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THE LATE PASTORAL LETTER

OF THE

BISHOP OF NORTH CAROLINA

TO THE

CLERGY AND LAITY OF HIS DIOCESE.

BY THE REV.

SAMUEL FARMAR JARVIS, D.D., LL.D.

WITH THE APPROBATION OF THE

BISHOP OF CONNECTICUT.

HARTFORD:
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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1849,

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I.

The Power and Limits of Priestly Absolution.

In the state of nature no Absolution. It is a blessing of the Gospel Covenant. That Covenant, after it was confined to Abraham and his seed, had an outward and visible sign. The change of the sign produced no change in the thing signified. Infant Baptism the incipient Absolution. Its difference from Adult Baptism. The final Absolution, at the last day, will be pronounced by our Lord himself. The period between Baptism and Death, the only space for controversy as to Absolution. The Baptismal Covenant renewed in Confirmation. One of the six fundamentals The duty of Christians to leave fundamentals, and go on unto perfection. What is meant by perfection. Not freedom from sin, but manhood in Christ. Baptism the Sacrament of Infancy—the Holy Communion the Sacrament of Manhood. To these two all other acts of the Christian life subordinate. To them the remission of sin or Absolution restricted.

II.

The Doctrine and Practice of the Church of England.

At the Reformation, Infant Baptism universal. No office for Adult Baptism till the restoration of Charles II. Definition of the two Sacraments as generally necessary to salvation, added in 1603, but in perfect harmony with the Catholic faith. Remission of sin conveyed in both Sacraments, and there only. Prayer Book of 1549, the mature and unbiased judgment of the English Reformers, attempted to restore daily service to the people, and Communion at least on every Sunday and Holyday throughout the year. Changes introduced in 1552—their causes and consequences. The two exhortations of 1549. Difficulties in the way of the English Reformers, from the ignorance of the people and mediaeval corruptions. Wisdom of the Reformers in guarding against error and upholding truth.

III.

Causes of the Alterations in the American Prayer Book.

If the exhortations of 1549 had been continued, all dispute would have been prevented about auricular confession. But, through all changes and trials, the Church of England confines Absolution to the Sacraments. The first violation of this principle in the American Prayer Book, by allowing the Absolution to be used to a mixed congregation. History of this and other changes. The New England States, New York, and New Jersey, opposed and had no part in
them. Connecticut more cautious than the rest in reserving the right to reject or receive the new Book. Part which Bishop Seabury took.

IV.

_Practice of Connecticut, and Extent of her Concessions._

Suffered much for the sake of union. Her rule, Conformity to the Old or English Prayer Book, wherever it is not directly contravened by the New. Consequently she has never approved the use of the proper Absolution, except to Communicants.

V.

_The Judgment of Bishop Seabury._

Selections from his Discourses, to show that he confines Priestly Absolution to the two Sacraments. His practice as to frequent Communion.

VI.

_How are we to Prepare for Communion?_

Baptism as early as possible. Religious training. Confirmation. The Holy Communion of the Young before they are exposed to the assaults of the World. The confession of sins as a preparation for Absolution in the Sacrament. Left by the Church to men's consciences; but indispensable to the vitality of the Christian life. Private confession to God, to be made every night at least, before sleep, the constant image of death. In this solemn act, every Communicant a priest to himself, preparing his soul for the Sacrament. In case of doubts or scruples which cannot be resolved, have recourse to a priest, as to a physician. Analogy between auricular confession of bodily disease to a physician, and auricular confession of the soul's infirmities to a priest.

VII.

_Strictures on the Pastoral Letter._

This simple principle of Absolution in the Lord's Supper will allay all agitation. Ravenscroft and Hobart united in Church principles with Seabury. Quotations from Ravenscroft, Hooker, Wheatly, all are in accordance with this principle. Remarks on Mr. Curtis' sermon. The supposed Absolution in the morning and evening services. Injustice to the early Lutherans in classing them with Calvinists and Puritans. This shown with regard to Bucer and Martyr. Two errors in departing from Sacramental Absolution, both leading to the neglect of the Lord's Supper. English Visitation Office. Important question. Conduct of Connecticut. The Changes in the American Prayer Book, lead us back to the Prayer Book of 1549. Strict observance of Rubrics. Two or three expressions in the Pastoral Letter of doubtful authority and meaning.

VIII.

_Conclusion._

The author is impelled to write this letter by a sense of duty to his friend, the Bishop of North Carolina, duty to the Apostolic Ministry, to the Diocese of Connecticut, to the true Catholic Church in these United States. The future, though uncertain, should not occasion despondence. An extract from Bishop Seabury's Discourse on the duties of the Laity.
Right Reverend and Dear Sir:

I am induced to address you thus publicly, by feelings of the utmost personal friendship, and the utmost reverence for your exalted station in the Church. As to friendship, I need not make any long or loud professions. Ever since I had the pleasure of knowing you, I have esteemed you as one of the purest minded of our prelates—incessant and untiring in the discharge of duties to God and man, and mainly anxious for His glory, and the salvation of immortal souls. As to reverence, I need only say that it has occasioned some doubt whether, as an humble presbyter, it was my duty to express any opinion respecting your late pastoral letter. Nor should I, if you had not sent it to me, and thus constructively expressed a wish to learn my judgment on the important subject which led to it. Even with this encouragement I am not disposed to assume the language of individual opinion; and it is with the approbation of my diocesan, expressed after a deliberate examination of what I now write, that I have ventured to call it

A VOICE FROM CONNECTICUT.

I.

The subject, then, of the following remarks, is the power of Priestly Absolution, and the limits within which it must be exercised.

To so sinful and corrupt a being as man, when considered only in his natural state, as a descendant of Adam, there can be no Absolution. This position, I presume, no one who rightly calls himself a Christian will deny. However vague and unmeaning is the
language of some who rely upon impulses and feelings, and talk of justification by faith, as if it were wholly unconnected with any act or deed on the part of man, there can be no question in the mind of any true believer, that we can be pardoned only through the merits and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To the Catholic Christian, there can be no doubt that, from the time of Abraham, the blessings of the Gospel Covenant have been conferred upon infants in connection with an outward and visible sign. As in Adam a perfect man was created with all the powers and faculties necessary to his nature, and then the successive generations grew up from the feebleness of infancy, so was it in the Covenant of grace with faithful Abraham. The promise of a Redeemer, after Adam's fall, was made before he was allowed to give birth to any child. All his posterity were therefore included in the promise of redemption through Jesus Christ. Noah and his sons were so included. Abraham himself was so included; and it was only on account of the universal corruption of men, and their voluntary abandonment of their great privileges, in and through the Redeemer, that a limitation was made of these blessings to the Father of the faithful. As he was called in the perfection of his powers and faculties, in a state of grace and not of nature, to be the father, by miraculous agency, of the child of promise, so was that child and all subsequent generations derived from him to be made partakers of the Covenant of grace on the eighth day after their natural birth.

