destruction, with false and deluding hopes of heaven. Give no

rest either to God or to yourselves, till this thorough change be wrought upon you in your regeneration."

Take another explanation of the term, or rather the same in another shape, from Archbishop Leighton's *First Lecture on Regeneration* :—" He who formed the heart of man can reform it at His pleasure, and this He actually does : whenever He admits a person into His royal family, He, at the same time, endows him with royal and Divine dispositions. And, therefore, if He honors any person with His love, that person thereby becomes deserving ; because, if he was not so before, He makes him so ; He stamps His own image upon him in true and lively colors, and as He is holy Himself, He makes him holy likewise. Hence it is, that this heavenly adoption is no less properly, truly, or frequently, in the sacred Scriptures, called regeneration."

And again, from the *Second Lecture*, a few hints on the nature of that gift, in the highest tone of scriptural philosophy :—" Now, whether you call this renovation or change of the mind, repentance, or Divine love, it makes no difference ; for all these, and, indeed, all the Christian graces in general, are, at bottom, one and the same, and, taken together, constitute what we may call the health and vigour of the mind. The Apostle Paul, in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, describes these adopted children of God by their repentance ; in the Epistle to the Romans, they are characterised by their love ; and in the passage of St. John's Gospel we have mentioned already, by their faith. But, whatever name it is conveyed by, the change itself is effected by the right hand of the Most High. As to the manner of this Divine operation, to raise many disputes about it, and make many curious disquisitions with regard to it, would be not only quite needless, but even absurd. Solomon, in his Ecclesiastes, gives some grave admonitions with regard to the secret processes of nature in forming the fœtus in the womb, to convince us of

our blindness with respect to the other works of God : how much more hidden and intricate, and even past our finding out, is this regeneration, which is purely spiritual. This is what our Saviour also teaches us, when he compares this new birth to the unconfined and unknown turnings and revolutions of the wind ; a similitude which Solomon had lightly touched before, in that passage of the Ecclesiastes to which we just now alluded. O ! that we felt within ourselves this blessed change, though we should remain ignorant with regard to the manner of it ; since we are sufficiently apprised of one thing, which it is greatly our interest frequently and seriously to reflect upon :—*Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* This spiritual progeny is also compared to the dew, the generation whereof is hidden and undiscovered. *Hath the rain a father, and who hath begotten the drops of the dew?* Good men are also called *children of light*, and *light in the Lord.* But it is from the Father of lights Himself, and from His only-begotten Son, that these stars (for this title of the angels may, without injustice, be applied to them) derive all the light they enjoy. Now, the nature of light is very intricate, and the emanation, and the manner of its production, is yet a secret, even to the most sharp-sighted of those who have made nature their study ; and no satisfactory theory of it has yet appeared. But, whatever it is, it was produced by that first and powerful Word of eternal and uncreated light,—*Let there be light.* By the same powerful Word of the Almighty Father, there immediately springs up in the mind, which was formerly quite involved in the darkness of ignorance and error, a Divine and immortal light, which is the life of men, and, in effect, the true regeneration. And, because this is the most effectual means of purifying the soul, it is ascribed to the water and to the Spirit. For this illumination of the Holy Ghost is, indeed, the inward baptism of the Spirit ; but, in the primitive times of Christianity, the baptism of water, on account of the supposed concurrence of the Spirit, was com-

monly called the illumination, and the solemn seasons appointed for the celebration of this mystery, the days of illumination or light. And, in the very same manner, the baptism of the Holy Ghost is by John the Baptist called the baptism of fire, on account of the wonderful influence it has in illuminating and purifying the soul. It is, to be sure, a celestial fire, quite invisible to our eyes, and of such a nature, that the secret communications of it to our souls cannot be investigated."

Bishop Beveridge, in his *73rd Sermon*, illustrates the change produced on the human character by spiritual regeneration:—
 "When a man believes in Christ, the second Adam, and so is made a member of His body, he is quickened and animated by His Spirit, which being the principle of a new life in him, he thereby becomes a new creature, another kind of creature from what he was before, and therefore is properly said to be born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. . . His whole nature is changed. . . He hath a new set of thoughts and affections, a new sight and sense of God, a new bias upon his mind, so that he is now as much inclined to virtue as he was before to vice; and of a foolish, proud, sinful, and carnal creature, is become wise, and humble, and holy, and spiritual. . . And, whereas other men are born only of the flesh, such a one is regenerate, or born again of the Spirit, according to that remarkable saying of our blessed Saviour,—*that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*: every thing being of the same nature with that from whence it proceeds. Hence all such are called the sons of God, and are really so."

In perfect harmony with all that has gone before, is the account given of the Christian's first entry into life, by that eloquent and effective preacher, Archbishop Tillotson:—"After many strugglings and conflicts with their lusts, and the strong bias of evil habits, this resolution, assisted by the grace of God, does effectually prevail and make a real change both in the temper of their minds and in the course of their lives: and

when that is done, and not before, they are said to be regenerate."

Then, again, the grand test of Regeneration is faithfully applied by the pious and amiable Thomas Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man, in a volume circulated by "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," under the name of *Maxims of Piety and Christianity*:—"A regenerate Person cannot sin. That is, he has, by faith and the grace of God, got such an habit of holiness, such an inclination to virtue, that he cannot, upon any temptation, knowingly consent to transgress the laws of God. Having overcome the world, that is, all those temptations by which men are led to commit sin, he is dead to sin; that is, he can no more sin than a dead man can breathe." And again, immediately afterwards:—"Regeneration. The only certain proof of regeneration is victory. He that is born of God overcometh the world. When we live by faith, when faith has subdued the will, hath wrought repentance not to be repented of, hath conquered our corruptions, then to him that overcometh will God give to eat of the tree of life." (p. 188.)

To sum up all, the growth of sanctification, as the progressive consequence of Regeneration, is thus delineated by the learned Bishop Pearson, in the 9th Article of his *Exposition of the Creed*:—"But, because there is more than an outward vocation and a charitable presumption, necessary to make a man holy; therefore, we must find some other qualification, which must make him really and truly such, not only by an extrinsical denomination, but by a real and internal affection. What this sanctity is, and who are capable of this title properly, we must learn out of the Gospel of Christ; by which alone, ever since the Church of Christ was founded, any man can become a saint. Now, by the tenure of the Gospel, we shall find that those are truly and properly saints, which are sanctified in Christ Jesus. First, in respect of their holy faith, by which they are regenerated; for whosoever believeth

that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; by which they are purged, God himself purifying their hearts by faith, whereby they are washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, in whom also, after that they believe, they are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Secondly, in respect of their conversation; for, as He which hath called them is holy, so are they holy in all manner of conversation; adding to their faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness charity; that they may neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such persons, then, as are called by a holy calling, and not disobedient unto it; such as are endued with a holy faith, and purified thereby; such as are sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God, and by virtue thereof do lead a holy life, perfecting holiness in the fear of God; such persons, I say, are really and truly saints.

4.—We here proceed to examine how far this wonderful and mighty change in the state and character of men may be pronounced the regular concomitant of Baptism. It is in every respect an inquiry fraught with equal interest and difficulty; to the writer himself it is one which appeals with more than usual urgency, as almost the only point on which any thing like a specific complaint has been made against him by the Incumbent he lately served.

That inward regeneration should have been represented by many persons as the necessary, constant, and exclusive effect of outward Baptism, will excite the less surprise, when we consider how flattering must be such a notion to the vanity and corruption of human nature. A more effectual balm was never found to allay the tumult of an uneasy conscience, or to wrap the cares of the indolent and abandoned in security. It little matters how pure the rest of a man's creed may be, when he has always this expedient at hand, to neutralise its

tendency and operation. He may admit, without scruple, the native depravity of his soul, when he believes its character was purified, as a matter of course, at baptism. He may easily assent to the original absence of free-will, so long as he can persuade himself that another law,—a counterpoise to the law of his members,—was inevitably imparted on the same occasion. It will inflict but little trouble on his mind to allow, that works done before justification are altogether sinful, while he takes for granted, the displeasure of God was washed away in the baptismal waters of his infancy. And as for the sense and assurance of reconciliation before God, what safer token of acceptance can be required, when he may at any time obtain a certificate of the forgiveness of his sins, of his adoption among the sons of God and fellow-heirs of Christ, and of his participation in the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, recorded in the Baptismal Register, and testified under the sign-manual of the Parish Clerk? So far as Baptism is merely understood to denote a public and formal admission into the communion of the visible Church on earth, it is probable that no difference of opinion prevails between religious classes of any kind: all appear to allow, that the bestowal of that blessing is included in the ordinance, however they may disagree on every other topic connected with it. But, from the extracts already offered on the subject of Regeneration, the writer's intention in the use of that term will have been easily ascertained; while a reference to the Liturgical Services for the Sacrament of Baptism, will immediately justify the widest acceptance of which the phrase adopted is susceptible.

But too many, who admit the comprehensive and momentous import of the term, still imagine that they are warranted, even by the Baptismal Services, in claiming this new birth for all to whom the rite is duly administered. Now, if by due administration is meant,—what those who use the expression generally appear to mean,—the authority of the person who administers; it is a remarkable circumstance that the 26th

Article of our Church is designed expressly to remove the plea of inefficacy in the administration of the sacraments, from the unworthiness of the Minister, and to fix it on the faithlessness of the receiver. "The effect of Christ's ordinance," we read, "is not taken away by the wickedness of Ministers; nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such, as by faith and rightly do receive the sacraments ministered unto them." But, that the services of the Liturgy afford no ground whatever for the maintenance of such a doctrine as the necessary connection of the outward and visible sign with the inward and spiritual grace in either Sacrament, is a fact repeatedly demonstrated by others, and again briefly enforced in the ensuing Sermon. Concluding that the person presented, if an adult, is himself sincere in his profession of repentance and faith; or, if an infant, is offered by devout parents and sponsors, who sincerely promise in the child's behalf; the Church presumes on the vows and prayers of the party, and proceeds, without hesitation, to claim and apply the promises. But are the vows and prayers of those who stand around the font invariably sincere? It may seem an uncharitable question,—but, is there reason to suppose they are generally so? Nay, is there any comfortable ground of confidence that most of those who bring their children to be baptised, are, themselves, in a state to pray for the regeneration of others,—are themselves regenerate,—if not sanctified, yet justified,—if not justified, at least earnestly desiring and expecting justification? These are matters known only to God and themselves, and for which the Church never aspires to answer. She presumes, that what her members undertake on their part, they undertake sincerely; and she knows that on His part God will not be wanting; and she therefore concludes, that the petitions of the congregation are heard and answered. From this time forth, through every step and stage of their career, from the cradle to the grave, while outwardly conformed to her obedience, she acknowledges her disciples as the disciples of her Lord and Saviour. With them-

selves abide the consequences, if, while nominally brethren of the Church, they are really and truly friends and servants of the world.

The custom of infant baptism has long prevailed so generally in the Church of England, that the very mention of that rite immediately connects itself in our minds with the idea of childhood. And this is, perhaps, one of the principal obstacles that has assisted to interrupt a fair and equitable view of the subject in its several aspects and directions. The very nature of a covenant requires that we suppose a voluntary assent to certain proposals on both sides; and it is only by a most gracious extension of Divine mercy, that man can be admitted into covenant with God, before he has reached the age of discernment between moral good and evil, and of consequent freedom and responsibility. And nothing can be more unreasonable, than to expect that a gratuitous admission to the privileges of manhood may be further construed into an exemption from those stipulations, without which not even manhood is admissible to the covenant; that, because a great allowance is made in our favour by a general invitation,—*Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not*,—we may, therefore, usurp a still greater, and claim in their behalf all the advantages of the covenant, without any pledges or obligations whatsoever. Surely it is no light thing in the Almighty to receive our children even on the same terms on which He would condescend to receive ourselves: but we must urge the matter still further, and require Him to admit them without either conditions or engagements. To assert that children are bound by the vows and promises of parents and sponsors, is the merest idleness in the world, if, as our adversaries contend, the covenant is at once fulfilled on one side, and the child regenerate, whether he observe or violate the treaty. Obedience thus becomes completely optional, and the law of duty degenerates into the law of honour,—the very cream and essence of Antinomian licentiousness. And what is

then the use of any vows and promises at all? What is the use of sponsors? The covenant is a mere form, and the child receives at once remission of sins and all other benefits of the cross and passion of Christ, with or without either repentance or faith,—in short, under all circumstances, just the same. But the fact is, the Church of England makes no distinction whatever in the demand she claims, whether of adults or of infants; only in the one instance she requires a personal, in the other a vicarious, stipulation. To distinguish between the two cases of covenant, is to draw a line not recognised by the authorities to which her communicants profess to bow. If it be asked, according to what principle the gift of present regeneration can be made to depend on the future fulfilment of promises, made in the name and person of an infant, the wisest answer perhaps will be, to do as the Church has done,—to give no answer at all; to leave the development of an acknowledged mystery in the hands of Him who *knoweth the hearts*, charitably hoping for the best, but no less charitably providing, by cautions and admonitions, against the worst. Some, indeed, have ventured to suggest, as a supposition not incompatible with the wisdom and knowledge of God, that He may already discern the seeds of faith and piety even in the mind of an infant, and grant or withhold His immediate benediction accordingly. But, at all events, shall we attach no value to the prayers of believing parents? The promise is *to them and to their children*,—a promise from One, who *sheweth mercy unto thousands in them that love Him*: and we know (from 1 Cor. vii. 14) that, even though one of the parents be an unbeliever, yet, for the believing parent's sake, the children shall be sanctified. Some people may remonstrate against such a dispensation, as if the salvation of a child were thus made to depend on the religious principles of its parents. Now, although it were too much to allow that the ultimate salvation of any human being can depend on any thing else but the condescending love of God in Christ, yet that

the welfare of a child may be much retarded and obscured by the sins of parents, who can pretend to doubt? They, indeed, who confine regeneration to baptism alone, may well stand out against a doctrine, which, if engrafted into their own principles, might consign the child of an unbeliever to immediate and irretrievable damnation; but such an inference only manifests more plainly the wickedness, as well as absurdity, of the argument they uphold. However, to press the point no longer, we may well believe the readiness of the Almighty to reward the believing parent with a blessing for his child, without supposing for one moment that He would in this wise *visit the sins of the fathers upon the children*, and entail the curse of disobedience on their posterity.

The question at issue on the subject of Baptismal Regeneration, resolves itself into several shapes, by no means equally productive of practical error and delusion. The party who maintain, and the party who deny, the inseparable union of Baptism and Regeneration, will each be found to comprise among their members some shades of distinction in their sentiments. But it is the one great line of demarkation, which not only divides the rival claimants from one another, but must for ever exclude all hope of their coalition. The quarrel is a quarrel of life and death; there can be no agreement, and there must be no compromise, between them. But with those who once admit the distinctive principle in dispute, the case is quite altered; the very moment men are found to stand so near together, that there is room for both within the pale of the same covenant, that instant they become brethren in Christ Jesus. When we read expressly, that *unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven*; an agreement as to the essential nature of the second birth becomes indispensable for the formation and continuance of a Scriptural Church. They who differ here, differ fundamentally; one of them is building on the sand. But, once agreed in the vital character of that qualification for eternity, and the freedom

and friendship of Christian brotherhood subdues all misconception and animosity on points not absolutely irreconcilable with saving faith and knowledge.

The object of the writer, then, will be, not to prove (what is indeed incapable of proof) that the sentiments of the great leaders of the Church of England have been precisely identical on every point connected with baptismal regeneration; nor yet to prove (what all profess, however inconsistently, to admit) that baptism presupposes repentance and faith, as conditions of regeneration, and therefore renders the fulfilment of those conditions incumbent upon all who are baptised; but that without repentance and faith,—without their sincere profession at the time, and their unequivocal fulfilment, either then or afterwards,—no spiritual regeneration really takes place; in short, that baptism and regeneration are not inseparable; that the latter is not a necessary, constant, or exclusive accompaniment of the former.

5.—The simple assertion of this important doctrine, that baptism and regeneration are not inseparable, shall be first grounded on the authority of a few divines of the highest character and influence. To begin with the Reformers; let us hear the opinion of Archbishop Cranmer, in his *Answer to Bishop Gardiner*:—"The wonder is not how God worketh in the outward visible sacrament, but his marvellous work is in the *worthy* receivers of the sacraments." And again:—"In baptism, those who come feignedly, and those that come unfeignedly, both be washed with the sacramental water, but both be not washed with the Holy Ghost, and clothed with Christ."

The remarks of John Frith, the Martyr, who wrote several treatises on the Sacraments, and who regards Baptism as a seal and pledge, no less than a confirmation, of grace previously bestowed,—afford an admirable exposition of our 27th Article, with reference to a point which shall be more fully illustrated hereafter by passages of more direct import:—

“ This outward sign doth neither give us the Spirit of God, neither yet grace, that is, the favour of God. For if through the washing of the water the Spirit of grace were given, then it would follow, that whosoever were baptised in the water should receive this precious gift. But that is not so ; wherefore, I must needs conclude, that this outward sign, by any power or influence that it hath, bringeth not the Spirit and favour of God. That every one receiveth not this treasure in baptism it is evident. . . . The outward sign giveth no man any grace. Moreover, if the Spirit of God and his grace were bound unto the sacraments, then, where the sacraments were ministered, there must the Spirit of grace wait on ; and where they were not ministered, should be neither Spirit nor grace. But that is false ; for Cornelius and all his household received the Holy Ghost, before they were baptised. Here we may see that, as the Spirit of God lighteth where He will, neither is He bound to any thing. Yea, and this example doth well declare unto us, that the sacraments are given to be an outward witness to all the congregation of that grace, which is given before privately to every man. When we baptise one that is come unto the years of discretion, we ask of him whether he believe : if he answer, yea, and desire baptism, he is baptised : so that we require faith of him, before he be baptised (which is the gift of God, and cometh of grace) : and so it is an outward sign of his invisible faith, which was before given him of God. . . . Even as the outward circumcision made not the Jews the elect people, and children of salvation ; so doth not the outward baptism make us the faithful members of Christ : but as they were the children of God, who were inwardly circumcised, even so they that are washed inwardly from the concupiscence of this world, are the members of Christ.”

Theodore Beza, one of the most learned promoters of the Reformation on the Continent, may be considered, in his *Essay On the Holy Spirit*, to keep pace precisely with the orthodox tenets of the Church, in regarding baptism as the ordinary, but

by no means the necessary, means of the new and spiritual birth :—“ If by the term, water, baptism be understood, seeing it is the peculiar sacrament of our regeneration, this declaration is so to be received, as if Christ had respect to the common order of the Church, and that he did not tie the grace of God to baptism so strictly, that it is absolutely and without exception necessary.”

Hooker, in the 5th book of his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, speaks distinctly upon both particulars involved in the present question. First, on Baptism as separate from Regeneration, in the 57th section :—“ Seeing that grace is a consequence of sacraments, a thing which accompanieth them as their end, a benefit which they have received from God himself, the Author of sacraments, and not from any other natural or supernatural quality in them; it may be hereby both understood, that sacraments are necessary, and that the manner of their necessity to life supernatural is not in all respects as food unto natural life; because they contain in themselves no vital force or efficacy; they are not physical, but moral, instruments of salvation; duties of service and worship; which unless we perform as the Author of grace requireth, they are unprofitable: for, all receive not the grace of God which receive the sacraments of His grace.”

And again, in section the 60th, on Regeneration as separate from Baptism :—“ It is on all parts gladly confessed, that there may be in divers cases life, by virtue of inward baptism, even where outward is not found.”

Among the highest authorities of a period somewhat later, may be named Lancelot Andrews, Bishop of Winchester. A quotation directly to our present purpose occurs in his *Sermon on the Holy Ghost*; which, it may be worth while to observe, was modernised by Archdeacon Daubeny, in 1821, besides having been incorporated, with some variations, by Bishop Mant, into the 1st vol. of his *Sermons for Parochial and Domestic Use* :—“ Should the Christian professor not receive

the Holy Ghost, nothing that relates to his Christian calling can turn to good account. In such case, the Word of life will be to him a killing letter; Baptism be but John's baptism, and the water a barren element."

Bishop Pearson has a passage in the 9th Article of his *Exposition of the Creed*, deserving the serious attention of those who have never compared the tendency of the opposite doctrine with the constitution and principles of an earthly Church:—"The saints of God, while they are of the Church of Christ on earth, have some kind of communion with those men which are not truly saints. There were not hypocrites among the Jews alone, but in the Church of Christ many cry, *Lord, Lord*, whom He knoweth not. The tares have the privilege of the field, as well as the wheat; and the bad fish of the net, as well as the good. The saints have communion with hypocrites in all things with which the distinction of a saint and a hypocrite can consist; they communicate in the same water, both externally baptised alike; they communicate in the same Creed, both make the same open profession of faith, both agree in the acknowledgment of the same principles of religion; they communicate in the same Word, both hear the same doctrine preached; they communicate at the same table, both eat the same bread, and drink the wine which Christ hath appointed to be received. But the hypocrite doth not communicate with the saint in the same saving grace, in the same true faith, working by love, in the same renovation of mind and spirit; for then he were not a hypocrite, but a saint: a saint doth not communicate with the hypocrite in the same sins, in the same lurking infidelity, in the same unfruitfulness under the means of grace, in the same false pretence and empty form of godliness; for then he were not a saint, but a hypocrite."

Bishop Burnet, in his *Exposition of the 25th Article*, takes the vantage-ground of united reason and revelation, while he strikes at the root of Popish superstition, in language

which ought to be imprinted on the heart of every Minister of the Gospel :—" The virtue of the sacraments being put in the worthy receiving, excludes the doctrine of *opus operatum*, as formally as if it had expressly been condemned." Again :—" This we reckon a doctrine that is not only without all foundation in Scripture, but that tends to destroy all religion, and to make men live on securely in sin, trusting to this, that the Sacraments may be given them when they die. The conditions of the new covenant are repentance, faith, and obedience ; and we look on this as the corrupting the vitals of this religion, when any such means are proposed by which the main design of the Gospel is quite overthrown. . . . We look on all sacramental actions as acceptable to God only with regard to the temper and the inward acts of the person to whom they are applied ; and cannot consider them as medicines or charms, which work by virtue of their own, whether the person to whom they are applied co-operates with them or not. . . . Thus we reject, not without great zeal against the fatal effects of this error, all that is said of the *opus operatum*, the very doing of the sacrament ; we think it looks liker the incantations of heathenism, than the purity and simplicity of the Christian religion." And again, at the conclusion of the same Article :—" The effect of the Sacraments comes only upon the worthy receiving of them. The pretending that Sacraments have their effect any other way, is the bringing in the doctrine and practice of charms into the Christian religion ; and it tends to dissolve all obligations to piety and devotion, to a holiness of life, or a purity of temper, when the being in a passive and perhaps insensible state, while the Sacraments are applied, is thought a disposition sufficient to give them their virtue. . . . As we have not so learned Christ, so neither dare we corrupt his doctrine, in its most vital and essential parts."

Another testimony, and, all circumstances recollected, a testimony of more than ordinary value, may be found in *A*

Discourse concerning Baptismal and Spiritual Regeneration, written by Dr. Samuel Bradford, some time Lord Bishop of Rochester, and circulated in thousands and tens of thousands by "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge." The whole pamphlet well deserves an attentive perusal; at present the following extract must suffice:—"It is the way of the Scriptures to speak to and of the visible members of the Church of Christ, under such appellations and expressions as may seem at first hearing to imply, that they are all of them truly righteous and holy persons. Thus the Apostles style those to whom they write in general *saints*: speak of them as *sanctified in Christ Jesus; chosen of God; buried with Christ in baptism, risen again with Him from the dead, sitting with Him in heavenly places*. . . The reason of which is, that they were visibly, by obligation and by profession, all this; which was thus represented to them, the more effectually to stir them up and engage them to live according to their profession and obligation. But yet it is too evident, from divers passages in their writings, and experience has confirmed to us the same thing, that both in their times and ever since, there have been many who have enjoyed the *washing of regeneration*, whose tempers and manners have demonstrated that they were not also *renewed by the Holy Ghost*. . . I take it for granted, that I need not insist upon any proof of this matter; but only further observe, that baptismal regeneration, when separated from the renewing of the Holy Ghost, must necessarily be ineffectual to the salvation of men's souls. . . What St. Paul says of the Jews, may be repeated with respect to Christians also, with a little variation of the words; *he is not a Christian, which is one outwardly; neither is that regeneration (viz., such as will be effectual to salvation), which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Christian which is one inwardly; and regeneration is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God*. . . Nor can it be otherwise conceived, that God should accept of men, only on account

of their having complied with some external and ritual institutions, whilst they had no regard to the design of them. The institutions of Christ do not work like charms; but being appointed to be used by reasonable creatures, there is a disposition in the mind of the person using them, necessary to the rendering them effectual. . . . But then, on the other hand, there are great numbers of professed Christians, who satisfy themselves with a compliance in the external institutions of Christianity, whilst they are devoid of all that is truly spiritual and internal. They are baptized in the name of our Saviour; they frequent the public assemblies; divers of them partake of the Lord's table; they go on in a constant round of performances; but their tempers and their manners are still unreformed; they are not *renewed in the spirit of their mind, after the image of God*, nor do the fruits of the divine Spirit appear in their lives and conversations. This, therefore, should be our care, to reverence all the institutions of our Lord, and to use them faithfully and diligently; but, at the same time, never to content ourselves till we find the Spirit of God and of Christ dwelling in us, and becoming a settled principle of piety and virtue to us throughout the course of our lives."