The change of the outward and visible sign made no difference as to the inward and spiritual grace which it signified. Every Christian parent or sponsor, presenting his child for Baptism, is a Father of the faithful circumcising the child of promise with the circumcision made without hands, (Col. ii. 11, 12.) It is the solemn act by which the Holy Ghost, as the vicegerent of the One Mediator, receives into the One Mystical body of Christ a newborn member. As all bloody rites were abolished on the cross, it is not now necessary to wait even till the eighth day of the natural life. Such at least was the decision of the third Council of Carthage, under St. Cyprian, about A. D. 253; not, as it has been incautiously represented, a decision that infants should be baptized, for of that the Ancient Church never doubted; but whether in the new sign it was necessary to be governed by the law of the
ancient circumcision. St. Cyprian and his colleagues unanimously decided "that the grace and mercy of God were to be denied to none who should come into the world. For since the Lord saith in his gospel, 'the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them,' (St. Luke, ix. 56,) as far as in us lies, if it can be done, no soul must be lost. For what is wanting to him who hath once been formed in the womb by the hands of God? To us indeed and to our eyes, they who are born seem to receive their increase according to the course of secular times. Whereas, whatsoever things are made by God, are perfected by the majesty and work of God the Creator." The Baptism of infants before they have done good or evil, is the incipient Absolution; the pardon of that sin under which they were born by descent from Adam; the justification by faith before the performance of any works. The postponement of Baptism indicates a want of faith in the parents and guardians of children, in direct violation of their duty to God: and so, it is an act of sin, for which they must account hereafter at the dreadful day of judgment.

I enter not into the question of adult Baptism, any further than to observe how obviously different it is from that of infants; inasmuch as the adult has committed actual sin. Whether a person lying under the guilt of the primæval curse, and aggravating it immeasurably as he advances in life, is pardoned in Baptism, depends on the reality of his faith and the sincerity of his repentance. The Holy Ghost, the searcher of all hearts, knows, when he asks

*Cyprianus ad Fidum, de infantibus baptizandis. Opera Ed. Erasmi, 1520, p. 82. Ed. Benedict, p. 98. I give the whole passage in the original, to show that the question referred by Fidus to St. Cyprian and the Council was not about infant baptism, but whether infants should be baptized the second or third day after their birth, or invariably on the eighth day. "Quantum vero ad causam infantium puritum, quos dixisti intra secundum vel tertium diem quoniam sunt constitutos baptizari non oportere, et considerandum legem esse circumcisionis antiquae, ut intra octavum diem eum qui natus est, baptizandum et sanctificandum non putares, longe alium in concilio nostro omnibus visum est. In hoc enim quod tu putabas esse faciendum nemo consensit, sed universi potius judicavimus nulli hominum nato misericordiam Dei et gratiam denegandum. Nam cum Dominus in evangelio suo dicit: 'Filius hominis non venit animas hominum perdere sed salvare,' quantum in nobis est, si fieri potest nulla anima perdenda est. Quid enim et deest, qui semel in utero Dei manus formatum est? Nobis enim atque oculis nostris, secundum dierum secularum cursum, accipere qui nati sunt incrementum videntur. Cæterum quocumque a Deo sunt, Dei factoris majestate et opere perfecta sunt." This is the text of Erasmus. It differs not in sense from that of the Benedictines, but of the two seems to me preferable.
for Baptism, whether he is inwardly moved by right motives or whether, by the hypocritical pretence of such motives, he only thereby increases his condemnation. The Christian minister, who confers the outward and visible sign, is the agent for that purpose of the Holy Ghost; but the inward and spiritual grace is given by the Holy Ghost himself. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all," (1 Cor. xii. 2-6.) A child of the Devil, like Simon the Sorcerer, may be so quickened by the instrumentality of the Word, and the preaching of Christ by his ministers, as to believe and be baptized, and continue with the Christian minister, and wonder when he beholds the power of God. (Acts. viii. 4-13.) It is not for us to limit by our crude conceptions and theories, the power of the Holy Ghost even over such a being. Simon was admitted by the sign and seal of Baptism into the outward and visible Church, the ONE MYSTICAL BODY of Christ. As such, though his "heart" was "not right in the sight of God," he was required to "repent of" his "wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of" his "heart" might "be forgiven" him. Such language would not have been used before his Baptism. He could not "repent" without the Holy Ghost. He could not "pray," so that his sin might be forgiven, without the Holy Ghost. Though perceived to be still "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity," his whole life was given him for repentance; and doubtless the Church, as he requested, prayed to the Lord for him that he might be forgiven. This is the worst aspect in which a case of adult Baptism can be considered. It belongs only to the Omniscient Spirit to judge; and except in such sins as "are open beforehand, going before to judgment," (1 Tim. v. 24,) the Church at the close of the life on earth of every baptized adult, commits his body to the ground in sure and certain hope of resurrection at the last day. It is the reference of judgment to Him who alone can judge in each particular case. The Church on earth presumes not so to judge, but only expresses her faith that they who sleep in Jesus will be raised like unto him. In the Baptism of infants the soul is so newly from the hands of its Almighty Creator, that the great Adversary of souls has not had time or opportunity to take it captive before it is put under the protection of
covenant mercy. In the Baptism of adults, the soul has been soiled by unnumbered sins and become the captive of Satan. In this condition it hears the blessed tidings of salvation through the merits of Him who hath led captive its captivity. The Lord opens it to attend to the Word of truth. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Rom. x. 11.) It is taught that the believer who is baptized shall be saved. (St. Mark. xvi. 16.) Alarmed by the sense of sin and misery without Christ, it applies to the minister of Christ and receives the same answer which the repentant Jews received on the day of Pentecost: "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts, ii. 38.) No sins can be remitted to men but by the Holy Ghost; for which reason our Saviour said to his apostles, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." (St. John, xx. 22, 23.) When Jesus was glorified, the Holy Ghost came to abide with the Church forever, (St. John, xiv. 16, 17.;) and this term forever must be explained by our Saviour's own limitation: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (St. Matt. xxviii. 20.) They that believe on Christ shall receive the Spirit, (St. John, vii. 37–39;) but it must be according to the terms which Christ has prescribed, by being baptized into his body. No works done before Baptism can plead for Absolution or justification in the sight of God. They are excluded by the very terms of the Gospel. It is by faith in Christ only, that the awakened sinner can be justified; for this plain reason, that, however excellent a man's works may be in themselves, they do not proceed from that principle of faith in the soul which is the foundation of all good works. He who maintains that the natural man can turn and prepare himself, without the grace of God preventing, is, whatever he may 'call himself, a Pelagian. He is condemned by the Catholic Church; and every one, who, in the language of the Creed, believes "in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life" and "the one Catholic and Apostolic Church," must also "acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins."

As the incipient Absolution or remission of sins in Baptism, is a justification by faith only, so the final Absolution, the final remis-
sion of sins, the final justification by our Lord himself at the last
day, will clearly be a justification by works. "The dead, small
and great, will stand before God and be judged, every man ac-
cording to their works." The great Apostle to the Gentiles, who
has dwelt most upon the evangelical doctrine of justification "by
faith without the deeds of the law," (Rom. iii. 28,) maintains with
equal clearness, that, in "the day of wrath and revelation of the
righteous judgment of God," He "will render to every man
according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in
well-doing seek for glory and honour, and immortality, eternal
life; but unto them that are contentious and do not obey the
truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation
and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil," (Rom.
ii. 5-9.)