Again: in the 8th monthly Part of the *Family Sermons*, now publishing by "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," is one by Dr. Arnold, the Head Master of Rugby School, on *Christ, the Door of the Sheep*; containing a passage illustrative of Bishop Wilson's remark, quoted above, that "victory over sin is the proof of regeneration;" that holiness of life is not only the obvious duty of those who are baptised, but the only token they can offer to the world of the validity of their baptism:—"It has ever happened that men have laid too much stress on the first entrance into the sheep-fold; whereas they can only tell by their life afterwards, whether they did truly enter in by the door or not. Some say, we were baptised when infants, we were confirmed in our youth, we have gone to Church duly, have read the Scriptures, have heard preachers;

surely we entered in by Christ, the door; surely we are safe under his care, within his sheep-fold. . . . Alas! It is not from the beginning that we can judge of what is to follow; but from what comes afterwards, that we can tell what was the real nature of the beginning. . . . We entered into the sheep-fold by Christ, the door. How are we sure of that, unless we are daily going in and out thereat, and finding pasture? unless, having cast away our own righteousness, that is, having ceased to trust to our own natural goodness, we have put on the robe of the righteousness of the Spirit, and, because God so first loved us, have learned, and are daily learning more and more, to love God and our brethren?"

6. Having thus ascertained the doctrine received, we may now proceed to inquire, what may be assigned as the reason or explanation of the fact, that outward baptism is not always accompanied by inward regeneration. And the requisite for this happy consummation we shall invariably find to be described as *faith*; faith preceded by repentance, and followed by the fruits of obedience and holiness.

Bishop Latimer, a name of the greatest weight among Martyrs and Reformers, expresses, with much precision, the doctrine of this sacrament, in one of his *Sermons*, recently republished; and concludes with one brief expression, precisely marking the nature of the qualification required:—"Now, this sacrament of baptism is a thing of great weight; for it ascertaineth and assureth us, that, like as the water washeth the body and cleanseth it, so the blood of Christ our Saviour cleanseth and washeth the soul from all filth of sins. And so it appeareth, that we may not seek Christ in the glistening of this world. For what is so common as water? Yet, He promiseth to be found there, when He is sought *with a faithful heart.*"

From the writings of Bishop Jewell, a host of testimonies to the same position might be collected. Two or three shall suffice. One, from *The Defence of the Apology against Harding*:—"The merits of Christ's death are conveyed unto us by God,

and received by us. God conveyeth them to us only of His mercy, and we receive them only by faith. But the ways whereby either to procure God's mercy, or to enkindle our faith, are many. . . Among other causes, the sacraments serve specially to aid and direct our faith. . . All this notwithstanding, we say it is neither the work of the priest, nor the nature of the sacrament, as of itself, that maketh us partakers of Christ's death, *but only the faith of the receiver.*"

A second, from *The Reply to Harding's Answer*, referring to the period of the Council of Carthage, and exhibiting in truly frightful colours the very tenet here denounced, as the stronghold of Papal tyranny and priestcraft:—"They thought, the very outward work of baptism itself, only because it was done, without any further motion of the mind, was sufficient to remit their sins. This old error our adversaries of late years have taken up, and made it catholic; bearing the people in hand, that their mass itself, *ex opere operato*, only of itself, and because it is said, is available for the remission of their sins. . . And therefore Cardinal Cajetan, at Augusta, in Germany, requiring Doctor Luther to recant this Article, said thus,—'Faith is not necessary for him that will receive the sacrament;' meaning thereby, that the very sacrament itself, only because it is ministered, is sufficient, although the receiver be utterly void of faith. And therefore the Bishops, in the late Council of Trent, have determined thus:—"If any man say that grace is not given by the sacraments of the New Testament, even for the work that is wrought (*ex opere operato*), but that faith only of the heavenly promise is sufficient to achieve grace, accursed be he.'" Again, of the separation:—"In baptism, as the one part of that holy mystery is Christ's blood, so is the other part the material water. Neither are these parts joined together in place, but in mystery: and therefore they be oftentimes severed, and the one is received without the other." Again, of the seal:—"In plain speech, it is not the receiving of the sacrament that worketh our joining with God: for whosoever is not joined

unto God before he receive the sacraments, he eateth and drinketh his own judgment. The sacraments be seals and witnesses, and not properly the causes of this conjunction.”

And a third, from his *Treatise on the Sacraments*:—“ If any man have the outward seal, and have not *the faith thereof* sealed within his heart, it availeth him not: he is but a hypocrite and dissembler. So the circumcision of the foreskin of the flesh taught them to mortify their fleshly affections, and to cut off the thoughts and devices of their wicked hearts. Therefore, said Stephen to the Jews, *Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears.*” And again:—“ It is the covenant, and promise, and mercy of God, which clothes us with immortality, assureth our resurrection; by which we receive regeneration, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. His Word declareth His love towards us, and that Word is sealed and made good by Baptism. *Our faith*, which are baptised, *and our continuance in the profession which we have made*, establisheth in us this grace which we receive. As it is said,—‘ True baptism standeth not so much in washing of the body, as in *the faith of the heart.*’ As the doctrine of the Apostles hath taught us, saying,—*By faith purifying their hearts*: and, in another place,—*Baptism saveth us, not the putting away, &c.* Therefore Hierome saith,—‘ They that receive not baptism *with perfect faith*, receive the water, but the Holy Ghost they receive not.’ ”

Beza thus remarks, in his *Annotation* on the passage (Gal. iii. 27), so continually urged in defence of the proposition here resisted:—“ Observe how briefly, and yet how judiciously, the Apostle argues. The false Apostles urged the necessity of circumcision. The Apostle replies, Baptism has succeeded to circumcision. But he argues from the sign to the thing (signified), not to establish that wicked notion of an *opus operatum*, but because he addressed *believers only*, and God is faithful to His promises, the pledges of which are the means which we call Sacraments.”

In like manner, that illustrious Reformer, Wolfgang Musculus, of Berne, treating of Baptism, in his *Book of Common-Places*, says:—"Baptism is the Sacrament of Regeneration; of cleansing, or, if you please, of washing; of initiation, of sanctification, and incorporation: by which, *if we repent, and profess the faith and the religion of Christ*, that, being washed from our sins, we may walk in newness of life, we are incorporated into Christ and His Church, and are sealed."

In *Nowell's Catechism*, the following answer is given to the question, relative to Baptismal Regeneration,—“Do all generally, and without difference, receive this grace?”—“*The only faithful* receive this fruit; but the unbelieving, in refusing the promises offered them by God, shut up the entry against themselves, and go away empty.” And again:—"The right use of baptism consisteth in *faith and repentance*. For first, we must with assured confidence hold it determined in our hearts, that we are cleansed by the blood of Christ from all filthiness of sin, and so be acceptable to God, and that His Spirit dwelleth within us. And then we must continually, with all our power and endeavour, travail in mortifying our flesh, and obeying the righteousness of God; and must, by godly life, declare to all men, that we have in baptism, as it were, put on Christ, and have His Spirit given us."

The *Heidelberg, or Palatinate Catechism*, first published in 1563, and sanctioned by the Synod of Dort, in 1618, as well as by the Council of the States General at Hague, in 1658, was only known by the "Sylloge Confessionum Fidei" of the University of Oxford, till a few years ago, when it was first translated into English by the Rev. Frederick Russell, now Curate of Romsey, Hants. The 66th Answer in this Catechism is as follows:—"The Sacraments are sacred and visible signs and seals, ordained by God himself for this cause, that He may declare and seal up, as it were, by them, the promise of His Gospel unto us; viz.—that he gives, freely,

remission of sins and everlasting life, not only to all in general, but to every one that believeth, for that one sacrifice of Christ made upon the cross."

Diodati, an Italian Divine of the 16th Century, who was appointed, for his wisdom and discretion, to aid in preparing the Belgic Confession of Faith, observes, in his *Commentary on the Ephesians*:—"Faith in Christ causeth Him to be effectually applied to all true believers, who are baptised in His name with internal as well as external baptism, even as a garment to the body; to communicate His Righteousness, Life, Spirit, Rights, and Dignities unto them."

And that the faith required for Baptism is neither a trivial nor an easy matter, is asserted in language of no common force in a portion of Archbishop Usher's third Sermon, on *Speedy Conversion the only means to prevent Imminent Destruction*:—"The devil transforms himself into an angel of light, when he preacheth gospel to a man. Beware of the doctrine, when the deceiver preacheth. This may be his doctrine,—'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.' From this, by Satan's cunning delusion, the natural man thus concludes:—'A mere heathen shall be shut out of heaven's gates; but I believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, therefore I am in a good condition.' . . . But this is but a mere delusion of Satan. . . It is no easy matter for a man to believe; it must be done by the mighty power of God; it is as great a work of God as the creation of the world, to make a man believe; it is the mighty power of God to salvation. Such a one must not only receive Christ as a Saviour, but as a Lord too. He must renounce all to have Him, must take Him on His own terms. He must deny the world and all, looking beforehand what it will cost him. Now, for a man to take Christ as his Lord, denying himself, the world, and all,—to resolve to pluck out his right eye, cut off his right hand, rather than to part with Him, and account nothing so dear to him as Christ,—is no small matter. Thou canst not be Christ's spouse,

unless thou forsake all for Him. Thou must *account all things as dung and dross in comparison of Him*. And is not this a difficult thing? Is this an easy task? Easily spoken indeed, not as easily done. It must be here as in the case of marriage,—a man must forsake all others, yea the whole world, else Christ will not own him. . . . Now, for a man to be brought out of his natural condition, and to take Christ on any terms, so he may be saved by Him in the end, is not so easy. Canst thou think there is no more required but only the outward baptism; or that there is no more in baptism but the outward washing of the flesh? No; *he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew that is so inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart*. Thou then enterest into God's livery. Mark this, for by it I strive only to bring thee back to thyself. Thou enterest into covenant with Him; thou bindest thyself to forsake the world, the flesh, and the devil; and we should make this use of baptism, as now, to put it in practice. When we promised, there were two things in the indenture;—one, that God will give Christ to us; the other, that we must forsake all the sinful lusts of the flesh: this is that which makes baptism to be baptism indeed to us. The other thing required is, that we forsake all. Let no man, therefore, deceive you with vain words; think it not an easy thing to get to heaven; the way is strait, and the passage is narrow. There must be a striving to enter; there must be an ascending into heaven,—a motion contrary to nature; and therefore it is folly to think we shall drop into Heaven; there must be a going up, if ever we would come thither."

Hammond, in the notes to his *Paraphrase* of Titus iii. 5, expresses the same sentiment in few words:—"Out of his free undeserved mercy towards us, not in respect of, nor by way of return unto, any good action of ours, He rescued and delivered us into a state of salvation, *upon our giving ourselves up in baptism His vowed reformed servants*, sealing unto us the

pardon of all our sins, and then bestowing His Spirit upon us, to bring forth in us fruits of good life."

The name of Stephen Charnock is familiar to students in Divinity by his *Discourse on Providence* ; on our present subject he furnishes a short, but valuable, paragraph, illustrative of the efficacy of prayer, as indispensable to a virtual reception of the sacraments :—" Means are not always successful, unless God doth influence them. The means do not work naturally, as a plaister cures a wound, or a hatchet cleaves wood ; nor necessarily, as fire burns : for then they should produce the same effect in all, as fire doth in combustible matter : but as God doth please to accompany them with His grace, and edge them with efficacy. They must be used *with an eye to God*, building with one hand, and *wrestling with God* with the other : men speed best in ordinances, as they *strive in prayer*."

Archbishop Leighton, in his *Commentary on 1 Peter*, iii. 21, following up the notion of a seal, shows that the thing sealed is faith unto salvation ; so that, where faith is not, there is nothing sealed :—" The end of baptism is *to save us*. This is the great common end of all the ordinances of God ; that one high mark they all aim at. And the great and common mistake in regard to them is, that they are not so understood and used. Were the sacraments considered as seals of the inheritance, annexed to the great charter of it,—seals of salvation,—this would powerfully beget a fit appetite for the Lord's Supper, and a due esteem of Baptism, would teach you more frequent and fruitful thoughts of your own Baptism, and more pious considerations of it, when you require it for your children. Oh ! what a different thing are they to the eye of faith, from what they are to a formal user of them ! ' Baptism doth save us.' . . . It saves by *the answer of a good conscience unto God*, and it affords that by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And though it doth not save all that partake of it, yet it does really and effectually save *believers* ; for whose salvation it is a mean. For there is an invisible impurity upon our nature,

chiefly on our invisible part, our soul. And where baptism reaches its true effect, it doth purify the conscience, and makes it good, in the sight of God, who is the Judge of it. . . . The waters of the flood drowned the ungodly, as a heap of filthiness washed them away, them and their sin together, as one, being inseparable; and upon the same waters the ark floating preserved Noah. Thus the waters of baptism are intended as a deluge, to drown sin, and save the *believer*, who, *by faith*, is separated both from the world and from his sin: so it sinks, and he is saved."

But on this part of our enquiry, there is not one who has written with more distinctness than Bishop Burnet, in his *Exposition of the 27th Article*; whose remarks, indeed, may be said to comprise the whole sum and substance of the doctrine:—"Another opinion that arose out of the former, was the mixing of the outward and the inward effects of Baptism; it being believed, that every person that was *born of the water* was also *born of the Spirit*; and that the *renewing of the Holy Ghost* did always accompany the *washing of regeneration*. . . . St. Peter has stated this so fully, that if his words are well considered, they will clear the whole matter. He, after he had set forth the miserable state in which mankind was, under the figure of the deluge, in which an ark was prepared for Noah and his family, says upon that,—*the like figure whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us*. Upon which, he makes a short digression, to explain the nature of Baptism; *not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer* (or the demand and interrogation) *of a good conscience towards God; by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven*. The meaning of all which is, that Christ having risen again, and having then had *all power both in heaven and in earth* given to Him, he had put that virtue in Baptism, that by it we are *saved*, as in an ark, from that miserable state in which the world was, and in which it must perish. But then he explains the way how it saves us;

that it is not as a physical action, as it washes away the filthiness of the flesh, or of the body, like the notion that the Gentiles might have of their *februations*; or, which is more natural, considering to whom he writes, like the opinions that the Jews had of their *cleansings* after their *legal impurities*, from which their washings and bathings did absolutely free them. The salvation that we Christians have by Baptism, is effected by that federation into which we enter, when, upon the demands that are made of our *renouncing* the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*, and of our *believing* in Christ, and our *repentance* towards God, we make such *answers*, from a good conscience, as agree with the end and design of Baptism; then, by our thus coming into covenant with God, we are *saved in Baptism*. So that the salvation by Baptism is given by reason of the federal compact that is made in it. Now this being made outwardly, according to the rules that are prescribed, that must make the Baptism good among men, as to all the outward and visible effects of it; but since it is the *answer of a good conscience* only that *saves*, then an answer from a bad conscience, from a hypocritical person, who does not inwardly think, or purpose, according to what he professes outwardly, cannot save, but does, on the contrary, aggravate his damnation. Therefore our Article puts the efficacy of Baptism, in order to the forgiveness of our sins, and to our adoption and salvation, upon the virtue of *prayer* to God; that is, upon those vows and other acts of devotion that accompany them; so that when the seriousness of the mind accompanies the regularity of the action, then both the outward and inward effects of Baptism are attained by it; and we are not only *baptised into one body*, but are also *saved by Baptism*. So that, on the whole matter, Baptism is a federal admission into Christianity, in which, on God's part, all the blessings of the Gospel are made over to the baptised; and, on the other hand, the person baptised takes on him, by solemn profession and vow, to observe and adhere to the

whole Christian religion. So it is a very natural distinction to say, that the outward effects of Baptism follow it, as outwardly performed; but the inward effects of it follow upon the inward acts: but this difference is still to be observed between inward acts and outward actions, that, when the outward action is rightly performed, the Church must reckon the Baptism good, and never renew it; but if one has been wanting in the inward acts, those may be afterwards renewed, and that want may be made up by repentance."

7. In several of the quotations already adduced, particularly those from Frith, Jewell, Nowell, and the Heidelberg Catechism, especial reference has been made to *the visible sealing of the Spirit in Baptism*. It is a doctrine entirely conformable with the authority of the English Church, and one of the utmost moment, as necessarily implying the previous acquisition of true, spiritual, and effectual faith. For this reason, a distinct view of Archbishop Usher's sentiments on *Spiritual Sealing* may not be deemed superfluous. The passage may be found in his 12th Sermon, already cited, *On the Redemption*: only we must bear in mind, that what is here described as taking place in the soul of man,—absolutely known, but known only to God and to himself,—is also by the sacrament of Baptism declared,—though not certified beyond the reach of doubt,—to the assembled congregation:—"Now we come to speak one word of the sealing in the text: *After that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise*. This sealing, which is a point of feeling, is a distinct thing of itself from faith; no part of faith. If I have faith, I am sure of life, though I never have the other. These are two seals. We put to our seals to the counterpart that is drawn betwixt God and us. The first seal is our faith: I have nothing but God's Word; and indeed I have no feeling: yet I venture my salvation, and trust God upon his bare Word. I will pawn all upon it. *He that believeth*, saith John, *hath set to his seal that God is true*. If

men doubt, and trust God no further than they see Him, it is not faith; but when God gives me a good Word, though I am in as much distress as ever, yet I trust; though it be contrary to all sense, or outward seeming, yet I put to my seal, and trust Him still. Then comes God's counterpart. God being thus honoured, that I believe His Word, though contrary to all sense and feeling, even His bare Word, then God sets to His seal; and now the Word comes to particularizing. Before, it was in general; now, it comes and singles out a man,—*Say thou unto my soul, I am thy salvation*; that is, as I did apply the generality of God's Word unto mine own case, to bear me up against sense und feeling, then comes the Spirit of God, and not only delivers generalities, but saith unto my soul, *I am thy salvation*. This is called in Scripture a manifestation, when God manifests himself unto us; as, in Isaiah x. 16,—*Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings; and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, &c.*; that is, when we have made particular application by faith, God will put to his seal, that I shall know that God is my strength and my salvation. I shall know it. *He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will manifest myself unto him*. Christ comes and draws the curtains, and looks on with the gracious aspect of His blessed countenance. When this comes, it cheers the heart, and then there are secret love-tokens pass betwixt Christ and His beloved. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows save he that receives it*; that is, there is a particular intimation that I shall know of myself more than any other; more than all the world besides. It is such a joy as the stranger is not made partaker of; such joy as is glorious and unspeakable; such peace as passeth all understanding. One minute of such joy overcomes all the joy in the world besides. Now consider; surely there is such a

thing as this joy; or else do you think the Scripture would talk of it, and of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, *by whom we know the things that are given us of God?* There is a generation in the world that hath this joy, though you that know it not, do not and cannot believe it; there is a righteous generation that have it; and why dost thou not try to get it? Do as they do, and thou mayest obtain it likewise. *The secrets of the Lord are revealed to them that fear Him.* These are hidden comforts; do you think God will give this joy to those that care not for Him? No; the way is to seek God, and to labour to fear Him. The secrets of the Lord are revealed to such, and such only, as fear Him. Do as they do, and follow their example, and thou mayest have it likewise."

8. Although it has been before observed, that the Baptism of adults and that of infants are held by the Church of England on the same principle, and administered on the same understanding, yet it may be well to notice two or three passages, where infant Baptism is distinctly and separately referred to, as no more calculated in reality (though equally supposed in charity, with that of adults,) to confer a necessary and irrelative blessing on the soul of the baptised.

The writings of Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, who suffered martyrdom under bloody Mary's persecution, are both numerous and very valuable. The following extract will be sufficient to explain his sentiments on Infant Baptism:—
 "Such as be baptised must remember, that repentance and faith precede this external sign; and in Christ the purgation was inwardly obtained, before the external sign was given. So that there are two kinds of baptism, and both necessary: the one interior, which is the cleansing of the heart, the drawing of the Father, the operation of the Holy Ghost; and this baptism is in man, when he believeth and trusteth that Christ is the only actor of his salvation. . . Thus be *the infants* examined concerning repentance and faith, before they be

baptised with water; at the contemplation of which faith, God purgeth the soul: then is the exterior sign and deed, not to purge the heart, but to confirm, manifest, and open unto the world that this child is God's. A traitor may receive the crown, and yet be true king nothing the more: so a hypocrite and infidel may receive the external sign of baptism, and yet be no Christian man any the more; as Simon Magus and others."

Bishop Hopkins, in his *Doctrine of the Two Sacraments*, is still more explicit and satisfactory:—"Though an external and ecclesiastical sanctification be effected by baptism, *ex opere operato*, by the mere administration of that holy sacrament; yet so is not an internal and habitual sanctification: and that, whether we respect adult persons or infants. . . I judge it unsound doctrine to affirm, that baptism doth confer real sanctification upon all infants, as well as upon some adult persons, who are made partakers of it."

A paragraph from Burnet's *Exposition of the 27th Article*, and it will suffice for this head:—"The office for baptising infants is in the same words with that for baptising persons of a riper age; because, infants being then in the power of their parents, who are of age, are considered as in them, and as binding themselves by the vows that they make in their name. Therefore, the office carries on the supposition of an internal regeneration; and in that helpless state the infant is offered up and dedicated to God; and provided that when he comes to age he takes those vows on himself, and lives like a person so in covenant with God, then he shall find the full effects of baptism."

9. Now, the passage last given would appear to introduce us to a doctrine we have not hitherto considered; which is that of *prospective regeneration*. It is a doctrine of comparatively modern date, and, though sanctioned by names of high authority, the writer of the present pamphlet is obliged to confess he cannot help regarding it as at variance with the spirit, no less than with the language, of the Church to which he is attached.

In fact, while assuming *prospective regeneration, prospective justification, prospective adoption*, indeed all the gifts of God and graces of the Spirit, as *directly, yet conditionally sealed*,—it seems to confound between facts and the evidences of facts, and thus to involve absurdities incapable of being carried out into any legitimate deductions. However, the doctrine has had, and still has, able and pious supporters; and it brings with it at least this good, that it does away with the *opus operatum*, or necessary virtue of the sacrament; applies the test of holiness to the assumption of spiritual life; and allows other instruments of grace to reconcile and sanctify the repentant sinner. In short, it asserts nothing but what any man may hold, yet find the way to heaven himself, and point it out to others.

The first authority at hand is that of Dr. Barrow, in his *Doctrine of the Sacraments*:—“The action, is baptising or immersing in water; the object thereof, those persons of any nation, whom His ministers can, by their instruction and persuasion, *render disciples*,—that is, such as do *sincerely believe* the truth of His doctrine, and *seriously resolve to obey* His commandments.” And again:—“As this holy rite signifieth and sealeth God’s collation of so many great benefits on us; so it also implieth, and on our part ratifieth, our obligation, then in an especial manner commencing, to several most important duties towards Him. It implieth, that we are in mind fully persuaded concerning the truth of that doctrine, which God the Father revealed by His blessed Son, and confirmed by the miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost; we therein profess our humble and thankful embracing the overtures of mercy and grace, purchased for us by our Saviour’s meritorious undertaking and performances, the which are then exhibited and tendered to us; we therein declare our hearty resolution to forsake all wicked courses of life, repugnant to the doctrine and law of Christ; fully to conform our lives to His will, living hereafter in all piety, righteousness, and sobriety, as loyal subjects, faithful servants, and dutiful children to God; in brief, we therein

are found, renouncing all erroneous principles, all vicious inclinations, and all other engagements whatever, entirely to devote ourselves to the faith and obedience of God the Father, our glorious and good Maker; of God the Son, our gracious Redeemer; of God the Holy Ghost, our blessed Guide, Assistant, Advocate, and Comforter. These are the duties antecedent to, and concomitant of, our baptism (immediately and formally required of those who are capable of performing them, mediately and virtually of them who are not), the which are signified by our being baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity. . . We should indeed continually remember, frequently and seriously consider, what in so solemn a manner we (upon so valuable considerations) did then undertake, promise, and vow to God, diligently striving to perform it; for, violating our part of the covenant and stipulation then made, by apostacy in profession or practice from God and goodness, we certainly must *forfeit* those inestimable benefits, which God otherwise hath tied himself to bestow,—the pardon of our sins, the favour of God, the being members of Christ, the grace, guidance, assistance, and comfort of the Holy Spirit; the right unto and hope of salvation. . . *If we wilfully sin, after we have taken the acknowledgment of the truth* (saith the Apostle, meaning that solemn profession of our faith and baptism), *we trample under foot the Son of God, we profane the blood of the covenant, we do despite unto the Spirit of grace*; and, incurring so deep guilt, we must expect suitable punishment.”

The next is from Archbishop Tillotson’s Sermon, *On the Obligation to a Holy Life*:—“He that calls himself a Christian, hath solemnly engaged himself to renounce all sin, and to live a holy life. By baptism we have solemnly taken upon us the profession of Christianity, and engaged ourselves to renounce the devil and all his works, and obediently to keep God’s commandments. . . From all which it is evident that the gospel requires something on our part; for the covenant between God and us is a mutual engagement; and as there are

blessings promised on His part, so there are conditions to be performed on ours. And if we live wicked and unholy lives, if we neglect our duty towards God, we have no title at all to the blessings of this covenant. The contrary doctrine to this hath been greedily entertained, to the vast prejudice of Christianity; as if, in this new covenant of the gospel, God took all upon himself, and required nothing, or as good as nothing, of us; that it would be a disparagement to the freedom of God's grace to think He expects any thing from us. . . . A covenant does necessarily imply a mutual obligation; and the scripture plainly tells us what are the terms and conditions of this covenant both on God's part and ours; namely, that He will be our God, and we shall be His people. But he hath nowhere said, that though we be *not* His people, yet He will be our God. The seal of this covenant hath two inscriptions upon it; one, on God's part, that He will know them that are His; and another, on our part, that we shall depart from iniquity. But if we will not submit to this condition, God will not know us, but will bid us depart from Him. . . . If we deal falsely in covenant with God, and break loose from all our engagements to Him, we release God from all the promises that He hath made to us. If we neglect to perform those conditions upon which He hath suspended the performance of His promises, we discharge the obligation on His part; and He remains faithful, though He deny us that happiness which He promised under those conditions which we have neglected."