These truths are so clearly expressed in holy Scripture, and
by ancient Catholic doctors, that an apology would be due from
me for having so long dwelt upon them, if it were not that I wish
to define with perfect precision what seems to me the only space
within which there can be any just room for controversy. The
grand question is, concerning the time allotted to every Christian
to work out his own salvation, and make his calling and election
sure. It is the period between Baptism and Death; and on the
issues of fourscore, or at the most fourscore and ten years, de-
pends the awful question, which the most aged of our race must
consider, whether he is to be eternally happy or eternally miser-
able. At the longest, how short! Yet in the midst of life we
are in death. Though certain and unerring in the decrees of
God, the term of every man's earthly existence is to himself most
uncertain. The night of death cometh when no man can work;
and the Christian must imitate, in the activity of Christian life, the
example of his blessed Lord, in working while it is day. Half
of our race, as is commonly computed, die before their senses are
exercised to discern good from evil. What that point is in each
individual, we are ignorant. The Holy Ghost, the searcher of all
hearts, is not so. He hath applied to the soul of every baptized
infant the merits of the great Atonement; and if that infant dies
without actual sin, he is, by the assurances of God's Word, most
undoubtedly saved. But if the infant lives, and the parents and
sponsors do their duty, he is taught that he has "made a solemn
vow, promise and profession” in Baptism, “to lead a godly and a Christian life;” “to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and be made like unto him;” to “die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness;” continually to mortify all his “evil and corrupt affections;” and to proceed “daily in all virtue and godliness of living.”

Our blessed Lord, circumcised on the eighth day of his mortal life, and on the faith of his mother and reputed father, was taken to the Temple at the age of twelve years, according to the practice of the Church which then was, to take upon himself the observance of the Covenant implied in what St. Cyprian called the “ancient circumcision.” It is so with the new circumcision, after the abolition of all bloody rites; the circumcision of the Spirit or of Christ, as St. Paul calls Baptism, in his epistle to the Colossians, (Col. ii. 11. 12; iii. 1-6.)* The child is now baptized on the faith of those who present him for Baptism; but he must afterwards take upon himself the observance of the Covenant; and this he does in Confirmation. It is one of the fundamentals or first “principles of the doctrine of Christ,” laid down by the Apostle in Hebrews, vi. 1, 2. They are six in number: repentance from dead works, faith toward God, the doctrine of bap-tisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” All these fundamentals cluster around Baptism, and are inseparably connected with that Sacrament. After the laying on of hands, the baptismal Covenant is confirmed and ratified. It is a Covenant between the soul of every baptized person and the Holy Ghost; confirmed by the recipient as far as the promise of duties is concerned, and by the Holy Ghost, through the outward and visible agency of His chief minister. If all the fundamentals are there, (and that the Holy Ghost surely knoweth,) there can be no doubt that, in that solemn transaction, the Covenant of Baptism is renewed and ratified. The pardon of past sins, by the very nature of the terms, is confirmed; and the soul of the Christian is invigorated by the Holy Ghost to renew the warfare with the enemies of his salvation, the world, the flesh, and the devil; looking forward to the two fundamentals which are yet future, the “resurrection of the dead” and “eternal judgment.”

*The circumcision “made without hands,” is a Hebraism; just as in Daniel, ii. 34 the “little stone cut out without hands,” to denote the agency of the Holy Ghost.
But the Apostle requires of all Christians, that they leave "the principles of the doctrine of Christ" and "go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation." What, then, is this perfection? It is a figurative term, which he himself has elsewhere explained; a term derived metaphorically from the growth of a human being. As a child grows up from infancy to manhood, so by gradual progression does the true Christian "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ," (2 Pet. iii. 18.) The Apostle reproaches the Hebrews, that when for the time they ought to be teachers, they had need to be taught again these first principles. He compares them to infants, who, on account of their tender age, must be fed with milk, and not with that strong meat which can be inwardly digested only by persons of full age, (Heb. v. 12-14.) So he tells the Corinthians that he has fed them with milk, as being babes in Christ, because they were carnal, and not spiritual; because there were among them envying and strife and schism. (1 Cor. iii. 1-3.) Yet he speaks of some of them as being "perfect." (1. Cor. ii. 6.) And so, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, speaking of that one Body and one Spirit into which we are called at our Baptism, he says of "apostles, and prophets, and evangelists and pastors and teachers," that they are given "for the perfecting of the saints." The ministry appointed by Christ, as agents of the Holy Ghost, is so appointed for the very purpose of bringing men from the infancy of the first principles "unto a perfect man—the stature of the fulness of Christ." It is so appointed, that the members of Christ's body may "be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men," but that they "may in all things grow up into him which is the head," (Ephs. iv. 4-16.) This perfection is not sinless. The greatest saint on earth is not in that sense perfect. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," (1 John, i. 8.) The most mature Christian counts not himself "to have apprehended," but "forgetting those things which are behind," the mere fundamentals of the Christian religion, he presses "toward the mark for the prize of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus." They who are perfect are thus minded. Though they are still on earth, their conversation is in Heaven," (Phil. iii, 13-20.) Such is the manhood in Christ. Such are they who, baptized into his body,
"continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers," (Acts, ii. 41, 42.) They are "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ Jesus," to whom the Apostles have written. They are "the faithful" of the primitive Church, to whom "the Cup of blessing," which the Apostolic ministry blesses, is "the communion of the blood of Christ," and "the bread" which they break, is "the communion of the body of Christ." (1 Cor. x. 16.) They examine themselves, that they may worthily "eat of that bread and drink of that cup," (1 Cor. xi. 28.) With the heart they believe unto righteousness; with the mouth they confess unto salvation, (Rom. x. 10.) It is the confession of Christ before men, (St. Luke, xii. 8.) Self examination to detect even their most hidden sins; repentance, whereby they forsake sin; that living faith which shows itself in works of love; that boldness in the faith which is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; that deep humility which acknowledges that, even when our lives are most holy, we are saved only through the precious death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ; the application of his passion to our souls, by the Holy Ghost, in the Eucharist, for the remission of post-baptismal sins; these are the qualifications and privileges which belong to the maturity of the Christian life. The Sacrament of Baptism, is the Sacrament of Christian infancy; the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, that of Christian manhood. All other acts of the Christian life are subordinate to these. In them, and in them alone, remission of sin is conveyed to the soul of the recipient, by the Holy Ghost. The power of the Christian priest consists only in this: that by a valid ordination he has received, and that exclusively, authority from the Holy Ghost to remit sins in the administration of the Sacraments. He is the agent by whom the Holy Ghost conveys the outward and visible sign; but the Holy Ghost, who presides invisibly over the Church, who has so presided ever since our glorified Lord sent Him as his substitute, and who will continue so to preside until that same Lord shall come again, reserves to himself the conveyance of the inward and spiritual grace. Unhappily, the practice of lay-baptism has been tolerated in the Church, on the ground of the absolute necessity of the incipient Sacrament; but even on the most favourable construction, it must be ratified and confirmed by the Holy Ghost, through the agency
of that chief minister of His, to whom alone the power of ordination is entrusted. As for the other Sacrament, no such toleration has ever existed. None but the Apostolic ministry derived from Christ, through the power of the Holy Ghost, can lawfully administer the Holy Communion. Such is, and ever has been, the judgment of the Catholic Church.

II.

We are now prepared to consider whether the doctrine and practice of the Church of England, is in strict conformity with the judgment of the Church Catholic.