Another is from the *Sermon on Faith and Works*, by Bishop Blackall, the antagonist of Hoadly, and a divine of considerable note in the reign of William and Mary:—"Baptism alone, considered only as an outward rite or ceremony, is not sufficient to restore us to God's favour, or to wash away our sins; it only serves to put us into a capacity of being entitled to the promises of the gospel, upon our after-performance of the conditions to which the promises are made; but it does not itself entitle us to them. . . . It is a token of the covenant between God and

us; and being by that ceremony admitted into the Christian Church, we are thereby assured of God's favour and good-will towards us, so long as we continue in covenant with Him; but if we break the covenant on our part, God is no longer obliged to make good the promises, which He, on His part, has made to us."

From the well-known *Catechism* of Archbishop Wake, long established as a text-book for school-examinations, and re-edited, a few years ago, with scriptural authorities, by the Rev. Frederick Twisleton, the following dialogue (from section 45) may serve to exhibit the opinion of that prelate:—Q. What repentance is required to prepare any person for baptism? A. The same which is required to qualify him for God's forgiveness after baptism. For baptism, if duly received, washes away all sin; and, therefore, no one can worthily come to it, who does not heartily repent of all his sins, and firmly resolve never more to return to the commission of any.—Q. What is the faith, which every one ought to bring to this sacrament? A. A firm belief of the truth of the whole Christian religion; but more especially of all those articles of it, which he is solemnly, at his baptism, to profess his belief of to the Church.—Q. Are not actual faith and repentance required of those who are to be baptised? A. Yes, if they be persons capable of it: otherwise, it is sufficient that they be obliged to believe and repent, as soon as they shall be capable of so doing.—Q. How can any one promise this for another? A. Upon a supposition of charity: that, as children are born of Christian parents, and under a security of being bred up to a sense and knowledge of their duty in this particular, and of the infinite obligations that lie upon them to fulfil it; so they will take care (by God's help) so to order both their faith and manners, as their interest as well as duty requires them to do.—Q. But what if they should not fulfil what has been promised in their name? A. In that case the covenant made on their behalf will be void: and so, by not fulfilling what was promised for them, they will lose all

those blessings which God would otherwise have been obliged to bestow upon them."

One more authority shall be that of Archbishop Secker, whose attention, like that of Wake, is known to have been most carefully directed to the subjects of Baptism and Christian Education. The extract is made from his *Sermon* on the former :—" But the mere outward act of being baptised is, as St. Peter very truly expresses it, the mere *putting away of the filth of the flesh*, unless it be made effectual to save us, *by the answer of a good conscience towards God* ;—that is, by the sincere stipulation and engagement of repentance, whereby we forsake sin, and faith, whereby we believe the promises of God, made to us in that sacrament. For it is impossible that He should forgive us our past sins unless we are sorry for them, and resolved to quit them ; and it is as impossible that we should quit them effectually, unless by a firm belief of what He teaches, and by a firm persuasion of His helping and rewarding us, to excite and support our endeavours. These two things, therefore, we see our Catechism justly mentions as necessary, in answer to the question,— ' What is required of persons to be baptised ? '

" But hence arises immediately another question : ' If these conditions are necessary, why are infants baptised, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them ? ' Repentance and faith are requisite, not before they are possible, but when they are possible. And, in the mean time, baptism may very fitly be administered : because God, on his part, can certainly express by it, both His removing at present the disadvantages which infants lie under by the sin of Adam ; and His removing hereafter, on proper conditions, the disadvantages which they may come to lie under by their own sins ; and though they cannot, on their parts, expressly promise to perform these conditions, yet they are not only bound to perform them, whether they promise it or not, but their sureties promise for them, that they shall be made sensible, as soon as may be,

that they are so bound, and ratify the engagement in their own persons; which when they do, it then becomes complete. For it is by no means necessary, that a covenant should be executed by both the parties to it at just the same time: and as the Christian covenant is one of the greatest equity and favour, we cannot doubt, to speak in the language of our Liturgy, but that God favourably alloweth the charitable work of bringing infants to his holy baptism."

10. If, then, the new or second birth,—vital and spiritual regeneration,—be not the necessary or constant accompaniment of Baptism, how are those persons to obtain that indispensable qualification, whose baptism has proved unavailing? The answer shall be given in three most satisfactory and valuable extracts. The first, from Bishop Hopkins, *On the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration*:—"If you ask me what you shall do to be renewed, I answer, the directions are not many: take only these two. Be instant with God by prayer, that He would, by His omnipotent grace, new create you to himself, and stamp again upon you His effaced image. There is a prevalency in the prayer of a mere natural man, when he prays for grace; else St. Peter would never have exhorted Simon Magus, who was *in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity*, to *pray that so the thought of his heart might be forgiven him*. Improve diligently all the means of regeneration, whereof the Word is the chief. This hath been the way in all ages, that hath proved successful for the bringing in of sinners unto God."

The next, from Bishop Bradford's *Discourse on Baptismal and Spiritual Regeneration*:—"Whereas it is to be feared, nay it is evident, that many, who have had *the washing of Regeneration*, are not yet *renewed by the Holy Ghost*, of which their tempers and their practices are a manifest proof: the present inquiry is, how such persons may attain this inward renovation? The answer to which is plain: They can be directed to no other method than that which the Gospel of our

Saviour hath marked out: namely, to make a faithful and diligent use of all the other means of grace and salvation instituted by our Lord and his Apostles. Let them seriously study the Divine Oracles,—those sacred books which are left as records by the Spirit of God, for the opening men's eyes, and the awakening their minds; in the use of which they may hope to feel the power and efficacy of the same Spirit. Let them earnestly and frequently pray to God, that He would please to bestow His Holy Spirit upon them; and let them never desist from their endeavours, till they find the image of God formed in their souls, and the life of God shining forth in their conversations; remembering always those both awakening and encouraging passages of the Apostle,—that, *to be carnally-minded, is death; but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace: that, if we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if, through the Spirit, we do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live; that, as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God: that, the Spirit itself beareth witness with their spirit, that they are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ,*"

The last,—and with it the question of Baptismal Regeneration must at length be closed,—is from Archdeacon Paley's *Sermon on Conversion*:—"I am not unwilling to admit, that this short, but very remarkable, conversation is fairly interpreted of the gift of the Spirit; and that, when this Spirit is given, there is a new birth, a regeneration; but I say, that it is nowhere determined at what time of life, or under what circumstances, this gift is imparted; nay, the contrary is intimated by comparing it to the blowing of the wind, which, in its mode of action, is out of the reach of our rules and calculations;—*the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*" The effect of this uncertainty is, that we are left at liberty to pray for spiritual assistance; and

we do pray for it, in all stages, and under all circumstances of our existence. We pray for it, in baptism, for those who are baptised; we teach those who are catechised to pray for it in their catechism; parents pray for its aid and efficacy to give effect to their parental instructions, to preserve the objects of their love and care from sin and wickedness, and from every spiritual enemy: we pray for it particularly in the office of confirmation, for young persons just entering into the temptations of life. Therefore spiritual assistance may be imparted at any time, from the earliest to the latest period of our existence; and wherever it is imparted, there is that *being born of the Spirit*, to which our Saviour's words refer."

II. We now arrive at a most interesting and important point of enquiry; a point, moreover, which requires the utmost delicacy in treatment: and that, not so much from any inherent difficulty, as from the mysteriousness attached to it by worldly and unbelieving minds. The point alluded to is the *sensible* operation of the Holy Ghost. And that the operations of the Holy Ghost are sensible, it may be as well, in the first place, simply to assert, on the authority of that powerful divine, whose personal experience, no less than his spiritual intuition into sacred scripture, enabled him to bear unequivocal testimony to this doctrine. It had long ago been remarked by one gifted prelate, Jeremy Taylor, in his poetical sweetness and impressiveness of style, that "though, after the manner of this life, our recollection is imperfect, yet the greatest changes of our state of grace or sin are *always present*, like capital letters to an aged and dim eye." But what is here referred to, is another and a very celebrated passage in Archdeacon Paley's *Sermon on Conversion*; which deserves the more attention, because, while professing to include such only as positively live *without God in the world*, he is really and truly describing those who form by far the largest portion of our ordinary worshippers, and, in fact, of the mass of population in a country nominally Christian:—"Of the persons in our con-

gregations, to whom we not only may, but must preach the doctrine of conversion, plainly and directly, are those, who, with the name indeed of Christians, have hitherto passed their lives without any internal religion whatever; who have not at all thought upon the subject; who, a few easy and customary forms excepted (and which with them are mere forms), cannot truly say of themselves, that they have done one action, which they would not have done equally, if there had been no such thing as a God in the world; or that they have ever sacrificed any passion, any present enjoyment, or even any inclination of their minds, to the restraints and prohibitions of religion; with whom, indeed, religious motives have not weighed a feather in the scale against interest or pleasure. To these it is utterly necessary that we preach conversion. At this day we have not Jews and Gentiles to preach to; but these persons are really in as unconverted a state, as any Jew or Gentile could be in our Saviour's time. They are no more Christians, as to any actual benefit of Christianity to their souls, than the most hardened Jew or the most profligate Gentile was in the age of the Gospel. As to any difference in the two cases, the difference is all against them. These must be converted, before they can be saved. The course of their thoughts must be changed, the very principles upon which they act must be changed. Considerations, which never, or which hardly ever, entered their minds, must deeply and perpetually engage them. Views and motives, which did not influence them at all, either as checks from doing evil, or as inducements to do good, must become the views and motives which they regularly consult, and by which they are guided; that is to say, there must be a revolution of principle: the visible conduct will follow the change; but there must be a revolution within. A change so entire, so deep, so important as this, I do allow to be a conversion; and no one, who is in the situation above described, can be saved without undergoing it; and he must necessarily both be sensible of it at the time,

and remember it all his life afterwards. It is too momentous an event ever to be forgot : a man might as easily forget his escape from a shipwreck. Whether it was sudden, or whether it was gradual, if it was effected (and the fruits will prove that), it was a true conversion : and every such person may justly both believe and say of himself, that he was converted at a particular assignable time. It may not be necessary to speak of his conversion, but he will always think of it with unbounded thankfulness to the Giver of all grace, the Author of all mercies, spiritual as well as temporal."

12. Now, no one pretends to affirm, of any given point in the process of spiritual operation, either that it is, or that it is not, sensible, in proportion as it may, or may not, in each particular case, be instantaneous. *Regeneration*, for instance, which the Church of England clearly maintains to be instantaneous, can hardly be esteemed as generally sensible ; while *conviction*, on the contrary, which may or may not be sudden, can be scarcely considered otherwise than sensible. All that is here contended for, is this ; that while, on the one hand, the operations of the Spirit are frequently of a nature to be sensibly and distinctly recognised ; so, on the other hand, no reason can be assigned why most of its operations should be limited either to more or less rapidity of execution. And this remark is fully warranted by scripture, by reason, by experience, and by the testimonies of the most pious and scriptural divines. Of these the first noticed shall be Hooker, in the 21st section of his *Discourse of Justification* :—"There be two kinds of Christian righteousness : the one without us, which we have by imputation ; the other in us, which consisteth of faith, hope, and charity, and other Christian virtues. God giveth us both the one justice and the other ; the one, by accepting us for righteous in Christ ; the other, by working Christian righteousness in us. The proper and most immediate efficient cause in us of this latter is the Spirit of adoption we have received into our hearts. That whereof it consisteth, whereof it is really and formally

made, are those infused virtues proper and peculiar unto saints; which the Spirit, *in the very moment when first it is given of God*, bringeth with it; the effects whereof are such actions as the Apostle doth call the fruits of works, the operations of the Spirit."

Our next quotation shall be taken from a valuable tract, entitled, *An Account of the Beginnings and Advances of a Spiritual Life*, originally attached to *Scougal's Life of God in the Soul of Man*, and frequently reprinted in that shape by "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge:"—"When God hath a purpose of love towards any such, as are either lost in vice, or ruined in insensible neglect of God and divine things, He usually begins to deal with them upon great and sudden emergencies,—by a sickness, some great and outward trouble, or the loss of a dear friend, which have brought on melancholy; and perhaps sometimes upon the commission of some great sin, that fills the conscience with horror: any of those cases,—meeting with some serious good sermon, or the converse of a sincerely pious and affectionately devout person, or the reading of some good book, will often occasion a great excitation of mind, to consider the condition and danger such a person is in; and though I deny not but some are insensibly, and by degrees slowly wrought to a change of heart and life (and, indeed, there are no rules to be given the Almighty), yet, commonly, *the change is notable in the first beginning*; a horror for past sins, and sad apprehensions of the judgments of God, usually break in first."

The next, from Bishop Hopkins, *On the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration*, applies this doctrine to the great comfort and satisfaction of every soul, which has been *sealed with the sealing of the Spirit*:—"And here observe, that, *in the very instant of our regeneration*, all the graces of the Holy Spirit are implanted in us, at once: for they are all linked together; and whoever receives any one grace, receives them all. There are faith and love, and the fear of God, and patience, and

humility, and self-denial, and the rest of the train of glorious graces ; for each of these is a lineament and feature of the divine image, without which it were not complete. And, therefore, that Christian that can but find any one grace wrought and acted in him by the Spirit of God, may comfortably conclude that he hath all other graces, at least in the habits and principles of them : they may all be weak indeed ; but, yet, not any one of them is wanting. And it may also serve to stir us up, since we have graces of all sorts that lie latent within us, not to yield to any corruption or temptation, as that with which we cannot grapple, so as to come off with victory and conquest : for our regeneration furnishes us with all grace ; and there is no particular sin, but we may within ourselves find a particular grace opposite to it, if we would but stir up and rouse it."

The *Sermons* of Archbishop Tillotson have been always famed for the stress there laid on effectual conversion. The following, among other passages, is strong and decisive :—" Some men, by an extraordinary power of God's grace upon their hearts, are *suddenly changed*, and strangely reclaimed from a very wicked and vicious, to a very religious and virtuous course of life ; and that which others attain by slow degrees, and great conflicts with themselves, before they can gain the upper hand of their lusts, these arrive at, *all of a sudden*, by a mighty revolution wrought in them by the power of God's grace, and, as it were, by a new bias and inclination put upon their souls."

Bishop Horne, of Norwich, among many eloquent Sermons, has one called, *The Duty of Repentance Illustrated*, from which an apt quotation may be derived :—" The leading step in the process must of necessity be *conviction* ; since he cannot be persuaded to repent, who is not first convinced that he has sinned ; and no man will think of returning into the right way, unless he be made sensible that he has wandered out of it. . . . Conviction is produced *gradually*. Upon some hint given to a man, either from within or from without, he begins to suspect himself in the wrong ; and then, if he be honest

enough to prosecute the inquiry, discovers at length that he actually is so. Or, sometimes it is flashed upon the mind *at once*: he awakes, and the dream is at an end. Under the direction of that blessed Spirit, whose office, we are told, it is to convince, or convict, the world of sin, it is produced by various means;—by disappointments, by crosses, by losses, by sickness, by the death of a friend, by a passage in Scripture, or a discourse upon one, by the incidents of common life, or the changes that happen in the natural world; in short, there is hardly a circumstance of so trivial a nature, but that a kind Providence, in some instance or other, has been pleased to make it instrumental to this salutary purpose.”

To return, at last, to Paley; we shall here find two more passages, strongly resembling one another, but both of them so truly excellent, that neither ought to be suppressed. The former is from the *Sermon*, already quoted, *on Conversion*:—“ I do not, in the smallest degree, mean to undervalue, or speak lightly of such changes, whenever or in whomsoever they take place; nor to deny that they may be sudden, yet lasting (nay, I am rather inclined to think, that it is in this manner that they frequently do take place); nor to dispute what is upon good testimony alleged concerning conversion brought about by affecting incidents of life; by striking passages of Scripture; by impressive discourses from the pulpit; by what we meet with in books; or even by single touching sentences or expressions in such discourses or books. I am not disposed to question these relations unnecessarily, but rather to bless God for such instances, when I hear of them, and to regard them as merciful ordinations of His providence.”

The latter, from that *On the Influence of the Spirit*:—“ The conversion of a sinner may be sudden, nay, may be instantaneous, yet be both sincere and permanent. We have no authority whatever to deny the possibility of this. On the contrary, we ought to rejoice, when we observe in any one even the appearance of such a change; and this change may

not only by possibility be sudden, but sudden changes may be more frequent than our observations would lead us to expect. For we can observe only effects, and these must have time to shew themselves; whilst the change of heart may be already wrought. It is the change of heart which is attributable to the Spirit of God, and this may be sudden. The fruits, the corresponding effects,—external reformation, and external good actions,—will follow in due time.”

13.—Amidst the sad insensibility betrayed, even by the religious classes of this country, to the doctrines of saving grace, nothing more lamentably tends to retard the progress of divine truth, than the abeyance into which the doctrine of *Personal Assurance* has of late years fallen. Certainly, no occurrence could more grievously have startled the mind of an Apostle, than to hear a doubt suggested by a member of the Church; whether a man might not *be in Christ*, and *yet not know it*. Every word and letter of the Apostolical Epistles evidently proceeds on a presumption, that they who read them know whether they receive the Word, or not; know whether they repent and believe, or not; know whether the promise of forgiveness of sins is realised in their own hearts or not; know whether they are adopted into Christ's family or not; know whether the Spirit of consolation, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of holiness, is shed abroad in their hearts or not;—or, at all events, that, if they hitherto know not these things with due certainty, yet at least that they *may* know them; that the knowledge of them is a thing allowed and vouchsafed to man through the Holy Ghost. But even supposing a man doubts his acceptance, he at least knows that he doubts it; and he ought to know, that so long as he doubts, he cannot be rooted and grounded in faith, and therefore he cannot be safe. To assert, that less than this is compatible with the principles of human decision, or even of human consciousness, is to assert that a man may *doubt whether he doubts or not*,—in short, that the whole action of his mind may

consist of a succession of doubts, rising one above another, till they reach the primary evidence of his senses, which must also be resolved into a testimony of equal fallibility;—a doctrine which probably no man alive will deliberately undertake to maintain. But uncertainty in matters of religion is readily allowed, where the bare notion of such a thing would be treated, on other topics, with ridicule and indignation. Whoever would learn the reason of the fact, let him turn back to page lxiv-vi, and read again what Archbishop Usher says on *the Sealing of the Spirit*. They who can bear witness, from their own consciences, to the witness of the Holy Ghost, are too few to be often heard above the clamour of the many, who feel compelled, by their own deficiency, to gainsay, first, its necessity, and then, its possibility. This is the whole secret in few words. People know they have not the assurance of the Spirit in themselves; and they cannot, and must not, and will not credit, that they ought to have it, and that, if thoroughly Christianised, they would have it infallibly. And so they deny its existence; just because they cannot testify to its possession. Precisely as those who sit at home contradict the narrations of the traveller, till they are tempted at length to go and see the scenery and customs he described, and find it was only their own incredulity which rejected what they had before charged on the exaggerations of the narrator. Till the day of doom arrives, the world will not give ear; but the world will then discover, to its inconceivable dismay, that no human being ever was, or ever could be, fully justified in the sight of God, and live and die in total ignorance of his justification.

The extreme inconsistency (to use no stronger word) of assigning their value to the works of man, according as he is, or is not, justified, and then denying that he has any means of ascertaining whether he be really justified or no, has deterred many, even of the most worldly writers, who acknowledged the authority of the 39 Articles, from hazarding such a declaration. To rescue the Articles, therefore, if possible, from utter inanity,

without admitting the unpalatable truth of *the inward testimony of the Spirit*, they generally propose *the fruits of faith* as the means by which a man must learn the certainty of his own condition. Now, the 12th and 13th Articles teach us the converse mode of reasoning; not that works are the test of justification, but that justification is the test of works: that the very same actions, which, in a person justified, are acceptable to God, are sinful in the unjustified; that no works are good, unless, as fruits of faith, they follow after justification. So that the proposal fails entirely of getting rid of the offence, which it only removes one step further back. For if the fruits of faith are to be the tokens of our justification, how are we to know whether our works are fruits of faith or not? We must still *examine ourselves whether we be in the faith*; we must still *prove our own selves*. Otherwise, the formal professor has a very easy process to satisfy himself withal:—"I walk in all the ordinances of the law, blameless; therefore, I know I must be in the faith; and, therefore, again, I know I must be justified." The Bible teaches us a different course of argument:—"I know that I am justified, because my sincere and earnest repentance has been sealed by the testimony of God's Holy Spirit to my conscience; by that Spirit my faith has been raised into a full assurance of divine favour; and, therefore, I trust my imperfect services will be accepted, through Christ, as a humble tribute of my obedience and thankfulness." The truth is this,—that works were never intended, and are never represented in Scripture, to serve as evidences to *ourselves*. By them we are to know *each other*, so far as one man can know another; though, here again, we must be always liable to err, and, by mistaking the nature of the fruit, to mistake the character of the tree also. Nay, our habitual tempers and affections afford us no direct or certain estimate of our own hearts; for even of these we must examine the sincerity, before we can justly draw conclusions in their favour. And how are we to ascertain that sincerity, unless by the assurance of our faith,—

by the Spirit of God, bearing witness to our own spirits, that we are the children of God?

To do justice to the abundant testimonials that exist to the truth of this great doctrine, would require, as a preliminary step, that the works of our Reformers should be nearly transcribed; they found it one of the strongest engines against Popery, and they maintained it alike in their writings and their conduct, without cessation. But the materials of this Introduction have already exceeded all bounds, and a few of the most striking passages, arranged, according to the matter of the Sermon, under convenient heads, must suffice.

14. And *first, of the assurance of faith*, or the testimony of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man, that, as a believer, he is an accepted child of God. And here the noble army of the faithful may be introduced with several extracts from that illustrious man, Martin Luther; beginning with his famous *Commentary on the Galatians*:—"Who gave himself for our sins.—This is, then, the chief knowledge and true wisdom of Christians, to count these words of Paul, that Christ was delivered to death, not for our righteousness or holiness, but for our sins (which are very sins indeed, great, many, yea, infinite and invincible), to be most true, effectual, and of great importance. Therefore, think them not to be small, and such as may be done away by thine own works; neither yet despair thou for the greatness of them, if thou feel thyself oppressed therewith, either in life or death: but learn here of Paul, to believe that Christ was given, not for feigned or counterfeit sins, nor yet for small sins, but for great and huge sins; not for one or two, but for all; not for vanquished sins (for no man, nor angel, is able to overcome the least sin that is), but for invincible sins. And except thou be found in the number of those that say, OUR SINS,—that is, which have this doctrine of faith, and teach, hear, learn, love, and believe the same,—there is no salvation for thee." Again: "I have used many words to declare that a Christian must assure himself that he is in the favour of God,

and that he hath the crying of the Holy Ghost in his heart. This have I done, that ye may learn to reject and utterly to abandon that devilish opinion of the whole kingdom of the Pope, which taught that a man ought to be uncertain and to stand in doubt of the grace and favour of God towards him. If this opinion be received, then Christ profiteth nothing. For he that doubteth of God's favour towards him, must needs doubt also of the benefits of Christ; namely, that he was born, suffered, died, and rose again for us. But there can be no greater blasphemy against God, than to deny His promises, to deny God himself, to deny Christ, &c." Again:—"This is our anchor-hold, and our foundation. The Gospel commandeth us to behold, not our own good works, our own perfection; but God the Promiser, and Christ the Mediator. Contrariwise, the Pope commandeth us to look, not unto God the Promiser, nor unto Christ our High-Bishop, but unto our works and merits. Here, on the one side, doubting and desperation must needs follow: but on the other side, assurance of God's favour, and joy of the Spirit. For we cleave unto God, who cannot lie. For He saith, Behold, I deliver my son to death, that through His blood He may redeem thee from thy sins and from eternal death. In this case, I cannot doubt, unless I will utterly deny God. And this is the reason that our doctrine is most sure and certain; because it carrieth us out of ourselves, that we should not lean to our own strength, our own conscience, our own feeling, our own person, and our own works; but to that which is without us,—that is to say, the promise and truth of God, which cannot deceive us." Again:—"Look, then; how much thou dost believe this, so much thou dost enjoy it. If thou believest sin, death, and the curse to be abolished, they are abolished; for Christ hath overcome and taken away these in himself, and will have us to believe, that like as in His own person there is now, after His resurrection, no sin nor death, so there is none in ours, seeing He hath performed and accomplished all things for us. Again, whatever sins I, thou, and

we all have done or shall do hereafter, they are Christ's own sins, as verily as if He himself had done them." And again:—" St. Augustine saith very well and godly, that every man seeth his own faith, if he have faith. This do they (the Papists) deny."

Similar tenets are as strongly inculcated in many other portions of Luther's writings. For instance, in his *20th Sermon*:—" They be ignorant both what faith is, and that it alone doth justify. They call it faith, when they believe those things which they have heard of Christ; which kind of faith the devils also have, and yet are nothing therefore justified; but this deserveth rather to be called an opinion of men, than faith. For, as we oftentimes admonish, it is not sufficient, that thou mayest worthily be called a Christian, to believe those things to be true that are preached of Christ; which kind of faith they of Cain's brood also have; but thou must also nothing doubt, that thou art of the number of them to whom these benefits of Christ are given and exhibited: which he that believeth, must plainly confess that he is holy, godly, righteous, the son of God, and certain of salvation; and that by no merit of his own, but by the only mercy of God, poured forth upon him for Christ's sake, which he believeth to be so rich and plentiful, as it is indeed, that, although he be as it were drowned in sins, he is, notwithstanding, thereby made holy, and the son of God."

Again, in that *On the Resurrection of Christ*:—" Christ taking upon Him our sins, they could not remain and abide upon Him. What then became of them? They must needs vanish away, and be utterly abolished, and brought to nothing. Whereby faith worketh so mightily, that he that believes that Christ hath taken away his sins, is as clean without sin as Christ himself."

And again, in that *On the 130th Psalm*:—"Whosoever, therefore, have not confidence in this one point, that our sins are so taken away by the blood of Christ, that God doth not see our sins in us; without doubt they are damned."