As to Baptism, I need say but little. It is now generally acknowledged and will soon, I trust, be beyond controversy, that she has ever departed, on that subject, from ancient and Catholic faith and usage. At the time of the English Reformation, the practice of infant Baptism was universal. The first Prayer-Book of 1549, and the subsequent prayer-books for nearly a hundred years, until a profane Parliament suppressed the Book of Common Prayer altogether, provided only for the Baptism of Infants; nor till it was restored, restored to the Church of England, when the dead waters of Puritanism had swept over the land, and had had time to produce their apples of Sodom, that an office for the Baptism of Adults was deemed necessary. During the same period the Catechism was included in the Office for Confirmation, and its very construction implied that all the children for whose religious training it was intended, had been baptized before they were capable of being taught what a solemn vow and promise and profession had been made in their names. What is now the Preface in Confirmation, was then only a Rubric assigning the reasons why children should not be confirmed at too early an age. On the accession of James I., and after the Hampton-Court Conference, to meet a reasonable objection of the Puritans, that too little was said in the Catechism about the Sacraments, the Convocation set forth the part which follows the subject of prayer. It was in strict accordance with Catholic faith and ancient usage; and we know not whether to admire most the precision and clearness of its definitions, or the dignified moderation of its language on questions then in controversy. In reply to the question, How many Sacra-
ments hath Christ ordained in His Church? the answer is, "Two only, as generally necessary to Salvation." The word Sacramentum was used among the Latins to denote what is meant in Greek by the word Mystery. Admitting this in its largest signification, and so avoiding a dispute about words, the answer says that Christ ordained two only as generally necessary to salvation. Infants, dying before the commission of actual sin, have been absolved in Baptism, and are undoubtedly saved. Confirmation is the renewal of the Baptismal Covenant; and though sacramental in its character, and probably ordained of Christ during the forty days instruction before he ascended, cannot be considered as necessary to the salvation of those who die in Christ before they have had ability to receive it. Orders may be sacramental, so far as the priesthood are concerned; but surely they are not generally necessary to salvation. Matrimony, instituted in Paradise as a type of the union of Christ with the Church, cannot be considered as generally necessary to salvation; or a life of celibacy would make those who practice, and those who enjoin it, cast-a-ways. I say nothing of extreme unction; for I have yet to learn that it was ordained of Christ; or that persons not so anointed are therefore rejected from God's mercy.

The next answer is a definition of the word Sacrament, as received and taught in the Church of England. What meanest thou by this word Sacrament? "I mean" (that is, every person baptized into Christ, and taught to observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded his Apostles, Matt. xxviii., 20)—every such member of the Church means, "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us; ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof." Baptism and the Lord's Supper are generally necessary to salvation; and are not only the means of receiving the inward and spiritual grace, but are the pledges given by the Holy Ghost, through the agency of His ministers, to all whom He, the searcher of all hearts, knows to be worthy. The doctrine of the Church of England, then, is, that Remission of Sins is conveyed in the two Sacraments; and it considers Confirmation as inseparably connected with Baptism, and therefore not an independent Sacrament. It is the end of Christian infancy, and the beginning of Christian manhood. In writing to a Bishop
of our Church, I do not think it necessary to enter into any defense of these positions. To any one who carefully examines the history of the English Reformation, they must all be apparent; and to that I proceed, in order to show that the Church of England allows no Absolution, separated from the Sacraments.

The Prayer-Book of 1549 expressed the mature and unbiased judgment of the English Reformers. It contained an Order for daily service, morning and evening, throughout the year. It was to be used in every congregation, chiefly for the edification of the clergy and for the purpose of having the Bible read through, "that the people (by daily hearing of holy Scripture read in the Church) should continually profit more and more in the knowledge of God, and be the more inflamed with the love of his true religion." The Litany was appointed to be used "upon Wednesdays and Fridays"—"in all places." The Office for the Holy Communion was used in Cathedral Churches and other places daily, and was appointed to be used in all parish Churches, upon all Sundays and Holy Days throughout the year. But it must be distinctly observed that in the morning and evening services throughout the year, to be attended by all, indiscriminately, there was no form of general confession or absolution. Such forms were appointed no where, excepting in the ministration of the Holy Communion. This I have said was the mature and unbiased judgment of the English Reformers. Unhappily, in the political condition of Europe at that time, the English statesmen wished for a closer union with the Protestant princes of Germany, which they thought might be effected by concessions to the foreign Reformers. This produced the Prayer-Book of 1552. The concessions were not to Calvin; for he was then a young man, just beginning to be known in England; and the little regard paid to him occasioned his petulant and peevish behaviour with regard to the English Reformation. Bucer and Martyr were the foreigners who, next to Melancthon, were held in greatest estimation in England. Both were men of great learning and moderation; but their influence led to changes which in many cases were far from improvements. They detracted from the fervour of the first Prayer-Book. They introduced into a book of devotions too much of the formalism of preaching, and too much of exhortation. Still, the texts of Scripture, and the exhortations with which the morning and evening services were now
commenced, were admirable in their kind; "the General Confession to be said of the whole congregation," was wisely adapted, by its lowly language, to produce a contrite spirit; and what was called the Absolution, stated clearly that all pardon comes from God, and can be obtained only on the conditions of the Gospel Covenant. I say what was called an Absolution; for it was only what the American Prayer-Book correctly calls it, "the declaration of Absolution or Remission of Sins." The true authoritative act of Absolution to be pronounced by the Bishop only when present, and by every priest only in his absence, was still connected inseparably with the Holy Communion. For any adult Christians to neglect the Communion was declared to be an offence against God, by which they perilled their own salvation. Without it there could be no remission of post-baptismal sin.

In the prayer-book of 1549 it was ordered that, "if the people be not exhorted," (in the sermon, which was always a part of the Communion Service,) "to the worthy receiving of the Holy Sacrament of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ," the Curate should use the exhortation specially provided "to those who were minded to receive the same." As it differed somewhat from the exhortation as now used, and its language clearly showed the mind of the Reformers on the efficacy of the Sacrament when worthily or unworthily received, I may be permitted to insert some extracts here:

"Dearly beloved in the Lord, ye that mind to come to the Holy Communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, must consider what St. Paul writeth to the Corinthians, how he exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves before they presume to eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a truly penitent heart and lively faith, we receive that Holy Sacrament, (for then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, we be made one with Christ and Christ with us;) so is the danger great if we receive the same unworthily. For then we become guilty of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour; we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord's body; we kindle God's wrath over us; we provoke Him to plague us with divers diseases and sundry kinds of death."
Therefore if any here be a blasphemer, adventurer, or be in malice, or envy, or in any other grievous crime, (except he be truly sorry therefor, and earnestly minded to leave the same vices, and do trust himself to be reconciled to Almighty God, and in charity with all the world,) let him bewail his sins, and not come to that holy table, lest after the taking of that most blessed bread, the devil enter into him, as he did into Judas, to fill him full of all iniquity and bring him to destruction, both of body and soul.

"Judge therefore yourselves, (brethren,) that ye be not judged of the Lord. Let your mind be without desire to sin; repent you truly for your sins past; have an earnest and lively faith in Christ our Saviour; be in perfect charity with all men; so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy mysteries. And above all things," &c., to "everlasting life," as now used. It then proceeded thus: "And to the end that we should alway remember the exceeding love of our Master and only Saviour, Jesu Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which (by his precious blood-shedding) he hath obtained to us, he hath left in those holy Mysteries, as a pledge of his love, and a continual remembrance of the same, his own blessed body, and precious blood, for us to feed upon spiritually, to our endless comfort and consolation. To Him, therefore, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, let us give," &c. . . . . "in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. Amen."

So averse were our Reformers to long exhortations, that in case there had been a sermon or homily, or portion of one of the homilies in which the people had been exhorted to receive worthily, it might be omitted. In Cathedral Churches and other places where there was daily Communion, it was sufficient to use it, doubtless under the same alternative, once a month. In Parish Churches, where the Communion was on Sundays and holy days only, it might be left unsaid upon the week days. But in case the people neglected to come to Communion on Sundays and holy days, the priest was ordered earnestly to exhort his parishioners in "these or like words." That is, he might, if he pleased, exhort them in a sermon, or homily of like import, if he preferred it.

"Dear friends, and you especially upon whose souls I have care and charge, on next, I do intend, by God's grace, to offer to all such as shall be godly disposed, the most comfortable Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, to be taken of them in
the remembrance of his most fruitful and glorious Passion: by the which passion we have obtained remission of our sins, and be made partakers of the kingdom of Heaven; whereof we be assured and ascertained, if we come to the said Sacrament with hearty repentance for our offences, steadfast faith in God's mercy, and earnest mind to obey God's will and to offend no more. Wherefore our duty is to come to these holy mysteries with most hearty thanks to be given to Almighty God, for his infinite mercy and benefits given and bestowed upon us his unworthy servants, for whom he hath not only given his body to death, and shed his blood, but also doth vouchsafe, in a Sacrament and Mystery, to give us his said body and blood to feed upon spiritually. The which Sacrament being so Divine and holy a thing, and so comfortable to them who receive it worthily, and so dangerous to them who will presume to take the same unworthily: My duty is, to exhort you, in the mean season, to consider the greatness of the thing, and to search and examine your own consciences, and that not lightly nor after the manner of dissimulators with God; but as they which should come to a most godly and heavenly Banquet; not to come but in the marriage garment required of God in Scripture that you may (so much as lieth in you) be found worthy to come to such a table. The way and means thereto is:

"First, that you be truly repentant of your former evil life; and that you confess with an unfeigned heart to Almighty God, your sins and unkindness towards his Majesty committed, either by will, word, or deed, infirmity or ignorance; and that with inward sorrow and tears, you bewail your offences, and require of Almighty God mercy and pardon, promising to him (from the bottom of your hearts) the amendment of your former life. And amongst all others, I am commanded of God especially to move and exhort you, to reconcile yourselves to your neighbour, whom you have offended, or who hath offended you, putting out of your hearts all hatred and malice against them, and to be in love and charity with all the world, and to forgive other, as you would that God should forgive you.

"And if any man have done wrong to any other, let him make satisfaction, and due restitution of all lands and goods, wrongfully taken away or withheld, before he comes to God's board; or at least, be in full mind and purpose so to do, as soon as he is able; or else let him not come to this holy table, thinking to deceive
God, who seeth all men's hearts. For neither the absolution of the priest can anything avail them, nor the receiving of this holy Sacrament doth anything but increase their damnation. And if there be any of you whose conscience is troubled and grieved in anything, lacking comfort or counsel, let him come to me," (his own spiritual guide,) "or to some other discreet and learned priest, taught in the law of God, and confess and open his sin and grief secretly, that he may receive such ghostly counsel, advice and comfort, that his conscience may be relieved, and that of us, (as of the Ministers of God and of the Church,) lie may receive comfort and Absolution, to the satisfaction of his mind and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness; requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession, not to be offended with them that do use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret confession to the Priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins to the Priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to God, and the general confession to the Church. But in all things to follow and keep the rule of charity; and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences; where-as he hath no command of God's word to the same."

Peter Martyr "confessed that we truly or really receive the body and blood of Christ in this Holy Sacrament," and that "the Holy Spirit operates effectually in" both "the Sacraments, by virtue of our Saviour's institution." So also did Bucer; and he admitted that there was nothing in the first Liturgy which did not agree with the Word of God, or at least nothing contrary to it. He also agreed with the English Reformers as to the need of restoring frequent Communion.* If so, where was the necessity of changing the first Office? Innovations, even for the better, are apt to produce discontent, especially among those who feel more than they reason; and a change in three years in the Prayer-Book, would seem to argue instability and error, just as the changes in the Roman Bible from 1590 to 1592 argued against the proud claim of Papal infallibility. In the case of the Prayer-Book, and especially in the Exhortations now given, the change in 1552 was not for the better. But as an apology for the English Reformers,

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must be added, what could not be said of the Popes Sixtus V. and Clement VIII., that they had to contend on every side with great difficulties. The people, under the long influence of Latin services and Mediaeval corruptions, were grossly ignorant. Though the Clergy retained the primitive practice of daily Communion, it had, in Parish Churches, degenerated into a solitary Mass. The laity were suffered to neglect the Communion excepting at Easter, and were willing to be excused from the Cup, which they loathed, because they were taught that the priest had changed it into natural blood. The Eucharist was considered as a piacular sacrifice; though all such sacrifice had been terminated forever on the Cross. The laity had been taught that one such sacrifice, once a year, was sufficient for them, and a fictitious Sacrament of Penance had been substituted instead of that “sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving” which commemorated the great sin offering, and constantly applied its blessings to the penitent soul.

Yet with wonderful wisdom all these abuses were guarded against, and the opposite truths maintained in the two short exhortations of which I have given the substance. In the first, as being addressed to those who are already “minded to receive the Holy Sacrament of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ,” the people are cautioned and warned “diligently to try and examine themselves,” and not to come unless they are “truly sorry” for their sins, “do trust yourselves to be reconciled to God,” which they cannot be unless they leave their sins, and have “that earnest and lively faith in Christ” which worketh by love. In the latter, addressed to those who neglect to come every Sunday and holy day to the Communion, they are told that although the “most fruitful and glorious passion” of Christ has already obtained re- mission of sins even for the most guilty, yet is the constant remembrance of it in the Sacrament, necessary to assure and ascertain it to the penitent, faithful and obedient soul. They are required to “confess with an unfeigned heart to Almighty God;” to “require of Him mercy and pardon;” to “promise Him from the bottom of their hearts, the amendment of their former life; of sins committed by will, word or deed, infirmity or ignorance.” They are told, that unless they redress the wrongs done to others, “NEITHER THE ABSOLUTION OF THE PRIEST,” nor the receiving of the Holy Sacrament can avail aught before God, who
seeth all men's hearts. If, then, in the secret examination of themselves, their consciences are so troubled that they need comfort or counsel, it is recommended to them to confess and open their sin and grief secretly to some discreet and learned priest, taught in the law of God, that by his spiritual counsel, advice and comfort, their consciences might be relieved. They are then required to follow and keep the rule of charity with regard to other men's consciences. Those who were "satisfied with a general confession" should not be offended with them who prefer "the auricular and secret confession to the Priest;" nor should "those who for the quieting of their own consciences think it needful or suitable, particularly to open their sins to the priest, be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble Confession to God, and the general Confession to the Church." When it is recollected that in the prayer-book of 1549, there was no other general Confession but that of the Communion Service, it will be seen that "the comfort and absolution to be received of the ministers of God and of the Church," is the comfort and absolution which follows the general Confession to the Church at the Holy Communion. This, in the first Liturgy, followed the consecration of the elements, and immediately preceded the receiving and delivery of the mystical body and blood.

III.