Luther's early friend, Martin Bucer, follows in the same track, in his *Exposition of Ephesians*, i. 5 :—" He emphatically rests on Christ, because the assurance of our faith consists in having Him for our Reconciler, and Giver of perfect righteousness ; because, through Him, the God of all grace becomes our unchangeable Father, by which unchangeableness we are able always to resist the devil, and never despair. On our own defective righteousness we never could securely rest, nor indeed be sufficiently grateful to God for His so great mercy. Wherefore let us dismiss the vain conceit of our own righteousness, and pray God to fill us with thanksgiving for His unspeakable loving-kindness as long as we live."

And so also his mild and pious fellow-labourer, Philip Melancthon, in his *Loci Communes* :—" Let this, then, be our definition : faith is assent to the whole word of God, and therefore to the promise of reconciliation that is freely given us through Christ our Mediator ; and it is fiducial trust in the mercy of God, promised for Christ's sake. For fiducial trust is an action of the will, necessarily following upon our assent to the word. Faith is a grace that appropriates and applies the promises, and brings peace into the soul, as these words clearly prove :—*Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, and access to the grace in which we stand.*"

Next upon the list stands Latimer, whose *Sermons* shall furnish us with two quotations on that speciality of faith, and appropriation of the promises, on which, as on its foundation, true assurance rests :—" We must believe Christ, we must know that our Saviour is come into this world to save sinners : therefore He is called Jesus, because He shall save His people from their sins : as the Angel of God himself witnesseth. And this faith must not be only a general faith, but it must be a special faith ; for the devil himself hath a general faith ; he believeth that Christ is come into this world, and hath made a reconciliation between God and man : he knoweth that there shall be remission of our sins ; but he believeth not he shall

have part of it ; that his wickedness shall be forgiven unto him, this he believeth not. He hath a general faith : but I say that every one of us must have a special faith : I must believe for myself, that His blood was shed for me. I must believe that, when Christ saith, ‘ Come to me all ye that labour and are laden, and I will ease you. ;’ here I must believe that Christ calleth me unto Him, that I should come and receive everlasting life at His hands : with such a special faith I do apply His passion unto me. Therefore I ought to believe, and so through faith apply Christ’s merits unto me ; for God requireth a special faith of every one ; as he did of David, when the prophet Nathan came unto Him, and said, ‘ The Lord hath taken away thy wickedness ;’ which words of the prophet Nathan he believed, and so according to his belief it happened unto him. For David had not such a contrition or penance as Judas had : for Judas, indeed, had a contrition ; he was sorry for his sins, but without faith. David was sorry for his sins, but he joined faith unto it : he believed stedfastly without all doubting that God would be merciful unto him. ‘ The Lord hath taken away thy sins ;’ and God required of him that he should believe those words. Now, like as He required of David to believe His words, so also He requireth of us too, that we should believe Him : for, like as David was remedied through his faith in God ; so shall we be remedied also, if we believe as he did.”

The other, on faith in the Son, as the means of assurance before the Father :—“ If thou art desirous to know whether thou art chosen to everlasting life, thou mayest not begin with God ; for God is too high, thou canst not comprehend Him. Begin with Christ, and learn to know Christ, and wherefore He came ; namely, that He came to save sinners, and made himself subject to the law, to deliver us from the wrath and danger thereof. If thou knowest Christ, then thou mayest know further of thy election.”

Nothing can exceed the vigour of Bishop Hooper’s language on the fulness of faith, except the patience with which his

own agonies at the stake bore witness to its sincerity :—" They that will justify themselves any other way than by faith, do doubt always whether their sins be forgiven or not ; and by reason of this doubt, they can never pray unto God aright." Again :—" And, as the Psalm saith, he called and nameth the God of glory, his glory. O marvellous and unspeakable boldness and constancy of faith ! a man, nothing but sin by nature, in the sight of God nothing but earth and ashes, replenished with all misery and wretchedness, by nature corrupt, the very enemy of God, a vessel prepared unto all dishonour, ignominy, shame, and perdition, contemned through sin, and shamed before all creatures ; and yet now, with all these dishonours, by faith saith, the King of glory is his glory, and the Conqueror of all dishonour is his shield and buckler."

A beautiful remonstrance, addressed to those who would drive a man from the aneorage of faith, and leave him to flounder on the waves of human works, occurs in the 22d chapter (*Confidence in the Promises*) of Fox on *Justification* :—" What is more firm for all manner of security, than that which relies on the certain faithfulness of God, and a free promise ? On the contrary, what is more unstable than that which depends on the most uncertain condition of our works, which are either for the most part evil, or always uncertain ? Why, then, wilt thou cast us again out of the most firm safeguard of most sure confidence proposed to us, which rests most safely in the free bounty of God's promises, as if thou drovest us out of a haven of tranquillity procured for us, to be tossed in the tempestuous waters and straits of diffidence and desperation ? And do you make those things doubtful and uncertain, which, through the bounty of God, we do as it were hold in our hands with a most assured faith, so that now there is not any thing certain, which a man may satisfy his own soul about touching salvation ? For what can be certain, if so be the grace of the promise being taken away, if imputation of righteousness being neglected, which is placed in Christ for us, the whole matter is brought

to the account of our actions; and you plead that we are not otherwise righteous before God, than by performing the offices of the divine law?

Bradford, eloquent on all subjects, is more than ever eloquent on this. His whole soul appears to be wrapped up in the confidence and love of God in Christ. Witness his *Treatise on the Fear of Death*:—"But now, where thou standest in doubt of pardon of thy sins, and thereby art afraid of damnation, my dear brother, I would have thee answer me, whether thou desirest pardon or no? Whether thou dost repent or no? Hearken what Christ is called,—*Call his name Jesus*, saith the Angel, for He shall save His people from their sins; so that where abundance of sin is, there is abundance of grace. Say, therefore, *Who shall lay any thing to my charge? It is God that absolveth me; who then shall condemn me? It is Christ who is dead for my sins, yea, who is risen for my righteousness, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and prayeth for me.* Be certain, therefore, and sure of pardon of thy sins; be certain and sure of everlasting life. Do not now say in thy heart, *Who shall descend in the deep?* that is, doubt not of pardon of thy sins, for that is to fetch up Christ: neither say thou, *Who shall ascend up into heaven?* that is, doubt not of eternal bliss, for that is to put Christ out of heaven. But mark what the Lord saith unto thee,—*The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: and this is the Word of faith which we preach; if thou confess with thy mouth that Jesus Christ is the Lord, and believe with thy heart, that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be safe.* If thou believe that Jesus Christ died, and rose again, even so shalt thou be assured, saith the Lord God, that, dying with Christ, I will bring thee again with Him." And again:—"Doubt once of thy salvation and continue therein, and surely he (the devil) will ask nothing more. It was the first thing wherewith he tempted Christ,—*If thou be the Son of God, &c.* It is the first and principal dart that he casteth at God's elect.

But as he prevailed not against Christ, no more shall he do against any of His members; for they have the shield of faith, which quencheth his fiery darts. They praise God night and day; how then should they perish?"

While the following, from his *Familiar Letters*, exhibits the assurance of reconciliation as the only true and lively spring of personal obedience and holiness:—"As certain as God is Almighty; as certain as God is merciful; as certain as God is true; as certain as Jesus Christ was crucified, is risen, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; as certain as this is God's commandment,—'I am the Lord thy God', &c.; so certain ought you to be that God is your Father. As you are bound to have no other gods but Him, so are you no less bound to believe that God is your God. What profit should it be to you to believe this to be true,—'I am the Lord thy God', for others, if you should not believe that this is true for yourself? The devil believes thus; and whatsoever it is that would move you to doubt whether God be your God through Christ, that same comes undoubtedly of the devil. Cast, therefore, yourself wholly upon it, and think, without all wavering, that you are God's child, &c. If you are assured hereof, as you ought to be, then shall your conscience be quieted; then shall you lament, more and more, that you want many things which God loveth; then shall you labour to be holy in soul and body; then shall you go about, that God's glory may shine in you in all your words and works; then shall you not be afraid what man can do unto you; then shall you have wisdom to answer your adversaries, as shall serve to their shame and your comfort; then shall you be certain that no man can touch one hair of your head, farther than shall please your good Father for your everlasting joy; then shall you be most certain that God; as your good Father, will be more careful for your children, and make better provision for them, if all you have is gone, than you can; then shall you, being assured of God's favour towards you, give over yourself wholly to help and care for

others that are in need ; then shall you condemn this life, and desire to be at home with your good and sweet Father ; then shall you labour to mortify all things that would spot either soul or body. All these things spring out of this certain persuasion and faith, that God is our Father, and that we are his children by Christ Jesus.”

As on the subject of Justification by Faith, already cited, so on that of the Assurance of Faith, Bishop Jewell has arranged the opinions of the Fathers in concise order, in *the Defence of his Apology* :—“ Now, concerning the assurance or certainty of salvation, the Scriptures are full. *St. Paul saith, there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. The Spirit of God beareth witness to our spirit that we are the children of God. I know that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor powers, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature else, shall be able to remove me from that love that God beareth towards me in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

“ Tertullian saith, ‘ that we might be certified that we be the children of God, he hath sent the Holy Ghost into our hearts, crying Abba, Father.’

“ Clemens Alexandrinus saith, ‘ Indeed hope is, as it were, the blood of faith ; in which faith hope is contained, even as faith is contained in the soul. And when hope is gone, then is all the lively power of faith dissolved, as if the blood were shed out of the body.’

“ Cyprian saith, ‘ Dost thou stagger, and stand in doubt of thy salvation ? That were as much as not to know God ; that were as much as, with the sin of unbelief, to offend Christ, the Master of believers ; that were as much as, being in the Church, in the house of faith, to have no faith.’

“ Prosper saith, ‘ They unto whom the world is crucified, and who are crucified unto the world, wait for the day of judgment without fear.’

But, to leave the ancient Fathers of old time, and to put

the matter quite out of doubt, one Antonius Marinarius, in the late council of Trent, in open audience, said thus; ‘ If the heaven should fall, if the earth should vanish, if the whole world should come down headlong, yet would I stand bold before God. If an angel from heaven would tell me otherwise, I would accurse him. Oh, the blessed trust and certainty of a Christian heart !’

“ So saith Job, in all his miseries,—*Although He kill me, yet will I put my trust in Him. Notwithstanding, I will reprove my ways before His sight.* So the prophet David,—*In thee, O Lord, have I trusted; I will never be confounded.* This is no presumption, but a patient and an humble waiting for the redemption of the children of God.

“ So saith Ambrose, ‘ I will not glory for that I am a just man, but for that I am redeemed; therefore will I glory. Not for that I am void of sin, but for that my sins are forgiven me. I will not glory for that I have done good to any man, nor for that any man hath done good to me; but for that Christ is my Advocate with the Father, and for that Christ’s blood was shed for me.’

“ Therefore Augustine saith, ‘ What shall I render unto our Lord, for that I call to remembrance all these my sins, and yet my soul thereof is not afraid ?’

“ To be short: thus saith Bernard, ‘ What safe rest or surety can the weak soul find, but in the wounds of our Saviour? As He is mightier to save, so dwell I there with more safety, &c. I have committed a great sin; my conscience is troubled, yet shall it not be shaken down, because I will remember my Lord’s wounds; for He was wounded for our sins.’

“ Thus, ‘ to be assured of our salvation,’ Augustine saith, ‘ it is no arrogant stoutness, it is our faith; it is no pride, it is devotion; it is no presumption, it is God’s promise.’

“ But your whole doctrine of the trust in man’s merits leadeth directly to desperation; and therefore Cyprian saith well

of you, ‘ They teach us night instead of day ; destruction instead of health ; desperation under the colour of hope ; infidelity under the pretence of faith ; antichrist under the name of Christ.’”

So much for individual Reformers. Let us now proceed to *Public Confessions of Faith* ; and first, to that of the *Protestant Church in France* :—“ We believe that all our justification is founded in the remission of our sins, as also is all our blessedness, as says David. We, therefore, reject all other means of justifying ourselves before God ; and, without presuming on any virtues or merits of our own, we hold simply by the obedience of Jesus Christ which is imputed to us, to the end that our sins may be covered, and that we may find mercy and favour before God. And we believe, that when we decline from this foundation, however little, we can nowhere else find repose, but must be always agitated by apprehensions ; inasmuch as we never are at ease with God until we are well assured of being loved in Jesus Christ, seeing that we are worthy of being hated in ourselves.”

Then to that adopted by the *English Congregation at Geneva*, and received and approved by the *Church of Scotland*, at the commencement of the Reformation :—“ It is not sufficient to believe that God is omnipotent and merciful, that Christ hath made satisfaction, or that the Holy Ghost hath this power and effect (*viz.*, to guide us into all truth, persuading us, most assuredly, in our consciences that we are the children of God), except we do apply the same benefits to ourselves.”

And then to that “ *believed and professed by the Protestants of Scotland*,” subsequent to the year 1560 :—“ Regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, working, in the hearts of the elect of God, an assured faith in the promise of God, revealed to us in His Word, by which faith we apprehend Christ Jesus with the graces and benefits promised in Him.”

The *Palatine Catechism*, which has been before cited, and

which is acknowledged by the *Protestant Churches both of Germany and of Scotland*, is very full and clear to the present point:—"Faith is not only a certain knowledge whereby I firmly assent to all things which God hath revealed unto us in His Word, but also an assured trust kindled in my heart by the Holy Ghost, through the Gospel, whereby I repose on God, firmly assuring myself, that remission of sins, everlasting righteousness, and eternal life, is granted not only to others, but also to me, and that freely of God's mercy for the merits of Christ alone."

From the *Catechism of the Reformed Church of Holland*, entitled *A Brief Compendium of Christian Religion*, and usually bound up with the Dutch Bibles, a brief extract will be sufficient:—"Sincere faith is a sure knowledge of God and His promises revealed to us in the Gospel, and a hearty confidence that all my sins are forgiven me for Christ's sake."

Wherever the simplicity of the truth stands in danger, *Nowell's Catechism* will never be searched in vain:—"Faith is an assured knowledge of the fatherly good-will of God towards us through Christ, and an affiance in the same goodness, as it is witnessed in the gospel; which faith hath coupled with it an endeavour of godly life, that is, to obey the will of God the Father." And again:—"For they know that, Christ (whom they trust upon) appeasing the wrath of His father, their sins shall never be imputed any more unto them, than if the same had never been committed. And though themselves have not satisfied the law, and their duty towards God and men, yet believe they that Christ, with His most full observing of the law, hath abundantly satisfied God for them, and are persuaded that, by this His righteousness and observing of the law of God, themselves are accounted in the number and state of the righteous, and that they are beloved of God, even as if themselves had fulfilled the law. And this is the justification which the Holy Scriptures do declare that we obtain by faith."

Hooker, in his *First Sermon on St. Jude*, demonstrates,

most beautifully, the doctrine enforced above, that the fruits of faith, to be ascertained as such, must follow after the assurance of faith : that it is the testimony of the Spirit which enables, nay constrains, the disciple, to illustrate his belief by his practice :—“ It behoveth you, therefore, greatly, every man to examine his own estate, and to try whether you be bond or free, children or no children. . . Judge thyself. God hath left us infallible evidence, whereby we may, at any time, give true and righteous sentence upon ourselves. . . *That we have passed from death unto life, we know it, saith St. John, because we love the brethren : and know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except you be reprobates ?* I trust, beloved, we know that we are not reprobates, because our spirit doth bear us record, that the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ is in us. It is as easy a matter for the Spirit within you to tell whose ye are, as for the eyes of your body to judge where you sit, or in what place you stand. . . If we can make this account with ourselves ;—I was in times past dead in trespasses and sins, I walked after the prince that ruleth in the air, and after the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience ; but God, who is rich in mercy, through His great love, wherewith He loved me, even when I was dead, hath quickened me in Christ. I was fierce, proud, heady, high-minded ; but God hath made me like the child that is newly weaned. I loved pleasures more than God, I followed greedily the joys of this present world ; I esteemed him that erected a stage or theatre, more than Solomon, which built a temple to the Lord ; the harp, viol, timbrel, and pipe, men-singers and women-singers were at my feast ; it was my felicity to see my children dance before me ; I said of every kind of vanity, O how sweet art thou to my soul ! All which things now are crucified to me, and I to them : now I hate the pride of life, and pomp of this world ; now *I take as great delight in the way of thy testimonies, O Lord, as in all riches ;* now I find more joy of heart in my Lord and Saviour than the worldly-minded man,

when *his wheat and oil do much abound*; now I taste nothing sweet but the *bread which came down from heaven, to give life unto the world*; now mine eyes see nothing but Jesus rising from the dead; now mine ears refuse all kinds of melody, to hear the song of them that have gotten victory over the beast, and of his image, and of his mark, and of the number of his name, that stand on the sea of glass, *having the harps of God, and singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, O King of Saints*. Surely, if the Spirit have been thus effectual in the secret work of our regeneration unto newness of life; if we endeavour thus to frame ourselves anew; then we may say boldly, with the blessed Apostle, in the 10th of the Hebrews, *We are not of them which withdraw ourselves to perdition, but which follow faith to the conservation of the soul*. For they which fall away from the grace of God, and separate themselves unto perdition, they are fleshly and carnal, they have not God's Holy Spirit. But unto you, *because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His son into your hearts*, to the end ye might know that Christ hath built you upon a rock unmoveable; that He hath bound himself in a sure and everlasting covenant to be your God, and the God of your children after you; that He hath suffered as much, groaned as oft, prayed as heartily for you, as for Peter,—*O Father, keep them in thy name. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. I have declared thy name unto them, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved them may be in me, and I in them*. The Lord of His infinite mercy give us hearts plentifully fraught with the treasure of this blessed assurance of faith unto the end."

A short but decisive passage, quite sufficient to exhibit the writer's capacity to teach the solemn doctrine of assurance, occurs in Bishop Andrews's Sermon on *Justification in the*

Name of Christ, which has been lately re-published, with others on the principal Fasts and Festivals of the Church, by a lady of the name of Davis :—“ If Christ be not only righteousness itself, but *our* righteousness also, we have nothing more to desire ; our wishes have received their highest consummation : for this pronoun, this possessive, this word of application, is all in all. By it, we have interest in both ; and without it, our case is similar to theirs, who exclaimed, *What have we to do with thee, thou Son of David?* This is a fearful state, indeed ; and terror and torment attend on the bare contemplation of it.”

Of the splendid succession of prelates, whose piety and wisdom has conferred lasting honour on the English bench, not one perhaps deserves to be regarded as higher authority than Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich, during the troubled days of Charles and the Protector. On the faith and love of God, in all its branches, his writings are most satisfactory, as will appear hereafter. For the present, a passage, full of resigned and pious confidence, may be taken from his *Soul's Farewell to Earth* :—“ I confess, should thy merits be weighed in the balance of rigorous justice, another place, which I cannot mention without horror, were more fit for thee, more due to thee ; for, alas ! thou hast been above measure sinful, and thou knowest the wages of sin, death. But, *the God of my mercy hath prevented thee* with infinite compassion ; and, in the multitude of His tender mercies, hath not only delivered thee from the nethermost hell, but hath also vouchsafed to translate thee *into the kingdom of His dear Son*. In Him, thou hast boldness of access to the throne of grace. Thou, who in thyself art worthy to be a child of wrath, art in Him adopted to be a co-heir of glory ; and hast the livery and seizin given thee beforehand of a blessed possession, the full estating wherein, I do, in all humble awfulness, attend.”

With the name of Hall is constantly associated that of Jeremy Taylor, who held the see of Down and Connor after the Restoration, and whose *Sermon on the Spirit of Grace*

furnishes us with an extract of uncommon beauty on the *sealing*, or *obsignation*, of the soul unto eternal life :—“ The *gospel* is called the *Spirit*, because, by and in the gospel, God hath given to us not only *the Spirit of manifestation*, that is, of instruction and of catechism, of faith and confident assent ; but *the Spirit of confirmation*, or *obsignation*, to all them that believe and obey the gospel of Christ ; that is, the power of God is come upon our hearts, by which, in an admirable manner, we are made sure of a glorious inheritance ; made sure (I say) in the nature of the thing ; and our own persuasions also are confirmed, with an excellent, a comfortable, a discerning, and a reasonable hope ; in the strength of which, and by whose aid, as we do not doubt of the performance of the promise, so we vigorously pursue all the parts of the condition, and are enabled to work all the work of God, so as not to be affrighted with fear, or seduced by vanity, or oppressed by lust, or drawn off by evil example, or abused by riches, or imprisoned by ambition and secular designs. This the Spirit of God does work in all His servants ; and it is called *the Spirit of obsignation*, or *the confirming Spirit*, because it confirms our hope, and assures our title to life eternal ; and by means of it, and other its collateral assistances, it also confirms us in our duty, that we may not only profess in word, but live lives according to the gospel. And this is the sense of *the Spirit*, mentioned in the text,—*Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you* ; that is, if ye be made partakers of the gospel, or of the *Spirit of manifestation* ; if ye be truly entitled to God, and have received the promise of the Father, then are ye not carnal men ; ye are *spiritual*, ye are *in the Spirit* : if ye have the Spirit in one sense, to any purpose, ye have it also in another ; if the Spirit be in you, you are in it ; if it hath given you hope, it hath also enabled and ascertained your duty. For *the Spirit of manifestation* will but upbraid you in the shame and horrors of a sad eternity, if you have not *the Spirit of obsignation* : if the Holy Ghost be not come upon you to the great purposes of holiness, all other pre-

tences are vain ; *ye are still in the flesh, which shall never inherit the kingdom of God.*"

And now for Archbishop Usher ; than whose testimony nothing can be desired more ample or more complete. And to begin with his 15th Sermon, on *Justification by Faith* :—
 “ Mark the speech of the Apostle ; *Examine yourselves, prove your own selves ; know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* Let us understand the words. First, we see, then, it is a thing that is possible to be known, whether we are in the faith or not : and this is flat against the papists : for they think a man can have but a conjectural knowledge that he hath grace and faith. It may be probable, say they, but it cannot be certainly known. But does not the Apostle say, *Examine yourselves, prove yourselves, know you not yourselves?* &c. No papist can know it ; yet it is possible to be known. Prove and try ; you shall not lose your labour. If you take pains in it, you shall attain it in this world. *Make your calling and election sure*, saith the Apostle ; on God’s part it is sure enough, for the foundation of God standeth sure ; but make it sure unto yourselves, in respect of your own knowledge. It is a thing may well be made sure of ; therefore search, try, examine, &c. Others are content with bare beginnings, that never come to any maturity ; but those who have true faith are ever bringing themselves to the trial and touchstone.”

Again, in the 2nd of his Sermons *On the Seal of Salvation*, where the singleness of faith is shewn to be absolutely indispensable, and exclusively promotive of Assurance :—“ The testimony of our spirit I conceive to be, when a man hath taken a survey of those excellent things belonging unto justification and sanctification ; when, according to the substantial truths which I know in the Word, I observe and follow as fast as I can what is there commanded. When I take the candle of the Word, and with that bright burning lamp search into the Word, what is there to be done, and so bring it home to

myself, thereby mortifying my corruptions ; this is the ground-work of the witness of our spirit. First, as in the blood, with my spirit I must see what is needful to be done in order unto justification, what free promises of invitation belong thereunto ; I must see how God justifies a sinner, what conditions on our part are required in justification ; I must see what footings and grounds for life, and what way of hope there is for a graceless man to be saved, yea, even for the worst person that may be. In this case a man must not look for any thing in himself as a cause. Christ must not be had by exchange, but received as a free gift, as the Apostle speaks,—*Therefore it is of faith, that it may be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.* I must there bring unto the receiving of Christ a bare hand. It must be of grace. God for this cause will make us let fall every thing, before we shall take hold of Him. Though qualified with humiliation, I must let all fall, not trusting unto it as to make me the worthier to receive Christ; as some think. When thus at first for my justification I received Christ, I must let any thing I have fall, to lay hold of Him, that then He may find us thus naked, as it were, in our blood ; and in this sort God will take us, that all may be of mere grace. Another thing the Apostle adds, and that is, that the promise may be sure. If any thing in us might be as a cause of help to our justification, a man should never be sure : therefore it is all of grace, that the promise might be sure. As though God should say,—I care for nothing else, bring me my Son, and shew me Him, and then all is well. And in this case you see He doth not name hope, or love, or any other grace but faith ; for the nature of faith is to let fall all things in laying hold on Christ. In justification faith is a sufferer only ; but in sanctification it works and purgeth the whole man ; and so witnesses the certainty and truth of our sanctification, and so the assurance of salvation.”

Again, from the same Sermon :—“ Now, our spirit having viewed all these things, and the promises upon which they are

grounded, thus it witnesseth, as if one should demand of a man,—Are these things presented to thy view true? Yes, will he say, true, as true as the gospel. Then the next thing is,—Is all good and profitable? Oh yes, says he, all is very good and desirable. Then the upshot is,—But is this good for thee? If your soul answer now, Yes, very good to me; if then thou accept of this, and wrap and fold thyself in the promises, thou canst not wind thyself out of comfort and assurance to be in Christ Jesus: for what, pray, makes up a match, but the consent of two agreeing? So the consent of two parties agreeing upon this message makes up the match betwixt us and Christ, uniting and knitting us unto Him.”