If these exhortations had been continued, as they came from the Convocation of 1548, even to the present time, they would, I think, have prevented many subsequent evils, and especially all dispute concerning the limits of Auricular Confession. Yet with all the changes occasioned by the fluctuations of the English Government, and introduced from 1552 to 1662, the Church of England adhered in fact to the great principle that Absolution is inseparably connected with the administration of Baptism and the Holy Communion; and notwithstanding her subsequent trials, she has ever retained it, even to this day. The first violation of this great principle, as far as the Holy Communion is concerned, I am obliged to confess, with shame and sorrow, was committed after the American Revolution, and on this side of the Atlantic. The Book, proposed by the seven States south of New England, in their Convention of 1785, however great and cen-
surable were its innovations, has the merit of more carefully distinguishing this great principle; for in the order for daily morning and evening prayer, it called the Absolution of 1552, what it was in reality, a declaration concerning the forgiveness of sins; while it confined to the Communion Office, and ordered to be said by the Bishop, if present, the true Absolution of 1549. It was reserved for the Convention of September and October, 1789, to violate the great principle of which I speak. The prayer-book of 1789, for the first time in the annals of the Catholic Church, degraded the true Absolution by making it a substitute for that which it rightly termed only a "declaration of Absolution." It is allowed to be used to a promiscuous congregation, baptized or unbaptized, many of whom may be notorious evil-livers, and others, who are not grossly immoral, negligent of their Christian duties, turning perpetually from the Lord's Table, and even to their dying day out of Communion, if not out of the Church, and living without the appointed means of grace and salvation. Is it to be wondered at that the Laity should set no value upon such Absolution? or that the Clergy should come to regard it as a lifeless form? I have myself heard a priest pronounce this solemn Absolution to a mixed congregation, while his Bishop was sitting at the altar, and afterwards heard the Bishop pronounce to the Communicants that same Absolution, because to them it was unlawful for the priest in his presence to utter it. Every one who considers Absolution as a reality, will see at once the inconsistency of such a violation with the fundamental principles of the Church. How then could it have been committed at a Convention where Bishop Seabury and the Clergy of Connecticut had a voice? To answer this question, and to exonerate the Bishop and Clergy of Connecticut, we must go as briefly as possible into the history of the violation.

The remote cause of all the changes in the American Prayer-Book was the political condition of England after the Revolution of 1688, and the accession of the House of Hanover in 1715. The violent suppression of the Convocation in 1717, made the Church subservient to the State, and threw all power in matters Ecclesiastical, into the hands of a lay Parliament. The voices of the Bishops in the House of Lords were too few and feeble to have much influence. They became timid and desponding. A general coldness and torpor came over the Church which extend-
ed itself to those Colonies in which the Church of England was by law established, or where at least it was favoured by the civil government. It was not so in New England. That province of the British crown had local Legislatures independent of the British Parliament, and an established religion of its own which ruled over its civil authorities with a rod of iron. This establishment, while it affected to have no other king but Jesus, tore from his sacred head the crown of his sovereignty. It took the crook from the hand of the good Shepherd, and gave innumerable little crooks to the sheep. In its own way it exercised as despotic an inquisition as Rome. It fined and imprisoned, and often treated with still greater barbarities, all whose consciences would not permit them to walk according to its rule. What worldly motive had our clergy and laity to believe in Episcopacy as giving sanction and validity to the Sacraments? Their own miserable condition led them to look back upon the suffering primitive Church before the days of Constantine, and to sympathize with the Catholic remainder of the Church of Scotland, situated like themselves under the ban of a corrupt civil establishment. The moment their consciences were relieved by a separation from the crown of England, and by the bill of rights of the American Revolution, which undermined the tyranny of the New England religious establishment, they took measures to obtain the Episcopate. They considered all attempts to organize the Church and revise the Prayer-Book, as irregular, without Episcopal authority. The great desire of their hearts was accomplished on the fourteenth of November, 1784, by the consecration of the Right Reverend Dr. Samuel Seabury. He was received by his clergy at Middletown early in the following year, and what had before been only a voluntary Convention was now resolved into a Convocation: a term which implies the necessity of being convoked by Episcopal authority. Connecticut was now a Church in the primitive sense of the term, entirely independent of all foreign aid, and having the approbation and support of the clergy generally in the other New England States. All looked with alarm upon the proceedings of their Southern brethren. Not the least trace of union with them existed for five years.* So little hope

* The Report of a General Ecclesiastical Constitution (Bioren, p. 3,) speaks of a meeting of Clerical and Lay Deputies, in New York, in October, 1784, in which the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut were in-
was there of union from the temper displayed in the Convention of the seven States, in June 1786,* that the Clergy of Connecticut elected the Rev. Messrs. Hubbard and Jarvis to proceed to Scotland for Consecration; and it was confidently expected that a like measure would be taken in Massachusetts. In that case, New England would have been a Province by itself, and so would have acted independently, with a complete organization. In Connecticut the order of morning and evening prayer, and the Litany of the Church of England, were continued as in 1662 without the state prayers; but the Bishop in Convocation set forth a Communion Service, modelled on that of 1549, which became then the Liturgy of the Diocese. This took place in 1786.

The amiable and conciliatory conduct of Bishop White prevented this rupture. A movement of the clergy of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, in a like spirit of amity, inviting the Bishops of Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania to unite in consecrating the Rev. Edward Bass as their Bishop, opened the door of reconciliation, in July, 1789.† The Convention was adjourned to the 29th of September in that year, to give opportunity for the New England States to act. The Clergy of Connecticut appointed as their Proctors, the same individuals whom they had before elected for Episcopal Consecration; but they did not give to their Proctors full authority. They reserved to themselves the right of accepting or rejecting the terms of future union. The wisdom of this reservation will now be made manifest by the testimony of one of the Proctors, which has never yet been published, and which I give in his own words. In answer to the eighth in a series of questions proposed to him by Charles James Stuart, Esq., "What alterations from the Church of England in the Liturgy or Common Prayers?" he answered thus: "A comparison of the two books by inspection will discover the alterations more effectually as well as more briefly, than any enumeration which could here be made. The causes of those alterations may not be so easily perceived. In September, 1789, delegates from ten of the

*See the motion made by Mr. (afterwards Bishop) Prevost, of New York, and seconded by Mr. (afterwards Bishop) Smith, of South Carolina.—Biren, p. 21.
† Bioren, p. 49—54.
then thirteen States, consisting of Clergymen and Lay-members of the Church, met at Philadelphia, for the purpose of forming a union. To accomplish this, it was necessary to make some alterations in the Prayer-book, which, as the offspring of the Church of England, the American Church still looked upon as its own. With respect to the extent of the proposed alterations, the Convention was equally divided. The delegates from five of the States, viz: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and New Jersey, were averse from any alterations, except the omission or adaptation of particular prayers in the daily service to the Government of the United States. Of the two Bishops present, (Bishop Seabury and Bishop White,) the former advocated the alteration in the Communion Service and the addition of some occasional prayers; in all other particulars, he strenuously opposed even such as were verbal. Strong impressions that a disunion would work ruin to the American Church, induced that part of the Convention most attached to her interest and sound doctrine, to submit to a compromise, in hopes that at some future day the true friends of the Church would be enabled to correct those defects to which the want of right principle and the fervour for innovation in their opponents had obliged them reluctantly to consent. This may account for all the departures from the English Prayer-book, and for the latitude given in many rubrics to the officiating minister, which laid the foundation of diversity in the use of the Liturgy."

I forbear to enter into any additional illustration of these changes by verbal testimony often received from the same source, except to state the remarkable fact, that notwithstanding all the prejudices against Bishop Seabury which existed in the minds of some of the deputies, principally of the Laity, from the States of Pennsylvania, Virginia and South Carolina, all the alterations which he specially advocated were passed without a dissenting voice. I look with devout thankfulness to God, that the Prayer of Consecration from the Connecticut Liturgy, modelled as I have said on that of 1549, was admitted without opposition and in silence, if not in reverence. In common with the Clergy and Laity of the five Northern States, the Bishop lamented the exclusion of the Athanasian Creed, the displacement of the Nicene, as the Creed of Communion, and the false views of Absolution which broke down the distinction between Communicants and Non-com-
municants; but he, as well as they, confidently looked forward to the rising of a better day, when these defects might be corrected. That day may not yet have arrived; but Church principles have ever since been steadily advancing in their influence; and if kept within their proper bounds, by the increase of correct learning among our Clergy, and the diffusion of a more fervent and devout spirit among our Laity, they will finally be shed abroad in every portion of our land.

IV.

Connecticut suffered much for the sake of union; but the Bishop and her Clerical Proctors, on their return from the Convention of 1789, did all in their power to reconcile the Clergy and people to the use of the New Prayer Book. With the exception of Stratford, where the influence of Dr. Johnson's memory was still powerful, they finally succeeded. At a Convocation of the Clergy held at Newtown, the last of September, 1790, "on the question being put, 'whether we confirm the doings of our Proctors in the General Convention at Philadelphia, on the 2d day of October, 1789?' it passed in the affirmative," by the votes of every member present, one only excepted, who entered his protest and left the Convocation. This was the Clergyman of Stratford. It occasioned some trouble; but by the mild and conciliatory measures of the Bishop and Clergy, the schism was soon healed. The Convocation left it to the prudence of each member to introduce the New Book among his parishioners; and it was solemnly "agreed, that in the use of the new Prayer Book, we be as uniform as possible, and for that purpose that we approach as near the Old Liturgy, as a compliance with the Rubrics of the New will allow." Thus did the Bishop and Clergy of Connecticut, in Convocation assembled, and in the very Act by which they received the New Prayer Book, establish as a fundamental rule of uniformity, that in all the rubrics which allowed a diversity of practice, the Old or English Prayer Book should constitute the usage or observance of this Diocese. That act of Convocation has never been rescinded to this day, and I trust never will be rescinded. It follows, therefore, that Connecticut has never approved the use of the proper Absolution, excepting to persons who are in full communion with the Church.
V.

I might now proceed to show, from the published writings of Bishop Seabury, his views on the necessity of the two Sacraments for the remission of sins. His discourses on the Authority of Christ's Ministers, their duties, and the duties of the people towards them; those on the Apostolical Commission, on Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Eucharist; and that on Christian Unity, now circulated as a tract among the Christians of the East; all express fully those Catholic truths of the primitive Church, which the English Martyrs had embodied in the Prayer-Book of 1549. I shall content myself with a single extract, which very briefly and happily discriminates the Catholic faith from all sectarian views of the Eucharist, and points out the benefits it conveys to the worthy communicant.

"There is therefore, in this holy institution, no ground for the errors of transubstantiation, consubstantiation, or the bodily presence of Christ, with which the Church of Rome, Luther and Calvin, have deceived, beguiled, and perplexed the Church. The bread and wine are, in their nature, still bread and wine.—They are not transubstantiated into the natural body and blood of Christ, as the Papists teach.—The natural body and blood of Christ are not consubstantiated with them, so as to make one substance, as the Lutherans teach.—Nor are the natural body and blood of Christ infused into them, nor hovering over them, so as to be confusedly received with them, as Calvin and his followers seem to teach; for they are far from being intelligible on the subject. The natural body and blood of Christ are in heaven, in glory and exaltation.—We receive them not in the Communion, in any sense. The bread and wine are his body and blood, sacramentally and by representation. And, as it is an established maxim, that all who, under the law, did eat of the sacrifice with those qualifications which the sacrifice required, were partakers of its benefits; so all who, under the gospel, eat of the Christian sacrifice of bread and wine, with those qualifications which the holy solemnity requires, are made partakers of all the benefits and blessings of that sacrifice of his natural body and blood, which Christ Jesus made, when, under the symbols of bread and wine, he offered them to God, a propitiation for the sin of the world.

"I am not sensible that, in this explanation of the mystery of the Eucharist, I have departed from the letter, or sense, or spirit of the Holy Scripture: and, in support of it, I appeal to the early writers, and first liturgies of the Christian Church. It cannot be supposed, that those early writers were ignorant of the doctrines and practice of the Church in their own time; or that they would wilfully misrepresent them. Nor could they be ignorant of the
doctrines and practice of the Apostles: at least, they had better and surer means of information than we can have, especially if we disregard their testimony. For, they had the same Gospels and Apostolical writings that we have: they understood the language in which they were written, and the manners and customs of the age, better than we do: and, the tradition of Apostolical practice passed but few hands, before it came to them.

"The first liturgies may be supposed to have been corrupted by the interpolation of some of the errors of subsequent times. Should this be granted, it will not follow that no credit is due to them. It will not be difficult, by comparing them together, to detect those interpolations and errors: and of this we may be sure, that those principles in which they all agree (differing only in expression) must be the remains of Apostolical Antiquity.

"By attending to these, we shall not only see the order and process of the consecration of the holy elements, but also the principles on which their practice was founded—

"At the time of the celebration, the officiating Bishop, or Priest, first gave thanks to God for all his mercies, especially for those of creation and redemption. Then, to show the authority by which he acts, and his obedience to the command of Christ, he recites the institution of the Holy Sacrament which he is celebrating, as the Holy Evangelists have recorded it. In doing this, he takes the bread into his hands and breaks it, to represent the dead body of Christ, torn and pierced on the cross; the cup, also, of wine and water mixed, representing the blood and water which flowed from the dead body of Christ, when wounded by the soldier's spear. Over the bread and the cup he repeats Christ's powerful words, This is my Body—This is My Blood. The elements being thus made authoritative representations, or symbols of Christ's crucified body and blood, are in a proper capacity to be offered to God as the great and acceptable sacrifice of the Christian Church. Accordingly, the Oblation, which is the highest, most solemn, and proper act of Christian worship, is then immediately made. Continuing his prayer, the Priest intercedes with the Almighty Father, to send upon them (the bread and wine) the Holy Spirit, to sanctify and bless them, and make the bread the body, and the cup the blood, of Christ—his spiritual life-giving body and blood in power and virtue; that, to all the faithful, they may be effectual to all spiritual purposes. Nor does he cease his prayer and oblation, till he has interceded for the whole Catholic Church, and all the members of it—Concluding all in the name and through the merit of Jesus Christ the Saviour.

"The Eucharist being, as its name imports, a sacrifice of thanksgiving, the bread and wine, after they have been offered or given to God, and blessed and sanctified by his Holy Spirit, are returned by the hand of his Minister to be eaten by the faithful, as a Feast upon the Sacrifice—the Priest first partaking of them himself, and then distributing them to the Communicants; to denote
their being at peace and in favour with God, being thus fed at his table, and eating of his food; and also to convey to the worthy receivers all the benefits and blessings of Christ’s natural body and blood, which were offered and slain for their redemption.