And yet again:—“Then from our believing God in general, believing and applying the promises, and valorous trustings of God, and restings upon God, taking Him at His word, comes the testimony of God’s Spirit witnessing with our spirit that we are the children of God. I say, this being done, and God having let us see what His strength in us is, He will not let us stand long in this uncomfortable state, but will come again and speak peace to us, that we may live in His sight; as if He should say, What! hast thou believed me so on my bare word? Hast thou honoured me so as to lay the blame and fault of all my trials on thyself for thy sins, clearing my justice in all things? Hast thou honoured me so as to magnify mercy to wait and hope on it for all this? Hast thou trusted me so as to remain faithful in all thy miseries? Then the Lord puts unto the witness of our spirit the seal of His Spirit, as we may read, Eph. i. 13.; says the Apostle, *In whom also ye trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, &c.* Here is the difference betwixt faith and sense: faith takes hold of general promises, draws them down to particulars, applies them, and makes them her own; lives and walks by them, squaring the whole life by them

in all things. But sense is another thing, even that which is mentioned, Ps. xxxv. 3; when there is a full report made to the soul of its assured happiness,—*Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.* When a man hath thus been gathered home by glorifying Him, and believing His truth, then comes a special evidence to the soul, with an unwonted joy, and saith, *I am thy salvation*; which, in effect, is that which Christ in another place speaks,—*He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself unto him.* So that, a meditation of the word being past, a man having viewed his charter and the promises, surveying heaven, the privileges of believers, and the glory that is to come, then comes in the Spirit, and makes up a third; with which comes joy unspeakable and glorious, in such a measure, that, for the present, we can neither wish nor desire any thing else, the soul resting wonderfully ravished and contented.”

Bishop Hopkins, *on the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration*, speaks of the assurance of faith with his usual accuracy and force of language:—“It is possible for a Christian to attain an assured knowledge of his regeneration. I say, an assured knowledge, to carry it higher than the papists do, who allow no more than a conjectural probability; which may well enough preserve from despair, but yet doth not exclude all fears and doubtings. But it is no wonder, that they, who will not trust their natural senses in the doctrine of transubstantiation, should not much less trust their spiritual senses in the doctrine of assurance. A Christian’s assurance is many degrees above these weak guesses, and arrives at a far greater certainty than any demonstration can be: for the evidence of sense and reason is not so clear as that of assurance is; the testimony that sense and reason give is but human, but the testimony given in a Christian’s assurance is divine, and therefore is far more certain and more infallible. The Apostle grounded the evidence of assurance upon the divinity of the witness, in Rom. viii. 16,—*The Spirit itself* (mark that)

beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. What greater ground for assurance can there be than this? *The Spirit itself beareth witness:* and what God speaks is infinitely more certain than that which our very eye sees: and therefore it is very injurious to His truth and veracity, when He, by the secret and sweet whisperings of His Spirit, informs the soul, that it is in a state of grace, to think that this testimony only gives probable guesses and conjectures. The witness that the Spirit gives is such a full assurance, as removes all doubts and fears; for it is the witness of God himself. Now, such a witness as this is, a Christian may have; and therefore, it is possible, and it necessarily follows also, that he may have a full assurance, beyond all doubts and fears. Nor is this possible by way of revelation, as a special privilege indulged only to some few, and them the choicest of God's servants: for in 2 Pet. i. 10, the Apostle exhorts all Christians *to give diligence to make their calling and election sure*, which he would never do, were it an impossibility, and could not be attained with our diligence. So, in 2 Cor. xiii. 5; *Examine yourselves*, says the Apostle, *whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves: know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* Reprobation, in this place, by the way, doth not stand opposed to the decree of election, as if none were elected but those that were already actually in Christ; but it stands opposed to approbation, for God doth not approve of any in whom Christ is not formed. Now, says the Apostle, since you know this, try and prove yourselves, whether Christ be in you: but it were a vain thing to put a Christian upon self-examination and trial, if there were no ordinary means to attain to the knowledge of it, but he must expect and depend upon some extraordinary revelation from heaven,—a thing that is never but rarely given unto some few."

And again, most admirably, on the indispensable union and consent of the two witnesses, and the insufficiency of the fruits of faith, without the warrant of the Holy Ghost, even to

attest the sincerity of a believer ;—“ The marks and signs of our regeneration, in which the Scripture abounds, are, of themselves, insufficient to raise us to a full assurance, without the testimony of the Holy Spirit of God. I doubt not but this appears very clear to those who have taken pains to search out their spiritual estate by marks and signs. If the Spirit comes not in, to satisfy them by His own witness, they may soon run themselves to a loss ; and, at the end, sit down as doubtful and perplexed as when they first began. As, for instance, if a gracious soul should call into question the truth and sincerity of his love to God ; and should begin to examine himself,—‘ How shall I know whether I do indeed love God ? Why, the Scripture tells me, by keeping His commandments, by obeying Him sincerely. Yea, but the sincerity of our obedience is as difficult to be known, as the sincerity of our love : and how shall I know whether my obedience be sincere ?’ Now here, though many signs might be given as evidence of this, yet still the doubting soul will be driving itself from one sign to another, and never find satisfaction in any of them, unless the Spirit of God comes in by its undeniable witness to silence all its objections, and to resolve all its doubts by a kind of peremptory and discussive voice that it is so : otherwise, there is no end of looking after signs, for they will still leave the soul full of perplexities. Unless the Spirit of God comes in as a satisfactory witness, we may run from one sign to another sign, to inquire after grace, whether it be there and there ; and, when all is done, we may be as much at a loss concerning that sign, as we were at first concerning the grace which we inquired after. So then, unto a full assurance, there is necessarily required an inward peremptory witness of the Holy Ghost. Signs and marks, without His infallible testimony, are insignificant and unsatisfactory things.”

But then, on the other hand,—“ That assurance that Christians have of their regeneration, is not wrought in them merely by the testimony of the Spirit, without the help of

signs and marks. As marks and signs cannot raise up to a full assurance without the Spirit of God, so neither do we obtain a full assurance merely by the testimony of the Spirit, without the help of signs and marks. For, to what end doth the Scripture so much abound in giving characters of men's estates, which is the main scope and drift of the whole First Epistle of St. John? These were all superfluous, if the usual way of the Spirit's evidencing were without them. I am regenerated: but how came I to be assured of this? Not barely because the Spirit testifies to me that I am so,—that looks too much like enthusiasm, and a wild and groundless delusion. But the Spirit proceeds in a more rational way. I am a Christian and regenerated, because I find those marks upon me, that can belong to none but to such who are so. Indeed, all our assurance must be ultimately resolved into the alone verdict of the Spirit of God, and that, without the help of farther signs and marks: for when a Christian gains assurance, he doth not with the sun run through all the signs of the zodiac to know if he be a Christian by this and this sign, and then to try the truth of that sign by another, and that other by a third, and so onward: that were endless and unsatisfactory. But when he is brought to signs that lie a remove or two off from the grace that he enquires after, he doth not usually make a farther search, whether they be truly in him or not; but the Spirit darts in a clear and heavenly light, that discovers them to him, not discursively, but only instinctively, so that he is able to say, 'they are in me beyond all deceit.'

“The usual way whereby Christians come to be assured of their regeneration, is by the joint testimony both of marks and signs of grace, and also by the Spirit's witnessing to us that these marks and signs are in us. . . . To evidence that we are born again, there comes in a two-fold witness; the witness of our spirits, and the witness of God's Spirit: our spirit deposeth that we are so, that we are born again, and become the children of God; and this it doth,

by observing the proper marks and characters that the Scripture gives of a child of God; and the Spirit of God comes in a another witness, that in the mouth of two witnesses this may be established; and, by His immediate light, clears up the truth of that attestation that conscience did make; which takes away all doubting and hesitancies, and fills us with a full assurance,—yea, gives us a plethory. So that, still, marks and signs are of great use, for the discovery of the truth of grace;—*by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.* But, still, we may be puzzled to know, whether our keeping of God's commandments be such a ground for our comfort; therefore, the witness of the Spirit is here required, to seal and confirm this unto us; without which, still, we shall be to seek assurance, for all the marks that the scripture lays down for evidences of our graces."

It is unquestionably a remarkable fact, that, while the chain of evidence in support of the doctrine of assurance continues uninterrupted from the days of Luther and Wicliff to those of Usher and Hopkins,—a period of three centuries and a half; during the century next ensuing there appears almost a blank, in reference to this great subject, on the surface of English Divinity. There may be, and doubtless are, testimonies to the truth scattered here and there among theologians of less reputation; but among those who are commonly, but inaccurately, called the *old* divines,—from the reign of Queen Anne to the commencement of the present æra,—religion certainly derives no character of sanctity from their assertion of its characteristic and fundamental principles. With writers now alive, and, still more, with preachers hitherto unknown beyond the limits of the pulpit, the day of better things has begun to dawn; and we cannot better authenticate this remark, than by adducing a remarkable passage from the *4th Discourse on Predestination*, published in 1821, by the Provost of Oriel College, Oxford, now Lord Bishop of Llandaff:—"Is it possible that

any sincere believer should so far belie his profession, as to scoff at this notion of conscious fellowship with the Holy Spirit? Where the voice of our Church expressly proclaims that ‘the godly consideration of Predestination, and our election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things;’ can any man, who has declared his assent to that Article, venture to make the very object it describes a theme of scorn and derision? It is possible, indeed, these appellations, which provoke the scorn of the world, may be assumed as badges of a sect or party: and if so, they are justly deserving of severe rebuke and blame. It is possible the individual against whom the ridicule is aimed, may be a hypocrite, or he may be an enthusiast;—let God be his judge; *to his own Master let him stand or fall.* But whatever the case may be, he cannot be a greater hypocrite than that man, who professes to believe all that our Church believes, and yet vilifies and derides one of her most solemn and explicit declarations.”

To descend yet lower; the very first of the *Monthly Sermons* now publishing by “The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,” is one entitled *The Christian’s Privileges and Duties*, written in the very best style of the present Bishop of London; who remarks, in reference to the unconverted, as not partakers of the promises and blessings of the gospel, and therefore not really members of the Church of Christ:—“But all this, which as natural men we *are not*, as Christians we *are*; and surely there is some meaning in the terms; and the difference between the two states which they describe is a real difference,—a difference which must be felt and exemplified; and if we do not experience its reality in our feelings, our motives, our hopes, in the bias of our wishes, and the bent of our minds, the description of the Apostle,—that is to say, the

description of the Holy Spirit himself,—is not applicable to us ; and then what is our Christianity, wherein is its substance, and what is the foundation of our hopes ?”

Take, again, a sermon of the same collection (Part II.) on *The Danger of Delay in Religion*, by Dr. G. Davys, Dean of Chester ; a gentleman, to whose spiritual knowledge and integrity the religious world cannot but look with feelings of the deepest interest, as the person intrusted with the education and discipline of the heiress to the throne of Britain. It is, therefore, with peculiar pleasure we find him asserting faithfully the necessity of the present acceptance of reconciliation, and of the consciousness of progressive holiness in the Spirit :—“ The everlasting blessedness of heaven is promised to those who are pardoned through the sacrifice of Christ, and who are also sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the real Christian, both these gifts are united ; he receives the merciful offers of forgiveness, to his great and endless comfort ; and he has, at the same time, *great delight in God’s commandments.*”

And yet again, in the 2nd volume of the same collection (Part VIII.), we find another, entitled *The End of Sin is Death*, by Dr. Kay, Bishop of Lincoln ; where, enlarging on the example afforded by the disciples at Rome, he demonstrates the duty of continued watchfulness and prayer, even after the fullest evidences of justification, lest the seeds of former depravity again take root, and flourish :—“ True it was, that they had received the joyful assurance, that the actual sins which they had committed during their unregenerated state were pardoned ; yet the perverse and corrupted dispositions in which those sins originated still remained, and were the more difficult to overcome, on account of the unrestrained dominion which they had previously been allowed to exercise. Although, therefore, the new convert to the gospel was penetrated with a deep sense of his former guilt ; although he was impressed with the firmest conviction of the necessity of personal holiness, and actuated by a sincere desire to render his whole life conformable

to that of his Redeemer; yet he found himself continually impeded in his progress by the influence of the bad habits which he had contracted; and which, if they did not involve him in fresh guilt, could only be subdued after a painful and arduous struggle."

15. *Secondly, of the assurance of hope*, or confident expectation of good things to come, both in this and in a future state of existence. Miles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter, and coadjutor with Wicliff in the labour of biblical translation, has a passage in his *Preface to the Letters of the Martyrs*, which may be properly ranged under this head:—"Whereby they that list not still to be blind, may plainly behold and see, not only the terrible judgment of God over and against the wicked, but also His wonderful doings, mixed with mercy in and towards His chosen. Unto whom, as unto them that love Him, He causeth all things to work for the best. So that with Him, by the heavenly light of steadfast faith, they see life, even in death; with Him, even in heaviness and sorrow, they fail not of joy and comfort; with Him, even in poverty, affliction, and trouble, they neither perish nor are forsaken."

Bishop Jewell, in his *Exposition upon 1 Thess. i. 4*, has another, full of exalted and invincible aspirations:—"This is the only thing wherein I cannot yield. The Lord hath spoken unto me; I have heard His voice; my heart hath felt it; my conscience knoweth it; I cannot deny it: no sword can cut me from it; no water can drown it; no fire can burn the love I bear unto it: there is no creature in heaven and earth that can carry me from that blessed hope I have conceived by His word."

The *Heidelberg Catechism* has also two, characterised by equal confidence, the former in regard to things temporal, the latter to the destinies of futurity:—"My only consolation in life and death is this:—that in my soul as well as my body, whether I live, or whether I die, I belong not to myself, but unto my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; who, by His most

precious blood, having made ample satisfaction for all my sins, delivered me from the dominion of the devil; and that He so preserves and watches over me, that, without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair of my head can fall; yea, and what is more, that all things should be subservient to my welfare. Wherefore, by His Holy Spirit, He assures me of eternal life, and renders me prompt and prepared to live henceforth to His glory."

And again:—"I believe that God, for the satisfaction made by Christ, hath put away all remembrance of my sins, and also of that depravity within me, which I have to contend with all my life, and doth freely endow me with the righteousness of Christ, that I come not at any time into judgment." . . . And, "I console myself that, forasmuch as I feel already in my heart the beginning of everlasting life, it shall come to pass, that, after this life, I shall enjoy full and perfect bliss, wherein I may magnify God for ever; which blessedness neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive."

Bishop Hall, in his *Soul's Farewell to Earth*, thus declares his sure and certain expectation of the inheritance:—"How canst thou but be pleasingly affected, O my soul, with the comfortable sense of having a God, a Saviour, and a heaven of thine own? For in these spiritual and heavenly felicities, our right is not partial and divided, as it useth to be in secular inheritances, so that every one hath his share distinguished from the rest, and parcelled out of the whole; but here, each one hath all; and this blessed patrimony is so communicated to all saints, that the whole is the propriety of every one. Upon the assurance, therefore, of thy God's gracious promises, made to every true believer, find thou thyself happily seized of both the King and kingdom of heaven, so far as thy faith can as yet feoff thee in both; and delight thyself, above all things, in these unfailing pledges of thine instant blessedness; and say, with the holy mother of thy Redeemer, *My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour.*"

While Bishop Taylor, in his *Sermon on the Spirit of Grace*, even outstrips himself in tenderness and sublimity, when expatiating on that blessed hope :—“ Now this Spirit of comfort is the hope and confidence, the certain expectation of partaking in the inheritance of Jesus. This is the faith and patience of the saints ; this is the refreshment of all wearied travellers, the cordial of all languishing sinners, the support of the scrupulous, the guide of the doubtful, the anchor of timorous and fluctuating souls, the confidence and the staff of the penitent. He that is deprived of his whole estate for a good conscience, by the Spirit he meets this comfort, that he shall find it again with advantage in the day of restitution ; and this comfort was so manifest in the first days of Christianity, that it was no unfrequent thing to see holy persons court a martyrdom with a fondness as great as is our impatience and timorousness in every persecution. Till the Spirit of God comes upon us, we are *δυσόψυχοι*. We have little souls, little faith, and as little patience ; we fall at every stumbling-block, and sink under every temptation, and our hearts fail us, and we die for fear of death, and lose our souls to preserve our estates or our persons, till the Spirit of God fills us with joy in believing. And the man that is in a great joy cares not for any trouble that is less than his joy ; and God hath taken so great care to secure this to us, that He hath turned it into a precept,—*Rejoice evermore ; and, Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice*. But this rejoicing must be only in the hope that is laid up for us ; *ἐν ἐλπίδι χαίροντες*, so the Apostle, *rejoicing in hope*. For, although God sometimes makes a cup of sensible comfort to overflow the spirit of a man, and thereby loves to refresh his sorrows ; yet this is from a secret principle not regularly given, not to be waited for, not to be prayed for, and it may fail us if we think upon it : but the hope of life eternal can never fail us, and the joy of that is great enough to make us suffer any thing, or to do any thing. To death, to bonds, to poverty, to banishment, to tribunals, any whither in hope of life eternal ; as long as this anchor holds, we may suffer a storm, but cannot suffer shipwreck.”

Archbishop Usher thus ends the last of his Sermons, *Peace with God through Faith*, in a tone of absolute delight and triumph:—"I will add, in the last place, when a man considers the great things which are given to him by God, and what an estate we get by Christ. I have forgiveness of sins; and *blessed is the man whose sins are forgiven*. Christ's blood is mine, and my name is written in the Book of Life; *do not rejoice*, saith our Saviour, *because the devils are subject unto you, but because your names are written in the Book of Life*. When I consider that I am not in the black roll, and it is my faith which strengthens me, which makes me reckon Christ my chief wealth; this makes me rejoice in mine inheritance, and in hope of the glory of God. When I consider the great reward in the world to come, this is a great cause of rejoicing; and therefore God's children long for the coming of Christ; it is made a mark of those that shall be saved, that they long for the appearance of Jesus Christ; *looking for and hastening unto the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; Tit. ii. 13: and, in 2 Pet. iii. 12, *Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God*. A longing expectation; not only they, but we also, that have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan and long for the coming of it; and therefore the last breath of the Scripture is breathed in this,—*He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen, even so be it; come, Lord Jesus.*"

In Scougal's *Life of God in the Soul of Man*, already quoted, occurs the following passage:—"These are the highest perfections that either men or angels are capable of,—the very foundation of heaven laid in the soul; and he who hath attained them, needs not desire to pry into the hidden rolls of God's decrees, or search the volumes of heaven to know what is determined about his everlasting condition, but he may find a copy of God's thoughts concerning him written in his own breast; his love to God may give him assurance of God's

favour to him ; and those beginnings of happiness which he feels in the conformity of the powers of his soul to the nature of God, and compliance with His will, are a sure pledge that his felicity shall be perfected, and continued to all eternity. And it is not without reason that one said, I had rather see the real impressions of a God-like nature upon my own soul, than have a vision from heaven, or an angel sent to tell me that my name were enrolled in the Book of Life."

Once more, a short but pithy sentence, from Bishop Pearson's *Exposition of the 9th Article of the Creed*, where he alludes to the communion of the souls of those that be alive, with the spirits of departed saints:—"That we communicate with them in hope of that happiness which they actually enjoy, is evident; that we have the Spirit of God given us as an earnest, is certain."

16.—*Thirdly, of the assurance of understanding*, or spiritual perception of such truths of Scripture as are indispensable to salvation; a doctrine by no means to be confounded with infallibility, as presuming to go no further than the guidance of the Spirit directly warrants, and making every allowance for the ignorance and perverseness of the old man, as well as for the assaults and stratagems of the devil. That religion, however, has but little chance, when men speak only what they think, and not what they know, is boldly testified in the following dialogue, extracted from the *Thirteenth Examination* of that worthy Clerk and Martyr, John Philpot, before the Archbishop of York, the Bishops of London and Chichester, and other Popish Inquisitors:—

Chich. "I see, my Lords, we do but lose our labours to reason with him; he takes himself to be better learned than we are.

Phil. "I take upon me the name of no learning; I boast of no knowledge, but of faith and of Christ; and *that* I am bound undoubtedly to know, as I am sure I do.

Chich. "These heretics take upon them to be sure of all

things they stand in. You should say rather with humility,
 ‘ I trust I know Christ,’ than that you are sure thereof.

Phil. “ Let him doubt of his faith that listeth. God give me
 always grace to believe that I am sure of true faith and
 favour in Christ.

* * * * *

Chich. “ Thou art as impudent a fellow as I have communed
 withal.”

The consequences of this assurance of knowledge are thus stated in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* :—“ By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaking therein, and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatnings, and embracing the promises of God, for this life and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone, for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.”

On the same confidence, applied to Prayer, there is an excellent remark, at the end of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, in answer to the question, ‘ What is the meaning of the word Amen ?’ as introduced at the close of our petitions :—“ That the thing is sure and beyond doubt. For my prayer is much more certainly heard of God, than I feel in my heart that I unfeignedly desire the same.”

In *Scougal’s Life of God in the Soul of Man*, the same doctrine is so extended as to imply, that the love of God depends on a sensible perception of His attributes, as revealed in Holy Writ :—“ Faith hath the same place in the Divine life, which sense hath in the natural, being indeed nothing else but a kind of sense or feeling persuasion of spiritual things. . . . The love of God is a delightful and affectionate sense of the Divine perfections, which make the soul resign and sacrifice itself wholly unto Him, desiring, above all things, to

please Him, and delighting in nothing so much as in fellowship and communion with Him, and being ready to do or suffer any thing for His sake, or at His pleasure."

And again, in the *Account of a Spiritual Life*, appended to the work just mentioned, a sure acquaintance with the means of access to the Father is made a principal ingredient in what are there termed *the inward leadings* of the Spirit:—"But because I have often mentioned the inward leadings of the Spirit, there is great need of explaining my meaning in that particular: and it is briefly this, that all such as are renewed, have an inward principle of a Divine life in them; which, as it inclines them to all those things commanded by God, either by bringing them often to their remembrance, by driving the contrary objects out of their minds, by discovering the excellency of the one, and the baseness of the other; or by an inward detestation engaging to the one, and deterring from the other; (all which, with more of the like nature, are experienced by pure minds;) so it also sets them in the methods and ways that may lead to a high pitch in those practices; and though the general and constant methods be in Scripture, yet there must be a great variety in them, considering the variety of men's tempers, complexions, educations, and circumstances. Now, for our instruction in these, God gives a Divine light to all that ask it of Him; which suggests means and methods to them for advancing this; and they, feeling these prove useful to them, may be well assured they came from God."

17.—The immediate result of this assurance is *the love of God*. What says Martin Luther, in his *Commentary on Galatians* ii. 20?—"Wherefore, if any man feel himself oppressed with heaviness and anguish of heart, he must not impute it unto Christ, although it come under the name of Christ, but unto the devil, who often cometh under the colour of Christ, and transformeth himself into an angel of light."

And of the possession or loss of that love, what says Wicliff in his *Sermon on Faith*?—"Here may men have a mirror to

judge whether they love God, and whether they are in charity, according to the order that they should have. If they love God well, they should have more joy of Him than of any earthly thing. And so of loss, if it come: if they lose the love of God by their sin, they should know they should have more sorrow thereof, than of loss of worldly things."

But, above all others, for love and devotedness to the Father, founded on a deep sense of pardon and reconciliation, through the blood of Christ, and of constant intercourse with the Holy Ghost, let us hear the delightful exclamations of Bishop Hall, in his *Soul's Farewell to Earth*:—"Yea, that blessed presence is ever comfortably acknowledged by thee, and enjoyed with such contentment and pleasure, that thou wouldst not part with it for a world, and that thou justly accountest all earthly delights but mere vexations to that alone. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.* Balaam could say, how truly soever, *I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh*: but, Lord, I see thee even now; I behold thee so nigh to me, that I live in thee, and would rather die than live without thee. I see thee, though weakly and dimly, yet truly and really. I see thee as my God all-sufficient; as my powerful Creator, my merciful Redeemer, my gracious Comforter; I see thee the living God, the Father of lights, the God of spirits; dwelling in light inaccessible; animating, filling, comprehending this glorious world; and do awfully adore thine infiniteness. Neither do I look at thee with a trembling astonishment, as some dreadful stranger, or terrible avenger; but I behold thy Majesty so graciously complying with my wretchedness, that thou admittest me to a blessed union with thee. I take thee at thy word, O dear Saviour, even that sweet word of impetration which thou wert pleased to utter to thy co-eternal Father, immediately before thy meritorious passion:—*I pray not for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me through thy Word; that they all*

*may be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one ; I in them, and thou in me ; that they may be made perfect in one ; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. I know thou couldst not but be heard in all that thou prayedst ; and therefore I take what thou suedst for, as done. Lord, I do believe in thee : unite thou me to thee ; make me one spirit with thee. It is no presumption to sue and hope for what thou hast prayed for, and promised to perform. O make me, according to the capability of my weak humanity, partaker of thy Divine nature. Vouchsafe to allow me, even me, poor wretched soul, to say of thee,—*I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.*"*

Or hear again the splendid enumeration of privileges and enjoyments, detailed in the 1st chapter of Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living* :—" God is especially present in the hearts of His people by His Holy Spirit ; and indeed the hearts of holy men are temples in the truth of things, and in type and shadow they are heaven itself. For God reigns in the hearts of His servants ; there is His kingdom. The energy of grace hath subdued all His enemies ; there is His power. They serve Him night and day, and give Him thanks and praise ; that is His glory. This is the religion and worship of God in the temple. The temple itself is the heart of man ; Christ is the High Priest, who from thence sends up the incense of prayers, and joins them to His own intercession, and presents all together to His Father ; and the Holy Ghost, by His dwelling there, hath also consecrated it into a temple : and God dwells in our hearts by faith, and Christ by His Spirit, and the Spirit by His purities : so that we are also cabinets of the mysterious Trinity. And what is this short of heaven itself, but as infancy is short of manhood, and letters of words?"

Bishop Barrow has a most eloquent passage upon the as-

assurance of spiritual love in his Sermon for Whit Sunday, *On the Gift of the Holy Ghost*:—"By the Holy Spirit we are instated in those inconceivably glorious privileges, and by it only we are assured of them, to our comfort; the gift of them, as it is a great part of them, and the chief cause, so it is a sure confirmation and pledge. *Ye, saith St. Paul, were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance; and it is God who did establish us with you in Christ, and anointed us, and also sealed us, and gave the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts; all which phrases do import the same thing, that is, a comfortable assurance concerning the realities of the benefits by Divine grace exhibited and promised to us. . . . It is this Holy Spirit which is the sole Author and Spring of all true delight, of all real content within us; of that unspeakable joy in believing, that gaiety of hope, that satisfaction in well-doing. The partaking of His society, influence, and consolation, is indeed the most delicious repast, and richest cordial of our soul; the nearest resemblance, the sweetest foretaste of Paradise."*

But Bishop Pearson, in the 9th Article of his *Exposition of the Creed*, dwells, with most particularity, and at greatest length, upon *the Communion of the Saints* on earth,—their friendly, filial, and conjugal union,—with the respective Persons of the blessed Trinity:—"Having thus declared what is the sanctity required to make a saint, that is, a man of holiness, we may now properly descend to the next consideration; which is,—who are those persons with whom these saints have this communion, and in what the communion which they have consists.—*First*, then, the saints of God, living in the Church of Christ, have communion with *God the Father*: for the Apostles did therefore write, that they to whom they wrote might have communion with them (*that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, saith St. John*), and did, at the same time, declare that their com-

munion was with the Father. Wherefore, being all the saints of God, under the gospel, receiving the doctrine of the Apostles; have communion with them; being the communion of the Apostles was the communion with the Father; it followeth, that all the saints of God, under the gospel, have a communion with God the Father. As we are the branches of the vine, so the Father is the husbandman; and thus the saints partake of His care and inspection. As *Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God*; so all which are heirs of the faith of Abraham are made partakers of the same relation. Nor are we only friends, but also sons; for, *behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.* Thus must we acknowledge that the saints of God have communion with the Father, because, *by the great and precious promises* given unto them, they become partakers of the divine nature.—*Secondly*, the saints of God, living in the Church of God, have communion with the Son of God: for, as the Apostle said, *our communion is with the Father and the Son*; and this connection is infallible, because, *he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son*; and our Saviour prayed for all such as should believe on Him, *through the word of the Apostles, that they might be one, as the Father is one in Him, and He in the Father, that they also might be one in both; I in them, saith Christ, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* This communion of saints with the Son of God is, as most evident, so most remarkable. He hath taken unto Him our nature and infirmities; He hath taken upon Him our sins, and the curse due unto them; while *we all have received of His fullness, and grace for grace*; and are called to the fellowship of His sufferings, that we may be conformable unto His death. What is the fellowship of brethren and co-heirs, of the bridegroom and the spouse? what is the communion of members with the head, of branches with the vine? that is the communion of saints

with Christ. For God *hath called us unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*—*Thirdly*, the saints of God in the Church of Christ have communion with *the Holy Ghost*; and the Apostle hath two ways assured us of the truth thereof; one rhetorically, by a seeming doubt *if there be any fellowship of the Spirit*; the other devoutly praying for it,—*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.* The saints are therefore such, because they partake of the Holy Ghost; for they are therefore holy, because they are sanctified, and it is the Spirit alone which sanctifieth. Beside, the communion with the Father and the Son is wrought by the communication of the Spirit; for hereby do we become the sons of God, in that *we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father*; and thereby do we become co-heirs with Christ, in that, *because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father*; so that *we are no more servants, but sons; and if sons, then heirs of God, through Christ.*—This is the communion which the saints enjoy with the three Persons of the blessed Trinity; this is the heavenly fellowship represented unto entertaining Abraham, when *the Lord appeared unto him, and three men stood by him.* For our Saviour hath made us this most precious promise,—*If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* Here is the soul of man made the habitation of God the Father, and of God the Son; and the presence of the Spirit cannot be wanting, where those two are inhabiting; for, *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.* The Spirit, therefore, with the Father and the Son, inhabiteth in the saints; for, *know ye not, saith the Apostle, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*”

The nature of this love, and of the confidence by which it is inspired, we find satisfactorily elucidated by Bishop Butler: a divine, whose insight into the human mind, and powers of

tracing its operations, have attained an eminence beyond the reach of competition, in his *Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion*. The following is from his *Sermon on the Love of God*:—"The presence of our fellow-creatures affects our senses, and our senses give us the knowledge of their presence; which hath different kinds of influence upon us; love, joy, sorrow, restraint, encouragement, reverence. However, this influence is not immediately from our senses, but from that knowledge. Thus, suppose a person neither to see nor hear another, not to know by any of his senses, but yet certainly to know, that another was with him; this knowledge might, and in many cases would, have one or more of the effects before mentioned. It is, therefore, not only reasonable, but also natural, to be affected with a presence, though it be not the object of our senses: whether it be, or be not, is merely an accidental circumstance, which needs not come into consideration: it is the certainty that He is with us, and we with Him, which hath the influence. We consider persons, then, as present, not only when they are within reach of our senses, but also when we are assured by any other means that they are within such a nearness; nay, if they are not, we can recall them to our mind, and be moved towards them as present. And must He, who is so much more intimately with us, that in Him we live, and move, and have our being, be thought too distant to be the object of our affections? . . . This love, reverence, desire of esteem, every faculty, every affection, tends towards, and is employed about, its respective object in common cases: and must the exercise of them be suspended with regard to Him alone, who is an object, an infinitely more than adequate object, to our most exalted faculties; Him, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things?"

18. There is yet one more point of view, in which the subject of assurance must be contemplated; and that is, the *full trust and confidence* it induces in the power, the care, and the mercy, of Almighty God; exalting the Christian above the fears and

vexations of the world; riveting his affections so much the stronger on his God, in proportion as he finds every earthly tie snapped or loosened; and driving him so much the closer to the haven of eternal hope, as he sees the ocean of mortal life overborne with waves and tempests. It is on this point, above all others, that the lives and deaths of the Reformers render their testimony invaluable. Witness the tranquillity of Tindal, in his *Lively Description of Justification*:—"And last of all, in temptation, tribulation, and adversities, we should perish daily, except faith went with us to deliver us, in that we have promises, that God will assist us, clothe us, feed us, and fight for us, and rid us out of the hands of our enemies. And thus the righteous lives ever by faith, even from faith to faith; that is, as soon as he is delivered out of one temptation, another is set before him, to fight against and to overcome through faith. The Scripture saith, *Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and his sins hid, and unto whom the Lord reckons not unrighteousness.* So that the only righteousness of him that can but sin, and hath nought of himself to make amends, is the forgiveness of sin, which faith only brings. And as far as we be unrighteous, faith only justifies us actively, and nothing else on our part. And as far as we have sinned, be in sin, or do sin, or shall sin, so far must faith in Christ's blood justify us only, and nothing else. To love, is to be righteous, so far as thou lovest; but not to make righteous, nor to make peace. To believe in Christ's blood, with a repenting heart, is to make righteous, and the only making of peace and satisfaction towards God. And thus, because terms be dark to them that be not expert and exercised, we always set out our meaning with clear examples, reporting ourselves unto the hearts and consciences of all men."

Receive the faithful advice of Bradford, in his *Letter to the City of London*:—"In sum, cast your care upon the Lord, knowing, for most certain, that He is careful for you: with Him are all the hairs of your head numbered, so that not one of them shall perish without His good pleasure and will: much more,

then, nothing shall happen to your bodies, which shall not be profitable; however, for a time, it seems otherwise to your senses. Hang on the providence of God, not only when you have means to help you, but also when you have no means, yea, when all means are against you. Give Him this honour, which, of all other things, He most chiefly requires at your hands; namely, believe that you are His children through Christ; that He is your Father and God through Him; that He loves you, pardons you all your offences; He is with you in trouble, and will be with you for ever. When you fall, He will put His hand under; you shall not lie still. Before you call upon Him, He hears you: He will finally bring you out of evil, and deliver you to His eternal joy. Doubt not, my beloved; herein doubt not, I say. God your Father will do this for you, not for respect of yourselves, but for respect of Christ, your Captain, your Pastor, your Keeper; out of whose hands none shall be able to catch you: in Him lie quiet, and often consider your dignity; namely, how that you are God's children, the saints of God, citizens of Heaven, temples of the Holy Ghost, the thrones of God, members of Christ, and lords over all."

Hear the venerable Metropolitan, Ridley, in a *Letter*, written the night before his execution:—"Let the world fret, let it rage never so much; be it never so cruel and bloody, yet be ye sure that no man can take us out of the Father's hands, for He is greater than all; who hath not spared His own Son, and hath given Him to death for us all; and, therefore, how shall He not, with Him, give us all things also? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who shall then condemn? The rest ye know, brethren; we are certainly persuaded with St. Paul, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that no kind of thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Hooker has a passage of uncommon force and dignity, on this subject, in his Sermon *On Faith in the Elect*:—"Blessed

for ever and ever be that mother's child, whose faith hath made him the child of God. The earth may shake, the pillars of the world may tremble under us, the countenance of the heaven may be appalled, the sun may lose his light, the moon her beauty, the stars their glory : but concerning the man that trusteth in God, if the fire have proclaimed itself unable as much as to singe the hair of his head ; if lions, beasts ravenous by nature and keen with hunger, being set to devour, have as it were religiously adored the very flesh of the faithful man ; what is there in the world that shall change his heart, overthrow his faith, alter his affection towards God, or the affection of God to him ? If I be of this note, who shall make a separation between me and my God ? I am not ignorant whose precious blood hath been shed for me ; I have a Shepherd full of kindness, full of care, and full of power ; unto Him I commit myself. . . . Therefore, the assurance of my hope I will labour to keep, as a jewel, unto the end ; and by labour, through the gracious mediation of His prayer, I shall keep it."

As for the evidence of Archbishop Leighton, it literally runs throughout his entire works. Take an instance from his *Commentary on 1 Peter* i. 7 :—" In spiritual trials, which are the sharpest and most fiery of all, when the furnace is within a man, when God doth not only shut up His loving-kindness from his feeling, but seems to shut it up in hot displeasure ; when He writes bitter things against him ; yet then to depend upon Him and wait for His salvation, and the more He smites the more to cleave to Him,—this is not only a true, but a strong and very refined faith indeed. Well might he say,—When I am tried I shall come forth as gold ; who could say that word,—Though He slay me, yet will I put my trust in Him. Though I saw, as it were, His hand lifted up to destroy me, yet from that same hand would I expect salvation."

Another, from his affecting Sermon, called *Hope amidst Billows* :—" Faith rests upon the goodness and truth of Him

who hath promised ; and Hope, raising itself upon faith so established, stands up and looks out to the future accomplishment of the promise. . . . Turn the promise, first upon thyself, and then upon God. Consider that He hath promised life eternal to believers, and then say, Though I saw His hand, as it were, lifted up to destroy me, yet from that very hand will I expect salvation ; for I have His Word engaged for it, that if I believe I shall be saved. . . . The direct and proper act of faith is no other than a recumbency or reliance ; a rolling over of the soul upon free mercy. That which breeds us much perplexity is, that we should invert God's order. If I knew, say some, that the promise belonged to me, and that Christ were a Saviour to me, I could believe. That is to say, I would first see, and then believe. But the true method is just contrary. *I had fainted*, says David, *unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord*. He believed it first, and saw it afterwards. . . . When God is in the midst of a kingdom or city, He makes it firm as Mount Zion, that it cannot be moved. When He is in the midst of the soul, though calamities throng about it on all hands, and roar like the billows of the sea, yet there is a constant calm within, such a peace as the world can neither give nor take away. . . . Labour, then, you who as yet never tasted of this love, to know what it means. Forsake and hate that which hitherto has made you strangers to it ; for if you obtain this, it shall comfort you when those things cannot, but would rather prove your greater torment. And you, who have received any testimonies of it, entertain it carefully, for it is your best comfort both in your best days and in your worst days too. . . . Though you may desire that God would command deliverance for you, yet, if you would be truly happy, your greater and more earnest suit should be, that He would command His loving-kindness to appear to your souls. And having once obtained this, you may possibly be persecuted, and endure hard trials ; but one thing is made sure, you cannot

be miserable. . . . If you ask David, why he repositeth so much upon the loving-kindness of God, what he means, to spend so much pains in praises and prayer to God, he answers, because He is my life. He is the Author and Preserver of my temporal life, and all the passages and accidents of it are in His hand alone. He hath also given me, and He maintains in me, a spiritual life; yea, He is the life of my soul: it lives by union with Him, as my body does by my union with it, and He hath laid up life eternal for me. Would Christians think thus indeed, the light of this consideration would dispel their distrustful fears. Certainly, there is atheism at the bottom of them; if not a denial or a misconceit of God, at least a forgetfulness of God."

And yet one more, from his Sermon on *The Confidence of Faith*:—"Oh the blessed, the high condition of a soul set on God, untied, independent from all things beside Him, its whole dependence and rest placed on Him alone, sitting loose to all the world, and so not stirred with alterations! Yea, amid the turnings up-side-down of human things, if the frame of the heaven and earth were falling to pieces, the heart founded on Him who made it, abides unmoved; the everlasting arms are under it, and bear it up. Do ye believe, my brethren, that there is such a thing, that it is no fancy? Yea, all is but fancy beside it. Do you believe this? Why, then, is one day after another put off, and this not attained, nor the soul so much as entered or engaged to a serious endeavour after it, looking on all things else, compared to this noble design, as vanity? The soul that places its joy on God, is still fresh and green, when all are withered about it. Acquaint thyself with Him betimes in ease. It is a sad case to be making acquaintance with Him, when thou shouldest most make use of His friendship, and find comfort in His love.—No language can make a natural man understand what this thing is, to rejoice in God. Oh! it is a mystery. Most men mind poor childish things, laughing and crying in a

breath, at trifles ; easily puffed up, and as easily cast down. But even the children of God are too little acquainted with this their portion. Which of you find this power in the remembrance of God, that it doth overflow and drown all other things, both your worldly joys and worldly sorrows, that you find them not ? And thus it would be, if we knew Him. Is He then our Father, and yet we know Him not ? Although all should fail, yet rejoice in Him who fails not, who alters not. He is still the same in himself, and, to the sense of the soul that is knit to Him, is then sweetest when the world is bitterest. When other comforts are withdrawn, the loss of them brings this great gain, so much the more of God and His love imparted, to make all up. They that ever found this, could almost wish for things that others are afraid of. If we knew how to improve them, His sharpest visits would be His sweetest : thou wouldest be glad to catch a kiss of His hand while He is beating thee, or pulling away something from thee that thou lovest, and bless Him while He is doing so.—*Rejoice in God, although the fig-tree blossom not, &c.* Yea, rejoice in these hardest things, as His doing. A heart rejoicing in Him, delights in all His will, and is surely provided for the most firm joy in all estates ; for if nothing can come to pass beside, or against, His will, then cannot that soul be vexed which delights in Him, and hath no will but His, but follows Him in all times, in all estates, not only when He shines bright on them, but when they are clouded. That flower which follows the sun, doth so even in cloudy days : when it doth not shine forth, yet it follows the hidden course and motion of it. So, the soul that moves after God, keeps that course when He hides His face ; is content, yea, is glad at His will in all estates, or conditions, or events. And though not only all be withered and blasted without, but the face of the soul little better within to sense, no flourishing of graces for the present, yet it rejoices in Him, and in that everlasting covenant that still holds, ordered in all things and sure, as the sweet singer

of Israel sweetly expresses it. 2 Sam. xxv. 5. *For this, says he, is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it not to grow.* That is a strange *although*, and yet he is satisfied even in that. This joy in God, as my God, the God of my salvation, ought to exercise the soul in the darkest and worst times; and it ought to stick to it, not to let go this confidence, still expecting salvation from Him, and resting on Him for it, though not having those senses and assurances that thou desirest. This weak believers are easily beaten from, by temptation. But we are to stand to our right in Him, even when we see it not. And when it is said to thee, as in Psalm iii., that there is no help for thee in God, tell all that say so, they lie: He is my God, my glory, and the lifter up of my head; as there he speaks. Rejoice in Him still as thy God; and, however, rejoice in Him as God. I will rejoice in Jehovah, glad that he is God, that His enemies cannot unsettle nor reach His throne, that He rules, and is glorious in all things, that He is self-blessed, and needs nothing. This is the purest and highest kind of rejoicing in Him, and is certainly most distant and most free from alteration, and hath, indeed, most of heaven in it."

Lastly, with a single passage from Bishop Horne's Sermon, *On the Blessing of a Cheerful Heart*, these extracts may not inappropriately conclude:—"God represents himself in the gospel, as a *God of love and of all consolation.* Our Lord calls us to Him, that He may *give us rest and refreshment*; that He may *wipe all tears from our eyes*; that we may *enter into our Master's joy*; and that *our joy may be full.* For this purpose He *has sent us a blessed Comforter, to abide with us for ever,* whose first fruits are, *love, joy, and peace*; a Spirit, cheerful in himself, and making those cheerful who are partakers of Him; cheerful in trouble, cheerful out of trouble; cheerful while they live, cheerful when they die; cheerful in using well the blessings of this life, cheerful in expecting the blessedness of the next; cheerful through faith, while they believe in the great and

precious promises made to them ; cheerful through hope, which depends upon their accomplishment ; cheerful through charity, in doing acts of mercy and loving-kindness ; till they come to that land of plenty, where none shall want ; to those regions of joy, from whence sorrow shall be for ever excluded."

In closing this compilation, the compiler cannot deny himself the satisfaction of remarking, that they form, perhaps, the most valuable body of theological extracts in the English language. And as it is a common observation, and one not altogether destitute of truth, that disjointed fragments may be so arranged as to make any writer say any thing ; he desires, most explicitly, to assure his readers, that not one single paragraph has been here quoted, to the best of his knowledge or belief, in any other sense, or with any other design, than that intended by the author, whose name it specifically bears. Whether the authorities adduced have been purely the result of his own observation, or borrowed occasionally from the researches of others, he has almost always compared the transcript with the original. In some few instances, he has been obliged to give but an imperfect reference to works, which he had not directly an opportunity of consulting : in all the rest, his notices are sufficient to allow the reader to examine the originals for himself. The extracts he has generally given at length, in order that the sense of the context at large might be fairly collected. Any thing in the shape of garbling, paraphrasing, abbreviating, or transposing, he has most scrupulously avoided ; and where a necessary regard to compression has compelled him to omit sentences of less immediate import, the omission has always been distinctly marked. And to prove that he has never laboured to press a solitary passage, from any writer, into a sense contradicted by the general tenor of his writings, he earnestly invites an entire and attentive perusal of the several works and authors he has quoted. In particular, he begs most strongly to recommend to all who are desirous of acquiring spiritual and scriptural knowledge on fundamental points, the

Works of the British Reformers, lately republished, at a very moderate price, in twelve convenient volumes; the *Sylloge Confessionum Fidei*, issued by the University of Oxford; the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, and other works of Hooker; the Sermons of Archbishop Usher; the Works, or, at least, the Select Works, of Bishops Hall, Taylor, and Hopkins; the *Letters on Justification*, by Bishop Barlow; the *Commentary on St. Peter*, and Sermons, of Archbishop Leighton; and the *Private Thoughts of Bishop Beveridge*: together with Scougal's *Life of God in the Soul of Man*, and Bradford's *Discourse on Baptismal and Spiritual Regeneration*, circulated (though the former in a mutilated shape) by "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge."

And now, in all humility and all tranquillity of mind, the writer ventures to entreat the benediction of the Holy Ghost to rest upon his labours, that they may be made to others, as they have been truly to himself,—*a work and labour of love*. Upon a host of topics, which appear naturally to arise out of his present circumstances, he forbears, for many reasons, to enlarge. He trusts, that in nothing which he has either said or written upon a controversy so momentous to his hopes and prospects, one word of anger or discontent has been suffered to escape his thoughts. He well knows that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*: and he desires, *as far as possible, to live peaceably with all men*. But he also recollects, that between the Church and the world there is a great gulf fixed; and there must be no affectation of courtesy between those who dwell on this side and on that. Immortal creatures are not to be complimented out of the salvation of their souls; when the struggle is with sin and hell, it must be war to the knife, and blood to the bridles. And above all, to use the language of a living Prelate, whose sentiments have been several times recorded in the course of the preceding pages,—“It is the peculiar duty of those who are set for watchmen on the towers of Zion, to exhort and persuade men not to rest in the generalities of

religion ; not to suppose that, because they live in the profession of it, and possess its privileges, and use its outward forms, they have, therefore, any thing of its life-giving, soul-preserving power abiding in them : but to search diligently for the methods and appliances of personal religion ; to close with the gracious offers of Christ ; to place between themselves and the world, out of which they have been chosen, a broad and decided line of distinction ; and to give undeniable evidence of their election, by a steady and consistent walking according to the gospel rule. May that powerful Spirit, who has been promised, and is engaged to uphold the kingdom of Christ, bless our endeavours to dispel the delusions which prevail on this momentous subject, and to break down that mere conventional standard of decency, and moderation, and honour, or whatever it may be called, which may, perhaps, serve for the purposes of our daily intercourse with the world, as long as no trying emergency occurs, but which is not the standard of gospel holiness, by which we are to be judged hereafter."

SALISBURY, *June 1, 1833.*

A SERMON.

2 COR. iv. 3, 4.

“ BUT IF OUR GOSPEL BE HID, IT IS HID TO THEM THAT ARE LOST :

“ IN WHOM THE GOD OF THIS WORLD HATH BLINDED THE MINDS OF THEM WHICH BELIEVE NOT ; LEST THE LIGHT OF THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF CHRIST, WHO IS THE IMAGE OF GOD, SHOULD SHINE UNTO THEM.”

NOTWITHSTANDING the reproofs and admonitions with which the great Apostle of the Gentiles had visited, in his former Epistle, the irregularities of the Corinthian Church, we find him again compelled to justify his dealings with several of their communion, in the language of severe, though affectionate, remonstrance. On the return of Titus, who had been despatched with the message of his displeasure, he is grieved to learn, that, while many have already confessed their sorrow for past misconduct, and their desire of immediate forgiveness and amendment, there are others

who yet continue to deny the authority of their instructor, and to set his counsels and his warnings equally at defiance. St. Paul accordingly proceeds, for the second time, to arraign their unbelief, with a dignity and solemnity of manner suited to the importance of the occasion. Not content to stand alone in an appeal, where the character of the whole priesthood is called in question, he associates his brother Timothy in the task of expostulation; and, in censure of a deed *not done in a corner*, but in the face of surrounding nations, he addresses his Epistle not only to *the Church of God which is at Corinth*, but to *all the saints which are in all Achaia*. He assures them of his consolation, that they have even *in part acknowledged him*, that *he was their rejoicing, even as they also were his*. He reminds them, that he is *not as many, which corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, speaking in the sight of God, in Christ*. And *therefore*, he continues, *seeing we have this ministry*,—not a ministration of the letter unto death, like that of Moses, but a ministration of the Spirit unto life,—*as we have received mercy, we faint not*; we make not our own assurance of reconciliation with the Father a plea for indolence or presumption in our Christian calling, but acknowledge ourselves *constrained* by that very *love of Christ*, by which our own

salvation is achieved, to labour but the more abundantly in the love of our brethren, and to exercise but the greater watchfulness over our own advancement. For theirs no less than for our Master's sake, *we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but, by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* For the ministration of the Old Testament, *which was to be done away*, was nevertheless so glorious, that *Moses put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold his face for the glory of his countenance, or look to the end of that which is abolished;* whereas, from the ministration of the New Testament, which *remaineth, and exceedeth in glory, the veil is done away in Christ, till we behold, with open face, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

If our Gospel, then, be veiled,—if the ministration of liberty and light be made a ministration of chains and darkness,—it is veiled to them that are lost,—to them whose hearts are wrapped in worse than Israelitish ignorance,—whose sins are open before-hand, going before to judgment; in whom the God of this world,—

the prince of evil, the mover of concupiscence, the tempter of man, and the enemy of God,—hath veiled, nay more, *hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God,—the brightness of his glory, and express image of his person,—should shine unto them;—lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and He should heal them.*

Brethren, you will observe the number and importance of the facts revealed to our consideration in so short and simple a passage of Holy Scripture. You will observe, that it is not deemed a thing impossible, that to many, in the bosom of a Christian country, the *Gospel* of salvation should still be *hid*; you will observe *to whom* it is hid,—*to them that are lost*; you will observe *by whose agency* it is hid,—not by the God of Heaven,—He *desireth not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,—but by the God of this world, which is the Devil*; you will observe *the means* which he employs to hide it from his followers,—he effectually *blinds their minds*; you will observe *to what condition* he reduces them,—that they *believe not*; you will observe *to what intent* he draws the cloud over their sight,—*lest the light of the glorious*

Gospel of Christ should shine unto them, and proclaim His arrival to their hearts in all the characteristics of divine mercy,—as Messiah; the Lord's anointed; as Emmanuel, God with us; as Jesus, the Saviour of His people from their sins. Finally, you will observe, that while the God of heaven is gathering his saints together, to constitute alike His visible Church on earth, and His invisible Church,—the general assembly of the faithful whose names are written in heaven; to the god of this world are assigned the miserable host of unbelievers, whose eyes he has blinded to the illumination of the truth, and hid the Gospel of Jesus Christ from their understanding.

Now, of all the topics which can engage the contemplation and research of man, there is not one, perhaps, more likely, under Divine favour, to arouse his soul from a state of indifference, and to stimulate it to an anxiety after spiritual knowledge and enjoyment, than the recollection of this momentous truth,—that, however the customs of social life may classify mankind by artificial ranks and distinctions, the decrees of God have ordained but two, and those two directly and irreconcilably opposed to one another. The man of intellect divides his fellow-creatures into the inquisitive and the dull; the man of pleasure into the gay and the sedate; the

man of business into the methodical and the unwary; the man of God, into the holy and the profane,—those who love Christ, and those who love the world. *He* knows the allotments of this present scene convey no reference whatever to that final destination, when happiness or misery will constitute our portion to all eternity, according as we are found on the right hand, or the left hand, of our Lord. *Whoso worshippeth the beast and his image, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.*

To an apprehension of that *great and terrible day of the Lord*, there can be scarce a human being, however imperfectly acquainted with the records of Providence, whose heart is not occasionally moved by the warnings of conscience, and troubled with a melancholy misgiving for the eventful issue of his own probation. Thanks be to God, the mystery of futurity addresses every soul of man with a voice too full of alarm, to be altogether drowned in the clamour of more engrossing interests: with all the abstraction of study, and all the hurry of dissipation, unpleasant thoughts will sometimes find their way to the bosoms of the worldly-

minded, and whisper in their ears the friendly admonition of the Preacher ; *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth ; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes ; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.* And well it were for all of us, if words designed like these to snatch the sinner from destruction, were allowed their due effect. But, unhappily, while some, like King Agrippa, continue but almost, and not altogether, persuaded to embrace the faith they acknowledge to be true and reasonable ; while others, like Felix, put off the day of reformation to a more convenient season, which never comes at all ; and while too many more, like Gallio, care for none of these things ; a class by no means insignificant, whether in point of numbers or of authority, consent to fix the standard of Christian doctrine on far other and lower grounds, than what the warranty of Scripture justifies, and think, like Pilate, to wash their hands of their Redeemer's blood, at the very moment they are consenting to His crucifixion. This is, indeed, to *make the members of Christ the members of an harlot*, to attempt a compromise between the Church and the world, alike hateful to God, and deeply perilous, nay rather unequivocally accursed, to man. *Let*

him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely: but I testify, saith the Spirit, in the revelation of future judgment, I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.

Sensible as I trust I am on all occasions of the responsibilities attached to the office of a Preacher in the House of God, I may safely acknowledge that I have never before felt, beneath the pressure of that sacred burden, a more urgent need of the assistance of His most Holy Spirit, than under the circumstances of the present hour. The political and moral aspect of affairs throughout the civilized regions of the globe; particularly, the position, absolute as well as relative, of our native country; and yet, above all, the signs of more than ordinary visitations, whether for chastisement or peace, that seem to gather round the atmosphere of her religious institutions; had been sufficient of themselves to demand the utmost vigilance and boldness from the meanest disciple of her

faith. But when to these general remarks I add a host of more immediate and particular considerations; when I look around upon the multitude here assembled, and recognise so many of my brethren, endeared to me alike by pastoral intercourse, and by personal attachment; and recollect that, so far as human foresight can pronounce, the last occasion we may find for intercourse like this must in all probability be drawing nigh, if not already at hand,—I cannot but confess a sense of sorrow and infirmity, which nothing short of His support and love, who left not His disciples, even for the gracious purpose of interceding continually for their welfare, but he first engaged to *pray the Father for another Comforter, who should abide with them for ever*,—were adequate to soothe or sustain. Believe me, with a great desire have I desired this season of exhortation; and our Heavenly Father has been pleased in his mercy to accede to that request. That it may not now be lost,—no, not to one of the least and frailest of His flock,—that the word of truth may be blessed in some degree to all,—that the obdurate may be roused, the mourner comforted, and the faithful encouraged and confirmed,—must be our prayer to Him who sends the sower forth, stedfastly promising, that *they who sow in tears, shall reap in joy; that he who now*

goeth on his way weeping, and beareth forth good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him.

The apostolical denunciation, with which I opened this address, would seem to afford us opportunity for promoting a few reflections on those peculiar and fundamental doctrines of Christianity, which compose the great offence of all in the eyes of the worldly and the sensual. The generality of mankind have no objection to admit a loose and popular application of the authority of the Gospel, so long as its enactments prevail no farther than to impart a tone of religious solemnity to the moral discipline of mankind. But once insist upon those ordinances of revelation, which lay the pride of carnal reason at the very foot of the cross,—once assert the wretchedness and helplessness of humanity, and the freeness and fulness of Divine grace,—once proclaim the sinner lost, and Christ crucified for his redemption,—and the Church and the world abide in amity no longer. To them, who are ready to renounce themselves, and to own no Saviour but the Son of God, their hope, their comfort, and their glory, here begin; but to them, whose vanity is still intent on the merit and exaltation of the creature, the reproach of the cross presents a barrier insurmountable. So truly is *the preaching of Christ, to them that*

perish, foolishness ; but to them which are saved, the power of God ;—unto the Jews, who still require the signs and wonders they reject, a stumbling-block ; and unto the Greeks, who seek after the maxims of human wisdom and refinement, foolishness ; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. They to whom God has given the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, will no longer be ashamed of the testimony of their Lord ; who hath saved them, and called them with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus, before the world began ; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.—“ If this, “ our Gospel, then, be hid, it is hid to them that “ are lost ; in whom the God of this world hath “ blinded the minds of them which believe not ; “ lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, “ who is the image of God, should shine unto “ them.”

This is the question, therefore, which I propose, by God’s permission, to examine this day for your improvement:—What are those primary and essential doctrines, which characterise exclusively the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ; doctrines, totally beyond the reach of scholastic

philosophy, but indispensably necessary to the attainment of Christian privileges and principles; doctrines, to the comprehension of which no man can expect to reach, without the succour of the grace of God, but in the profession of which no child of God can hesitate; which, consequently, form the test, the true and only test, of entire and absolute resistance to the spirit of the world, and conformity to the will of heaven? And I shall endeavour to answer this inquiry by a few plain and practical observations, arranged under three distinct, but not unconnected, heads:—

FIRST, THE TOTAL CORRUPTION OF THE NATURE OF MAN.

SECONDLY, JUSTIFICATION, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.

AND, THIRDLY, THE EFFECTUAL OPERATION OF THE HOLY GHOST.

I need not say the design is an extensive and an arduous one. Upon each of the subjects here enumerated, page after page, and volume after volume, might be written, without any thing like a plenary elucidation of the weighty matters they embrace. But where all are comprised within the compass of a single sermon, it must be deemed sufficient to state the doctrines of the Bible, as briefly and clearly as possible, and to demonstrate the piety and wis-

dom of our Church, in upholding them inviolate to her community.

I. *First*, then, of the *corruption of man*. Our first parents, as we read, were *created in the image of God*, and placed in the garden of Eden, as their allotment in a world of trial and probation. The *breath of life* was *breathed into their nostrils*,—the life of God into the form of man,—*and man became a living soul*,—alive to holiness, to happiness, to immortality, and to God. But though created free from sin, he was not created impregnable to temptation, or incapable of loss. But one command was given him, but one restriction laid on his enjoyment: *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*. The command was positive, and its observance easy; yet the subtilty of the serpent seduced the mind of man to unbelief. He disobeyed, and incurred the fatal penalty of disobedience,—the penalty of death, not only bodily and temporal, but spiritual and eternal. *He ate of the tree whereof the Lord had commanded him, thou shalt not eat*. And in that very day he died; he forfeited the image of his Maker, and died to holiness, died to happiness, died to immortality, and died to God. The body dies, when sepa-

rated from the soul; and the soul dies, when *alienated from the life of God*. And as in Adam all men were created, so by the sin of Adam all men died; all became sinners and enemies to God. *Adam begat a son in his own likeness*; and in the reproach of the sire his whole posterity stands accursed:—

“ From him what can proceed,
 “ But all corrupt; both mind and will deprav'd,
 “ Not to do only, but to will the same
 “ With him? How can they then acquitted stand
 “ In sight of God?”

Par. Lost, x. 824-8.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? or who can disown the sad avowal of the Psalmist,—Behold, I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin hath my mother conceived me? And so it was, the Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that would understand, and seek after God; but they are all gone out of the way; they are altogether become abominable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. He saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. In short, the universal mass became dead in trespasses and sins; without hope and without God in the world; heirs of wrath, as well as children of disobedience. Even of the sons of

Judah, the peculiar people of God, what saith the prophet Isaiah? *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint: from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.* And the same we continue to this hour; *the whole world lieth in wickedness; the old man is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; his sins are more in number than the hairs of his head; and God is far away from all his thoughts. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,—the greediness of gain, and superfluity of naughtiness,—have obliterated every symptom of that righteousness and true holiness, by which man was originally designed to glorify the God who made him.*

A doctrine so humiliating to the pride of man, as that of innate and total depravity, could hardly fail to offer the severest affront to the lukewarm professor of Christianity. And yet one might have supposed that the history of the world, in every age and race, were sufficient to confirm the declarations of Scripture beyond the possibility of doubt or cavil. At all events, the unconcern with which many persons deny or evade the doctrine, while they pretend to continue in communion with the Established Church of England, serves but to prove how entirely the religion of a large proportion of mankind becomes at last but a mat-

ter of formal compliance with the example of their forefathers, or of decent submission to the modes and fashions of the world. There is not a day when they enter the house of prayer without the language of confession on their lips, whatever may be the impenitence of their hearts :—“ Almighty and most merciful Father ; we have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep ; we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts ; we have offended against Thy holy laws ; we have left undone those things which we ought to have done ; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done ; and there is no health in us : but thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders.—We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us : the remembrance of them is grievous unto us ; the burden of them is intolerable.—Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers, neither take Thou vengeance of our sins : spare us, good Lord.—O Lord, deal not with us after our sins, neither reward us according to our iniquities.”

If we turn to our Articles of Faith, sanctioned by the Convocation of Archbishops and Bishops,

in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, we shall find their sentiments upon the point in question still more emphatically expressed. "Original sin," they say, "is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very * far gone from original righteousness, and is, of his own nature, inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and, therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation."†

And if we proceed yet further, to the Book of Homilies, set forth by Ecclesiastical Authority at the Reformation, we shall find the same tenets again declared in the utmost power and plainness of language:—"Whereby,"—in giving ear to the suggestions of the devil,—“it came to pass, that, as man was before blessed, so now he was accursed; as before he was loved, so now he was abhorred; as before he was most beautiful and precious, so now he was most vile and wretched in the sight of his Lord and Maker. Instead of the image of God, he was now become the image of the devil; instead of the citizen of heaven, he was become the bond-slave of hell; having in himself no one part of his former purity and cleanness, but being altogether

* Quàm longissimè; *as far as possible.* † Article IX.

spotted and defiled ; insomuch that now he seemed to be nothing else but a lump of sin, and, therefore, by the just judgment of God, was condemned to everlasting death. And this so great and miserable plague fell not only on Adam, but also on his posterity and children for ever ; so that the whole brood of Adam's flesh should sustain the self-same fall and punishment, which their forefather, by his offence, most justly had deserved. As, therefore, in Adam all men universally sinned, so in Adam all men universally received the reward of sin ; that is to say, became mortal, and subject unto death, having in themselves nothing but everlasting damnation both of body and soul."*

Now, there are two objections we hear most commonly urged against the doctrine of man's entire corruption. In presuming to answer whatever outcry may arise against the dispensations of Almighty Providence, a Christian Minister will by no means consider himself compelled, either by the character of his cause, or the purport of his office, to demonstrate the existence of an exact harmony among the several features that compose a design, confessedly beyond the intelligence of human weakness ; or to square and level all the particulars

* Homily for Christmas-Day.

of his creed to suit the dimensions of any human and fallible system. With the few and imperfect faculties of mortality, while we *see* but *through a glass, darkly*, it will be well if we succeed in shewing, to the satisfaction of the modest and the teachable, that nothing is asserted as the law of the Lord, which rests not on competent authority; and that, if some things in the *great mystery of godliness* are hardly ascertained to be consistent, at least none of them can be proved irreconcilable.

It has been often said,—If the nature of man be thus corrupt from his birth, why should any restraints of moral legislation be deemed expedient for his welfare? If his degradation be already at its lowest ebb, why take any precautions that he sink no lower? But let us just consider what is meant by innate corruption. The child is brought into the world, it is true, without one solitary grace or virtue, or any capacity, under existing circumstances, to receive them. This is the infancy of corruption. The seed of every passion and every vice lies buried in the soil of the heart, and only awaits the genial atmosphere of the world, to draw out its blossoms into full luxuriance. But no one will pretend to deny, that, by connivance and neglect, the influence of this evil grows continually more baneful, and its hold upon the constitution

more tenacious. And yet the formidable mass of guilt, contracted under all the aggravation of long and licentious indulgence, must be no less resolutely resisted, before even the task of repentance can proceed. For repentance has its fruits, as well as faith; and it were absurd for any man to feign remorse for sin, while he still continued in its wilful and habitual gratification. So that, in fact, however corrupt at our birth, we daily may, and daily must, grow worse and worse, harder and more hard, by every fresh commission of ungodliness; and, till the hour of reformation arrives, we shall be only adding misery to misery, and *treasuring up unto ourselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.*

Again, it has been asked,—If man by nature be totally corrupt, how comes he by any means acquainted with God? What ability has any one to turn to God? or how is one brought home to Christ, rather than another? How, in short, can man be said to be endowed with free-will,—with any choice or discernment between good and evil? By nature he has no such discernment, no free-will at all, except to follow evil; and, were he left to the motions and counsels of nature, he could not fail to perish everlastingly. *No man can come unto me, saith our Lord himself, except the Father draw*

him. *Without me ye can do nothing. It is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Turn thou me, O Lord,* was the prayer of Ephraim, *and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord.* And what are our own acknowledgments in the great congregation of the Church? “We have no power of ourselves to help ourselves.—We are tied and bound with the chain of our sins.—O God, through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do no good thing without thee.—Grant that, by thy holy inspiration, we may think those things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same.” “The condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such,” says our Tenth Article, “that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.” “Of ourselves,” says the Homily on Sin, “we are very sinful, wretched, and damnable; of ourselves, and by ourselves, we are not able either to think a good thought, or work a good deed; so that we can find in ourselves no hope of salvation, but rather whatsoever maketh unto our destruction.”

And again, in that on Repentance ; “ We must beware that we do in no wise think in our hearts that we are able to repent aright, or turn effectually to the Lord by our own strength.” And yet again, in that for Rogation Week ; “ If, after our fall, we repent, it is by God that we repent, who reacheth forth his merciful hand to raise us up. If we have any will to rise, it is He that preventeth our will, and disposeth us thereto.” Thus, saith the Psalmist, *the people shall be willing in the day of Thy power. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God.* By grace unmerited, the Spirit of God is sent to counteract the fatal tendency of our nature, and to call the sinner to repentance. By this invitation, the boon of free-will, which man had forfeited by transgression, God again restores ; He *takes the stony heart out of our flesh, and gives us a heart of flesh* ; He enables us, though He compels us not, to turn and repent ; and if we still perish, we perish by our own consent and resolution. So true was our Saviour’s declaration to his disciples, *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.* And when we come to recollect, that it is no longer the innate corruption of a man, which he cannot help, but the continued *hardness and impenitency of his*

heart, which he can help, despising the riches of divine goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, which ought to lead him to repentance,—that effectually quenches every spark of illumination, and resists every overture of mercy; how can we evade the solemn account that we must one day give of the souls committed to our charge, if we fail to dedicate our children to the service of piety, and to bring them up, from their cradles, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

II. From the consideration of *man's depravity*, we pass, *in the second place*, by an easy transition, to that of *Christ's sufficiency*; or, *the justification of man, by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ.*

We have already seen that man, by reason of innate and entire corruption, can do no good thing for himself: whatever is to be done for him, must be done of God. To restore the fallen creature to the position he had occupied before he fell,—to reanimate the soul to a life of holiness and happiness in this world, and of personal communion with God eternally,—this was the gracious purpose of the Almighty, when *He sent His first-begotten Son into the world.* Now *the righteousness of God*,—the maintenance of all His holy attributes unimpaired,—*is manifested*, saith St. Paul, in his 3rd Chapter to the Romans, *without the law*,—without dependence on

the law, without any reference to the obedience of man, past, present, or to come; *even the righteousness of God* is manifested *by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe*, both Jews and Gentiles. *For there is no difference* between those to whom the promises were delivered, and those to whom they were not delivered; all alike require justification before God, and all must seek it in one and the same manner. *For all have sinned*,—all the posterity of Adam have become depraved, both in character and in practice, by the transgression of their first parents,—*and are come short of the glory of God*,—the very object they were designed to promote on earth, and to enjoy in heaven; *and are justified freely by His grace*,—pardoned and accepted solely by His mercy, and by no claim or merit of their own,—*through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*,—in consequence of the ransom paid for their restitution to God by the death of His Son; *whom God hath set forth*—declared and displayed in the presence of men and angels—*to be a propitiation*,—a peace-offering, a conciliatory sacrifice,—available to fallen man, *through faith in His blood*; *for a demonstration of His righteousness by the remission of sins that are past*,—for the assertion and vindication of all His attributes at once,—His truth and justice, no less than His love and mercy,—in an

act where Christ alone endures the shame and agony, and man the forgiveness and deliverance, *through the forbearance of God* to man : *for a demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time*, before its final ratification hereafter; *that He might be at once just,—upright in the punishment of sin,—and yet the justifier—the merciful forgiver—of him which believeth in Jesus.* (Verses 21 to 26.)

But this redemption from the guilt and punishment of sin, however freely offered by the blood of Christ, could profit no man, who was not capable of receiving it. And we have already seen that man is by nature altogether incapable of receiving either this or any other holy and perfect gift. We want, therefore, an instrument, by which we may succeed in laying hold of the redemption offered us; and that instrument the Father himself provides for us, when he gives us *faith* to believe and receive the promises. No work, no merit of our own, has, or can have, any thing to do with the attainment of forgiveness from God. The best that we can do, while yet in our sins, is all sin; the very assumption of holiness is sin; and the hope and thought of recovering the approbation of God, by our unholy services, is tenfold sin and blasphemy. If we are too proud to take the mercies of redemption as a

free gift, we have still to seek the first of all requisites to their reception. Till we submit to humble ourselves in a sense of our own destitution, God will neither remit our obligations, nor accept the proffered ransom of His Son. The debtor must expect neither allowance nor release, till he owns he has *nothing* in himself *to pay*.

While, therefore, we know that *by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*; we also know that, *as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men, unto justification of life. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. Moreover, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. And so we conclude, with St. Paul, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.*

On no one doctrine of the Bible is our Liturgy more uniformly explicit than on this; and in no other portion of her services is it more forcibly inculcated, than in the special celebration of that solemn feast, at which the covenant of a Saviour's death is signed and sealed to his elect.

We are there reminded, that “ those holy mysteries ” are “ to be received in remembrance of Christ’s meritorious cross and passion, whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven ; ” and we there entreat “ our heavenly Father, that, by the merits and death of his Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His blood, we may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His passion.” In like manner, our Eleventh Article declares, that “ we are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings : ” and adds, “ Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as is more largely expressed in the Homily of Justification.” Let us turn, then, to the “ Homily of Justification,” more generally known by the title of the “ Homily of Salvation : ”—“ Because all men are sinners against God, and breakers of His law, therefore can no man by his own works (seem they ever so good) be justified and made righteous before God; but every man, of necessity, is constrained to seek for another righteousness, to be received of God’s own hands. And this righteousness, which we so receive at God’s mercy and Christ’s merits, embraced by faith, is allowed of God for our perfect and full justification. Christ is now

the righteousness of all them that truly do believe in Him. He, for them, paid the ransom of His death ; He, for them, fulfilled the law in His life ; so that now, in Him and by Him, every true Christian man may be called a fulfiller of the law." Again : " Justification is not the office of man, but of God ; for a man cannot make himself righteous by his own works, neither in part, nor in the whole. But justification is the office of God only, and is not a thing which we render unto Him, but which we receive of Him ; not which we give to Him, but which we take of Him, by His free mercy, and by the only merits of His most dearly-beloved Son, our only Redeemer, Saviour, and Justifier, Jesus Christ."

*Do we, then, make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law. For until we believed, it was not in our power to fulfil the law. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin. " Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ ; yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin."** But " good works, which are the fruits of faith, follow after justification."†

* Article XII.

† Article XIII.

Now that we are justified, we can and must labour above measure, by *the grace of God which is with us*, to fulfil the law. One might as well expect to empty the great sea, drop by drop, as to reform, by dissuasives, the individual vices of mankind; but justification through faith only applies the axe to the root of the tree, and brings the trunk, with all its rotten branches, to the ground. For *faith worketh by love*; and *what does it profit*, saith St. James, *though a man say he have faith, and have not works?* He may say what he likes; but if he do nothing, *can faith* like this,—inactive and inefficient,—*save him?* *Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.* Be sure, my brethren, it is not enough to obtain forgiveness for past transgressions; we must be thoroughly sanctified, both in body and soul, if we would hope to inherit and enjoy a land of everlasting holiness. *Whom the Lord calleth, them He justifieth; whom He justifieth, them He sanctifieth; and whom He sanctifieth, them He also glorifieth. Without holiness no man can see the Lord.*

But, after all, it may be asked,—Does not even this representation admit, in some degree, that a man is saved, or, at least, finally rewarded, according to his own deserts?—On no

account whatever. As his works were the result, and not the cause, of justification, vouchsafed to the repentant sinner; so his salvation is the result, not of his works, but of the righteousness of God, imputed in justification, and thenceforth working in the true believer. He must *work out his own salvation*, no doubt, and work *with fear and trembling*; for no zeal, no labour, no anxiety can stand for an acknowledgment, in any degree commensurate with the blessings we receive in Christ. And in this sense, *every man will be rewarded*, at the day of judgment, *according to his works*; because his works are the outward fruit and token of the inward faith that has been given him. In any other sense than this, I repeat again and again, from the beginning to the end of the Gospel, there is no such principle recognised as merit in the works of man. God loves not us because we first loved Him; had God been pleased to wait till we first manifested our love to Him, we must have waited for His love for ever. But *we love Him, because He first loved us,—loved us, even when we were dead,—and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* And it is *the love of Christ constraineth us, that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto Him which died for us, and rose again: because God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that*

we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. By the righteousness of God in Christ, made over to us through faith, we are justified;—by the righteousness of God in Christ, working in us by love, we are sanctified;—and, by the righteousness of God in Christ, fulfilled in us in glory, we trust hereafter to be glorified. Before justification, we have no capacity to work; after justification, our capacity is not our own, but Christ *dwelling in our hearts by faith.* *We, ourselves, are not our own; we are bought with a price.* Christ is *all in all* throughout; the *Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.*

Behold, then, my brethren, how wonderfully the Gospel dispensation harmonises and blends together those two doctrines, apparently arrayed in direct hostility to each other—the indispensable necessity of personal holiness, and the worthlessness of man's performances. No perfection of virtue within our widest conceptions, can afford us the slightest title to heaven; and yet, without a pureness of virtue far more excellent than every other system in the world united could devise, that heaven never can be ours. Well may man exclaim, in despair of its attainment, *Who, then, can be saved?* And well may he embrace, with thankfulness, the comfortable answer of his Lord,—*With man it is impossible; but all things are possible to God.*

Should any one who hears yet ask a reason for these things, truly might an answer be returned,—*God giveth not account of any of His matters.* But there is one reflection so indissolubly connected with the doctrine of justification through faith only, that its occurrence can hardly be avoided. If we are *justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,—where, then, is boasting?* Is the happiness of heaven the reward of our own deserts? Far otherwise: it was made ours by the obedience of Christ. Was our reconciliation with the Father purchased by a sacrifice of our own? Surely not: it was bought for us by the blood of the Lamb of God. Was our interest in that atonement secured by our own importunity? Oh, no! the grace of God took pity on our blindness, and freely gave us what we neither deserved nor desired. The only part that man has ever acted in the history of his own pilgrimage, is the character of sin and folly: whatever is more than this, he has received it all of God. And if he has *received it, why should he glory, as if he had not received it?* Here is a lesson, *to hide pride from man; and to admonish him that glorieth, to glory in the Lord.*

III. In the course of what has gone before, occasions have repeatedly arisen for alluding to

the operation of the Holy Ghost. Several remarks, however, of extreme importance, remain to be suggested on this, *the third topic proposed for our inquiry.*

The influence of the Holy Ghost upon the heart of man continues throughout the whole career of our progress towards eternity. He first attempts, by various appeals of terror or persuasion, to rouse the sinner from his lethargy, and to wean him from selfish and frivolous attachments; to reduce him to that consciousness of danger, and abhorrence of sin; that distrust of man, and weariness of the world; that craving desire and anxious search for pardon and for peace; which are all included, in the phraseology of Scripture, under the significant title of *Conversion*. And whenever, through faith, we are enabled to cast all other things behind, to cling to Christ alone for mercy and satisfaction, and to appropriate to our own souls the offer of forgiveness and adoption into the household and family of God,—the spiritual change that passes over our condition and prospects, no less than our motives and principles of action, is called, after the analogy of our introduction to natural life, *Regeneration,—the new, or second birth*. From this time forth, the work of Sanctification commences,—if, indeed, it may not be said to have

commenced already ; and *the fruits of the Spirit,—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance,—*are regularly developed and displayed.

Now, of all the means provided by a gracious Providence for the bestowal of His most Holy Spirit, the Sacrament of Baptism may be justly ranked among the most prevailing. And when we call to mind the ancient establishment of that rite, under the type of circumcision ; its subsequent confirmation from the lips of our Lord to his disciples ; and its universal practice in the purest ages of the Church ; we can entertain but little doubt that its celebration is a scene at which the eye of God regards the homage of his congregation with more than ordinary favour and encouragement. But under none, except the most corrupt administration of religious ordinances, has it ever been represented, that any charm or incantation was attached to outward ablution, unaccompanied by inward graces, to wash away the stain of sin, and *purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.* The due reception of Baptism invariably implies, in the recipient, the very same qualifications, with which alone he could at any time approach the throne of grace,—“repentance whereby he forsakes sin, and faith whereby he stedfastly believes the

promises of God made to him in that sacrament.” To approach the laver of purification without these requisites in force, is to offer an insult to Almighty God, proportionate to the solemnity of the occasion, and the benefits expected from its observance. “ In such only as worthily receive the Sacraments, they have a wholesome effect or operation ; but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves damnation, as St. Paul saith.*”

And as it is with those, whose maturity of age and reason allows them to present themselves, in their own persons, at the baptismal font ; even so it is with those, whose engagements, during the years of infancy, are stipulated at the hands of parents and sponsors. The Church, presuming on the sincerity of such as promise in the child’s behalf, acknowledges their vows and obligations, and *nothing doubts*, but *earnestly believes*, the soul thus dedicated on the faith of others is accepted on its own account. Follow the language of that Church through all her Liturgies and Offices, and you will find the same confidence reposed in the word and profession of her members, which the Apostles themselves reposed in all who openly professed the tenets of the Christian faith. They are

* Article xxv.

always treated and addressed as children,—sometimes indeed as lukewarm, sometimes as disobedient,—but always as elect and adopted children of God. But no one can really suppose, that all who are offered in baptism,—whether on their own responsibility or that of others,—are offered in penitence and faith; and yet we have no authority for concluding that the impenitent and unbelieving are made partakers of the grace of God either in or out of Baptism. *Circumcision*, saith St. Paul, *is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter: and, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God; but Baptism is only “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace;” it is not the grace itself; and but an empty sign it will prove, unless the sprinkling of water be accompanied by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.—“They that receive Baptism rightly,” says our 27th Article, “are grafted into the Church; the promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed, and grace increased, by virtue of prayer unto God.”* But recollect, a sorcerer might profess his belief, and be baptised at the hands of a Deacon of Samaria,

and yet continue *in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.*

And, O my beloved brethren! for whom I groan and *travail in birth, until Christ be truly formed* in you, "lay not that flattering unction to your souls," that either yourselves or your children can be raised, by the bare form of baptism, "from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness." Were this indeed the case, how could so many baptised hypocrites, so many baptised worldlings, so many baptised profligates, so many baptised swearers, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, array themselves in communion with the Church of Christ?—men, who bear the emblem of the faith upon their foreheads, but *walk as enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame?* We must all have a spiritual, no less than a natural, father. *As many as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ; and if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.* But these are the children of the devil, and the works of their father they do.

What, then,—will any man presume to *live at ease in Zion*, in friendship with the very things he vowed in baptism to renounce, and yet defy the solemn warning of the voice of God, and plead that he was born again in infancy? Oh,

own it not, unhappy man! for how can this but aggravate your guilt, and *increase your condemnation?* Were you then dedicated to the Lord at eight days old, and have you all these years been paying homage to the devil? Were you offered at the altar of mercy, before you knew the use of reason, to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and have you, ever since your reason came to use, been flying in the face of God, and devoting all your will and energies to serve the cause of Satan? Does the abomination of desolation,—the love of the world and of the flesh,—the host of angry and malignant passions,—the train of vile and inordinate affections,—stand where it ought not? Have you set up the standard of the legions of Hell in the tabernacle of that immortal soul, which was designed to be, and which you declare at one time was, the temple of the Holy Ghost,—not only *set apart for an habitation of God through the Spirit*, but solemnly surrendered to his tenure? Oh! glory not in this, that you were once a child of God, and have now sold yourself in bondage to his enemies! But rather blush for shame, and hide yourself with confusion of face! Boast no more of that which ought to sink you to the earth with horror before God and man!

But I have yet another word to interpose with

your pretensions. I say you have yourself denied your baptism,—denied it in the most conclusive manner. You have denied it from the very first ; you have denied it over and over again, every day and hour of your existence. In your baptism, you renounced the devil and all his works ; whenever, therefore, you *give place to the devil*, and do his works, you deny your baptism. In baptism, you renounced this wicked world, with all its pomps and vanities ; whenever, therefore, you *follow a multitude to do evil*, or court the partiality and applause of men, instead of the approbation of God, you deny your baptism. In baptism, you renounced all the sinful lusts of the flesh ; and, therefore, by every act of uncleanness, intemperance, or revenge ; by every profane and obscene word ; by every wilful allowance of foolish and licentious imaginations, you deny your baptism. *Be not deceived*, brethren ; *God is not mocked* : without inward as well as outward purification, you never can be sons of God. Is it not high time, then, *saieth the Lord*, to *turn even to me, with all your heart, with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning* ; and to pray and cry with all the earnestness with which the Spirit may vouchsafe to give you utterance, *Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me ?* that so you may be enabled to *yield yourselves unto*

God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God? Be not deceived in anywise: except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. They that have not the Spirit of Christ, are none of His. An intellectual and speculative assent to the doctrines of salvation, and a cold and barren observance of legal formalities, are things of easy attainment, but very different things from Christian faith and love. *Give me thy whole heart,* is the demand of the Creator from his creatures. Most people appear to fancy there is a certain point in the conduct and character of men, where worldly-mindedness concludes, and heavenly-mindedness begins; and that the difference between the two is not a difference between positive evil and positive good, between actual darkness and actual light, but between a greater and a smaller degree of good, a light of more or less power and splendour. These are the distinctions of the world, not the distinctions of the Bible. They who *know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent,* are *clean every whit,* and henceforth *need not save to wash their feet:* but they that continue *in the flesh, cannot please God.* To the worldly all things are worldly; not only his avarice and dissipation,—his selfish toils and vain amuse-

ments,—which are without excuse in all ; but the very semblance of religion he assumes,—his gravity, his erudition, his alms-giving, his devotions,—are all but *sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal*,—an idle and wicked mimicry of the solemn services of heaven. The profligate and the formalist appear, perhaps, at first sight, to prosecute a different journey ; and while the former gives but too conspicuous evidence, that *his house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death*, the latter may be thought to stand at least not far from the door of the kingdom of heaven. But to the eye of God there is no difference whatever, except that he who *trusteth in himself that he is righteous*, adds the pride of the spirit to the lust of the flesh. Both of them set out from one and the same point,—the love of the world and of themselves ; both of them pursue, if not the same, at least a corresponding path ; and both of them arrive at the same destination,—the abode of misery and torment. And let the formalist go on with doubled and redoubled ardour,—straining the cords of conformity, till they are ready to snap asunder,—he will only find himself further and further removed from *the truth as it is in Jesus*, more and more entangled in the snares and perils of the world, and doomed to be dismissed hereafter with that mortifying reproof,—*Who*

hath required this at thy hands? Depart from me, thou worker of iniquity!

But how, you may proceed to ask,—how shall I know when I am justified? He who is already justified, will never lack an answer to that question. For I have still to notice, that the operations of the Holy Ghost are generally *sensible* to man. Indeed, it would be a most extraordinary circumstance if they were not so; if the deepest change imaginable could take place, whether in the present constitution or the future expectations of a rational being, and he remain *insensible* alike to its rise, its progress, and its effects.

And we may begin by observing, that the operations of the Spirit are frequently *definite in point of time*, and occasionally rapid, or even instantaneous. *Let there be light, and there was light*: a word, a wish,—the effort of a moment,—was sufficient to reduce the shapeless elements of chaos into order. And shall the revolution of months and years be required, to inform a single soul with the animation of that Spirit of God, which already broods, like an eagle on its nest, over the dark waters of the soul?

The very mention of *sudden conversion* is a stumbling-block to the world: and as the doctrine is frequently misrepresented by its enemies, there certainly appear upon its surface

no common symptoms of suspicion. The progress of spiritual control over the mind of man is marked by a variety of attainments, some of them, far more than others, subject to rapidity of operation ; while, as many persons employ the term *sudden conversion*, they not only select a portion of the work, on which that rapidity of operation is less frequently exerted, but they include in the very name of *conversion* a far wider latitude of meaning than its characteristic properties of faithful penitence and prayer can at all be said to authorise. The sinner is first called by the Spirit to a *conviction of sin*. If he obey the call, his obedience may be either instantaneous or gradual. The cases in which a domestic calamity, an attack of sickness, the death of friends, the recurrence of an alarming passage in the Bible, the impression wrought by an affecting sermon, or by the conversation of devout acquaintance, strikes the fears of the unbeliever with a flash of instantaneous conviction ; and those, in which a regular application to the word of God, to solitary meditation, or to other means appointed for inquiry into divine truth, affects the reasoning apprehensions with gradual surmises and conclusions ; are, perhaps, equally numerous, and, therefore, equally probable. What next ensues, again,—the process of *conversion*,—may or may not be

expeditious, according to the measure of grace originally bestowed upon the suppliant, to feel the wretchedness of sin, and to fly to Christ for refuge. But the actual gift of the Holy Ghost,—*regeneration* itself,—the second birth, at which the new and spiritual life commences in the remission of sins, and restoration to the image, as well as to the love, of God,—this,—at whatever period and under whatever circumstances it may take place,—I have no hesitation in maintaining, resolutely and unequivocally, must always be instantaneous,—never can be otherwise. At our first creation, the breath of natural life was breathed into our nostrils; at our second creation, the breath of spiritual life is breathed into our souls: who can imagine either of those operations to be any thing but instantaneous? The pangs and throes, whether of natural or spiritual childbirth, may betoken the sorrows of approaching travail for many a weary hour; but there must be always a precise period, when the child, whether of man or God, is born into the world he is henceforth to occupy. The endowment conferred is wonderful in either case; but even with man the act of giving is not retarded in proportion to the value of the gift; and why should God be fettered with restrictions disallowed by man? But the strangest feature of

the whole dispute is this ; that the very persons who exclaim most loudly against the instantaneous operation of the Spirit on sincere converts, are, of all men, the most invincible in their claims for that very suddenness of operation, whether in children or in adults, provided only the inward grace be shadowed forth under the outward sign of baptism. Only let the ceremony of sprinkling be performed,—without repentance, without faith, without one holy or serious disposition,—and they pronounce the man a heretic, who subscribes not to the Popish superstition of a necessary and irresistible outpouring of the Spirit at the very moment of lustration ; whereas, to expect the same indulgence to one, who experiences but too surely that he has never yet been born again, and who kneels in penitence and faith for that inestimable blessing, they deem the very foolishness of folly, the rhapsody of an enthusiast and a fanatic. *If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.*

With respect to *sanctification*, — the preparation of the pardoned soul for the holiness and bliss of Heaven,—there can be no doubt but this is, by much the most frequently, a gradual, sometimes almost an imperceptible, process ; by which the hatred of sin and love

of God are confirmed, evil passions subdued, growth in grace promoted, and the prospect of future enjoyment brought home in peaceful and affectionate anticipation. At the same time, we have no right to deny the power of God to sanctify, as well as justify, his repentant creatures in a moment. In fact, unless we grant the possibility of such a consummation by the ordinary proceedings of divine mercy, we utterly shut out all hope of salvation from a case of death-bed repentance. And unwilling as I should feel to speak a word of encouragement, not fully authorised by Scripture, to those who *continue in sin that grace may the more abound*, and leave the care of that which never dies to the agonies of disease and separation; and fearfully difficult and hazardous as their task in its best estate must prove; still, it is not for us,—worms of the earth,—to dictate laws to Him, who *hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth*; and to say, even at the last moment,—it is too late; there may be room for pardon, but sanctification is now impossible. *Beloved*, saith St. Peter, *be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*. And if we confess that the spirit of evil had power to corrupt in an instant that which God had once made holy, let us not

doubt but the Spirit of good has power also to restore immediately to holiness that which Satan had corrupted.

But this is not all. The operations of the Holy Ghost are not only *definite in point of time*, but *distinctly evident in their immediate influence and results*. The idea of *personal assurance* is scarcely less offensive to the worldly mind than that of *sudden conversion*; yet, of these two doctrines, rightly understood, is constructed the most important bulwark of the Christian's comfort and stability,—the *sense* of God's forgiveness and acceptance: a feeling, described in our "Homily of Justification," as "a sure trust and confidence in God's merciful promises, that, by the merits of Christ, our sins are forgiven, and we reconciled to the favour of God, and made partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven; whereof," it adds, "doth follow a loving heart to obey the commandments." No man can cheerfully or effectually labour for the salvation of others, till he is first established in the way, that leads towards the attainment of his own. No man can ever realise,—no, nor appreciate,—no, nor even understand,—the tranquillity, the happiness, the devotion, of the spiritual mind, so warmly inculcated by the Apostolic writers, without that consciousness of interest and intercourse with the Father, thus beautifully de-

scribed by one of England's Prelates, in the golden era of her Church :—

- “ Converse with God, pure thoughts, a heavenly mind,
 “ Perfect serenity of will resign'd ;
 “ The joys of pardon, and God reconcil'd,
 “ The soft, yet firm, recumbence of a child.”

Bp. Ken's Poems. 'The Saint's Privileges.'

Now, the subject of *personal assurance* may be briefly noticed, according to scriptural distinction, under *three* divisions ; the *assurance of faith*, the *assurance of hope*, and the *assurance of understanding*.

By the *assurance of faith* is meant an inward and divine conviction, that by faith we have obtained the fulfilment of His gracious promise, who *is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent ; in whom all the promises of God are yea, and in Him amen, unto the glory of God by us ;* and who has sworn with an oath, *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. Whosoever believeth, saith St. John, that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. Accordingly, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, and access to the grace in which we stand. We cast not away our confidence, which hath great recompense of reward ;*

because *in confidence* exists *our strength*; and *believing, we rejoice*. And as the work of faith is ever in return to Him, *of whom we have obtained mercy*, so we *abound in the work of the Lord*, *forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord*.

By the *assurance of hope* is meant the earnest expectation, founded on the principle of faith,—*faith, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*,—that, by the favour of God, *all things will henceforth work together for our good*, both *in the life which now is, and in that which is to come*. Thus *by hope* also *we are saved*; saved from present anxieties, and from melancholy apprehensions of futurity; *that we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us in the Gospel*. We are permitted to *rejoice in the glory of God*; and *having this hope, we purify ourselves even as He is pure*: till, at length, when *ready to be offered*, and seeing *the time of our departure now at hand*, we fear not to assert that *there is laid up for us a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give us at that day*, when we shall be made like unto Him, shall *see Him face to face, and know Him even as we are known*.

By the *assurance of understanding* is meant that spiritual perception, likewise imparted through faith in the saving truths of Scripture,

which authorises us to *speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen* : both to teach and preach *in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power* ; like Titus, to *convince the gain-sayers*, and, like Paul, to *confound the unbelievers, proving*, not with man's wisdom, but with the wisdom of the Spirit, *that this is very Christ. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned : but the new man is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created him. As the law of the Lord is an undefiled law, converting the soul ; even so the testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple. By unction of the Holy One, we know all things ; His people are taught of God, and, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, escape the pollutions of the world.*

From the combination of this three-fold assurance of *faith, hope, and understanding*, arises, moreover, the perfect and delightful assurance of *love*. As *children of God*, we can now cry, in the *spirit of adoption, Abba, Father* ; and if children, then heirs,—heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. *Who, now, shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? Nay, in all these things, we are more than con-*

querors, through Him that loved us: for we are persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Being enabled, however imperfectly, through faith, to do the Father's will, we are addressed by the Son under those endearing appellations, —the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. And, lastly, being united in the Church to Christ, our first love, as the spouse is united to her husband, we are called after His name, and conformed to His image in our hearts; and conscious that we are highly favoured among men, we exclaim, in the fulness of sacred solace and repose, I am my Beloved's, and the Beloved is mine!

Having thus the witness in himself,—the testimony of his own conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he has had his conversation in the world; and the Spirit of God also bearing witness with his own spirit that he is a child of God,—the Christian can rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The peace of God which passeth all understanding keeps his heart and mind in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. In the midst of trials and persecutions he can confess the presence of

divinity,—*My Lord, and my God!* yea, in death itself he can look up stedfastly into heaven, with the first martyr Stephen, and *see the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;* and exclaim, with patient and faithful Job, I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH. *Blessed is the people that know that joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For Thou art the glory of their strength, and in Thy favour their horn shall be exalted.*

Or, would he require additional evidences of his safety and prosperity from within? Let him observe the tokens particularised in the First Epistle of St. John:—*Hereby we know, that we do know Him, if we keep His commandments. Whoso keepeth His word, in Him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him. If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness, is born of Him. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him;—because we love one another, not in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, because he hath given us of His spirit,—the spirit of love:—and hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the*

spirit,—the spirit of obedience,—*which He hath given us*. Here are evidences for himself, and evidences for the world; for himself, the testimony of his own faith and affections; for the world, the testimony of His good works, revealed for the salvation of the souls of men, and *the glory of His Father which is in heaven*.

And yet, O strange infatuation! not a day passes over our heads, but we hear the possibility of the sensible operation of the Spirit called in question; we hear it actually denied, that any man can tell, whether he is yet justified, or no! What! can *old things pass away*,—can we be *crucified to the world, and the world to us*,—and we not know it? Can we be endued with a new and different nature,—with new principles, new thoughts, new motives, new desires, new prospects,—and not know it? Can we be rescued from bondage to liberty, and not know it? Can we be brought *out of darkness into marvellous light*,—*from the power of Satan unto God*,—and not know it? Can we be raised from death to life,—summoned, like Lazarus, by the voice and finger of God, to leave the sepulchre of sin, and to breathe the air of righteousness,—and not know it? Can we hear and receive *glad tidings of great joy*, and not be glad? Can we entertain THE COMFORTER in our hearts, and find no comfort? Oh, my little children, *let no*

man thus deceive you. Be sure that ignorance on such a point as this, is the most fatal symptom you can betray of estrangement from the knowledge of God. If you have not within you at this moment a sense,—an earnest and abiding sense,—of reconciliation, it is but a melancholy proof that you are as yet unreconciled: if you know not the fact of your justification, it is only because you are as yet unjustified. And have you ever considered what it is to be without justification, without reconciliation with your Maker? It is to continue in your sins: the wrath of God abides in you; the vengeance of the law hangs over you; your blood is on you: cursed in the whole tenor of your lives; cursed in your thoughts, your conversations, and your labours; cursed in your closet, at your table, and upon your bed; you go on from morning till night, and from night till morning, in one continued course of sin. Let me not be thought to cast one shadow of disappointment in the way of the contrite and broken-hearted,—to *break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax.* Fain would I strengthen those who faint, and hasten those who linger, with that affectionate announcement of their Lord,—*He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* But to

teach the people, *over whom the Lord hath made us overseers, to trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God, yet, neither bid them know whom they have believed, nor be persuaded that He is able to keep that which they have committed unto him against that day; to teach them they have here no continuing city, and yet deny their hope of one to come to be an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast; to teach them, that the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God, and yet pronounce it madness to expect that God will make manifest to them the savour of his knowledge in Christ, or will "grant them, by His Holy Spirit, to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort,"* * —this is to demand the fruits of exertion, while we conceal every motive and encouragement to perseverance; to exact of the labourers their double tale of bricks, while they are *scattered abroad throughout the land of Egypt, to gather stubble instead of straw.*

But I trust, brethren, there are some among us here this day, who have *not thus learned Christ; who have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that they might know the things that are freely given to them of God; and who, since they believed, have been sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest*

* Collect for Whit-Sunday.

of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. To them the effect of righteousness,—the righteousness of God in Christ, working in their hearts by love,—is quietness and assurance for ever. To them, the bitterness of death is past ; the kingdom of heaven within them is begun. And being filled, in body, mind, and spirit, with all the fulness of God, they tread, betimes, where only the redeemed may venture, in the Paradise of heavenly contemplation ; and walking by faith, and not by sight, as seeing Him who is invisible, they hold sweet converse with their God, before the gate of heaven, and listen to that new song, which no man can learn but those who bear their Father's name upon their foreheads. And regarding the covenant ordered in all things and sure, they know that the Son of God is come, and hath given them an understanding that they may know Him that is true ; and they are in Him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This, brethren, is the true God, and eternal life. And in this state it was of calm devotion and retirement, fully assured in mind, and ready to avow,—Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him ; in such serenity and stedfastness of mind it was, that one who loved in days of old to be accounted nothing higher than a " Priest to the Temple," and who lived to impart to many a villager, in the neighbourhood of

this city some portion of his own experience in the heights and depths of religious love and knowledge, could defy the taunts and reproaches of the world :—

“ O most gracious Lord !
 If all the hope and comfort that I gather
 Were from myself, I had not half a word,
 Nor half a letter, to oppose
 What is objected by my foes.

But thou art my desert ;
 And in this league, which now my foes invade,
 Thou art not only to perform thy part,
 But also mine ; as, when the league was made,
 Thou didst at once thyself indite,
 And hold my hand, while I did write.

Wherefore, if thou canst fail,
 Why, then can truth and I ; but while rocks stand,
 And rivers stir, thou canst not shrink or quail ;
 Yes, when both rocks and all things shall disband,
 Then shalt thou be my rock and tow'r,
 And make their ruin praise thy pow'r.”

George Herbert's Poems. 'The Church : Assurance.'

Such, brethren, is the task I proposed ; and thus, to the best of my ability, under the help of God, I have performed it. I have examined the three great doctrines, maintained by the Church of England, of *Man's Corruption*, *Christ's Sufficiency*, and *the Power and Influence of the Holy Ghost* : and, I trust I have vindicated her

fideliſy in the maintenance of thoſe doctrines, againſt the hoſtility of open adversaries on one hand, and the treachery of pretended adherents on the other.

But ſome one, perhaps, may interpoſe :—The ſtatements we have heard appear legitimately deduced from Scripture ; but may not many a Scriptural inference be found a dangerous doctrine for promiſcuouſ and unqualified announcement ? A dangerous doctrine ! And is it not, think you, a damnable doctrine, to aſſert that one ſingle ſentence in that bleſſed book,—the armoury of all our ſtrength, and the treaſury of all our hopes,—can prove a dangerous doctrine to thoſe who humbly and faithfully receive it ? To thoſe who receive it not, it is indeed a *two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, of the joints and marrow*. Caſt the ſeed of the grape, or the olive, into ſtony ground, and when you look for fruit, you ſhall find but wild fruit : but graſt their branches into the true olive and the true vine, and you ſhall gather fruit in due ſeaſon. And even ſo, my brethren, it is only the *ingrafted word* in Chriſt, *received in meekneſs, which is able to ſubdue the ſtony ſoil of your hearts, and to ſave your ſouls alive*. What has the ambalaſſador to do with the conſequences of his miſſion ? *What the Lord commandeth, that he is to ſpeak*, and leave the

consequences to Him, *in whose hands are the issues of life and death.* And for my part, brethren, however men may *speak evil of this way,* however *few* may *hear,* and however *many* may *forbear,* I am determined, by the grace bestowed on me, wheresoever the Lord may be pleased to cast the lot of my future heritage on earth, to *know nothing else, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;* and alike *in season and out of season,* to *declare the whole counsel of God,* neither *adding thereto* nor *diminishing therefrom.* And *I take you all to record this day,* that *with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of man's judgment;* yea, *I judge not mine own self;* for *I know nothing by myself:* but *He that judgeth me is the Lord;* who will one day come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God. Seeing, then, that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech; insomuch that, "if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not; lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Let me, therefore, ask you, in a word, how the distinctions we have this day ascertained, apply individually to yourselves. Are you of

the Church or of the world? Are you of the many or of the few? Are you of Christ or of Belial? Of both you cannot be; a compromise between the two you cannot be. None but empty hands can *lay hold on eternal life*. You must be all of God, or none; for *the friendship of the world is more than a matter of indifference,—it is direct enmity to God*. I bid you not go out of the world; *in* the world you may and must be; but *of* the world you cannot be, except you be also of the god of the world. For Christ's sake, you must love sinners; but for your own sakes, you must abhor sin: and while you mingle with publicans and harlots, beware you fail not, by faithful hostility to their evil-doings, to deliver your own soul from blood-guiltiness before God. The world can assume a host of disguises, and deceive its wretched victims with many a semblance of religion; it can throw an air of sanctity over its business, its accomplishments, its gaiety, its very crimes. But, brethren, go not after them. *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing. Faith alone will enable you to overcome the world; faith alone will furnish you with the garb of perfect piety, the robe of the righteousness of Christ.*

Brethren, I have nearly done. The great importance of the topics we have this day ven-

tured to consider, has carried me beyond the customary limits of the time and place. But where the vital truths of Christianity are at stake, I trust the Lord would give me strength to preach till midnight, rather than leave a syllable unsaid, which might have served to snatch a fellow-sinner from destruction. I never address myself to the labour of scriptural exhortation, without a lively faith that *the word shall not return unto me void*,—that one, at least, of those who hear will be granted to my prayers,—that one, at least, of those who have *erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and he that murmured shall learn doctrine*. O, then, my brethren, may each of you persuade himself, you are to-day that one! You have heard *the sentence of God against yourselves*: cast it off, you cannot,—brave it out, you dare not: you must either stop your ears, or listen and obey. *Awake, then, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!* Delay not,—I beseech you to delay no more;—come, by the tender mercies of the Lamb of God;—begin this day, this very hour, to make your peace with God. The day is not yet spent;—but a few more hours, and the shadows of evening will soon begin to close, and none of you can tell if you shall ever more be wakened from your bed of sleep, but by *the shout of the Archangel, and the trump of*

God. Too many of you, I fear, have little thought how stands the account of your stewardship with God : they who keep no reckoning, know not what they spend. Be sure, then, *it is now high time to awake out of sleep ; to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light.* Would you be given over to a *probrate mind*? As yet *the vail is on your hearts ; the leaven of hypocrisy is yet at work ; you would still go about to establish a righteousness of your own,—a righteousness of filthy rags : and, until you turn to the Lord, the vail will not be taken away.* Unto God the words of truth are a *sweet-smelling savour*, whether *in them that are saved, or in them that perish ; but to the one they are a savour of life unto life, unto the other of death unto death.* Wherefore also it is contained in the *Scriptures, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect and precious : and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded : unto you, therefore, which believe, He is precious, but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word.* Oh, might the stumbling-block of offence be this day moved out of the way of some,—blessed be God ! even *the foolishness of this preaching* had not been heard in vain !

Brethren, I have done. What I have now spoken, I have spoken neither in reproach nor in anger, but in brotherly-kindness and in love. A day will be, when *every man's work shall be made manifest; wherefore, let every man take heed how he buildeth; for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ; and whether our building be of gold, and silver, and precious stones, or of wood, and hay, and stubble, that day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is.*

That many among us may find forgiveness ere that day arrive, may God of His infinite mercy grant, through the merits and mediation of His only Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!