“For this reason, the Eucharist is also called the Communion of the body and blood of Christ; not only because, by communicating together, we declare our mutual love and good will, and our unity in the Church and faith of Christ; but also, because, in that holy ordinance, we communicate with God through Christ the Mediator, by first offering, or giving to him the sacred symbols of the body and blood of his dear Son, and then receiving them again, blessed and sanctified by his Holy Spirit, to feast upon at his table, for the refreshment of our souls; for the increase of our faith and hope; for the pardon of our sins; for the renewing of our minds in holiness, by the operation of the holy Ghost; and for a principle of immortality to our bodies, as well as to our souls.

“From this consideration, the necessity of frequently communicating in the Holy Eucharist evidently appears. It is the highest act of Christian worship; a direct acknowledgment of God’s sovereignty and dominion over us, and over all his creatures. It is the memorial of the passion and death of our dear Redeemer, made before the Almighty Father, to render him propitious to us, by pleading with him the meritorious sufferings of his beloved Son, when he made his soul an offering for sin. It is a sensible pledge of God’s love to us, who, as he hath given his Son to die for us, so hath he given his precious body and blood, in the Holy Eucharist, to be our spiritual food and sustenance: And as the bread of this world, frequently taken, is necessary to keep the body in health and vigour; so is this bread of God, frequently received, necessary to preserve the soul in spiritual health, and keep the divine life of faith and holiness from becoming extinct in us.”—Seabury’s Discourses, Svo., 1793, Vol. 1, pp. 179–183.

Bishop Seabury had no Cathedral, like the stately pile which now covers his remains;* nor had he a body of clergymen at the altar with whom he could renew the primitive and apostolic practice which he commends, of daily Communion. [See Disc. I., Part I., p. 13.] Such observances require endowments; and his deep poverty, (for he was obliged to support himself by his consummate skill as a surgeon and physician,)—his deep poverty and the humbler duties and labours of a parish priest, would not permit more than Sunday Communion. In this he continued steadfast to his

* The remains of Bishop Seabury were transferred, on the 12th of last September, to the crypt beneath the Chancel of the new and beautiful Church of St. James in New London. The Bishop’s monument, which is an Altar-tomb, in a canopied niche, stands immediately above, in the Chancel, on the right side of the Altar, and without the rails.
dying day, labouring to excite in his parish and in his Diocese that sense of the importance of frequent Communion, which it was a prime object of the English Reformation to revive. If he failed, it must be ascribed to the infelicity of the times, and the deep-seated prejudices and false views of the nature and importance of the Sacraments which pervade New England. Speaking of those false views, he observes:

"There seems to be an opinion prevailing with many, which, probably, prevents their compliance with the institutions of religion, more than any thing else—namely: That, while they refrain, they may freely indulge themselves in many things, which would be inconsistent with the obligations which those institutions imply. But, in this opinion, several mistakes or false suppositions are contained. It supposes that a man may live innocently, and be good enough, though he live in constant disobedience to God. It supposes, also, that a compliance with the ordinances of religion lays new duties upon him, or makes that unlawful for him, which before was not so, and those practices sinful which before were innocent. But neither of these suppositions is true. He that lives in disobedience to God, lives in a state of sin: For sin is neither more nor less than disobedience to God. And, with regard to the other supposition—Though it be acknowledged that the ordinances of religion furnish new motives for doing our duty, and supply new strength to perform it; yet our compliance with them increases neither the number nor magnitude of our duties. What can be done consistently with a good conscience, may always be done; and what cannot be so done, ought never to be done, whether we comply with the ordinances of religion or not. For instance; it is a man's duty to renounce the devil and his works, the world and its wicked tempers, and the evil appetites and passions of his nature, whether he be baptized or not.

"Another false supposition contained in the above opinion is, that the ordinances of religion are mere arbitrary institutions, of no value in themselves, but merely to show God's sovereign power over us. That they are arbitrary institutions, in this sense, (that they depend entirely on the will of God; and that, for any thing we know, he might have omitted these, and have appointed others) is readily granted. It is also acknowledged, that had he not appointed them, there would have been no virtue nor goodness in them. But, it is denied, that they are instances of his sovereignty intended to increase the burden of our duty, or to render more strait the narrow way that leadeth unto life. They are intended to be privileges and blessings to us—to put us in that narrow way, and to keep us in it—to make it more plain and easy to us; and to strengthen and refresh us in our progress in it. He that refuseth them, refuseth his own good, and turns away from blessings which God holds out to him.
“That it is a privilege to be admitted into God's family, and made one of his children, and an heir of the heavenly inheritance, no one, who has seriousness to think about it, can doubt. This privilege we obtain by Baptism. The wilful rejection of Baptism, therefore, put into plain language, is—I will not be one of God's family, nor one of his children—I like this world and its enjoyments, which religion marks as extravagant, too well to give them up; and, I find too much gratification in my appetites and passions, to put them under restraint. And as to the works of the devil, they have a bad name, it is true, but I see no great harm in them.—In short, let them seek for a heavenly inheritance who choose it. This world, and the life it inspires, is enough for me; and I am determined to enjoy as much of it as I can.”—


I have added these remarks of that clear-minded and great writer, because they are as applicable now as they were then. We cannot get rid of our responsibilities. They are inseparable from our being. Every man has a soul to save, or a soul to lose. If saved, it must be reconciled to God. If the Sacraments are necessary to salvation, or reconciliation with God, it is an awful inquiry, How are we to prepare for them? And upon that question I now enter.

VI.

That our children should be baptized as soon as possible after their natural birth; that they should be trained to know what a solemn vow, promise and profession was then made; that they should be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed, as soon as they know what is necessary for their souls' health; that they should come to Communion before they go out into the world, as a safeguard against its follies, temptations and crimes; are truths which no right-minded member of our Church will question. The only cases of conscience concerning which there can be any doubt in the minds of faithful, earnest men, relate to Confession. The general duty is clear. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." Before the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity, even Seraphs veil their faces, and His angels he chargeth with folly. The greatest saint upon earth is a sinner saved only by the blood of Christ. To be more and more conscious of sin, and more and more penitent for it, is an evidence to our own souls of their increased vitality in the Christian life. Let a man
examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup which are the Communion of the body and blood of Christ. The just or righteous man lives by his faith; and no one can properly be called faithful, who does not receive the outward and visible sign of Christ’s death and passion, that he may receive from the Holy Ghost the inward and spiritual grace. For our encouragement the gracious promise is given, “If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” He is faithful; for what He hath promised, He will surely keep and perform. He is just; for to all who keep the conditions He impose, He conveys the Remission of sins past, and more grace to help in future time of need. The oftener this confession is made, the better. It ought especially to be made every night, before sleep, which constantly prefigures death, refreshes the care-worn body and anxious soul, for the resurrection of a new day. At that hour of stillness and seclusion, the faithful penitent, with prostrate body and uplifted soul, pours forth the language of confession and prayer. No eye seeth him but that which saw his substance yet being imperfect, and hath known every thought and word and deed, from infancy through his past life. The appalling consciousness of this knowledge is tempered by the conviction that “God is love.” If his heart, in these secret searchings, condemns him, God is greater than his heart and knoweth all things; if his heart condemn him not, he has confidence in God. On the morrow it may be, the Holy Ghost, by his minister, will present to him the outward and visible sign of absolution and reconciliation, peace with God, and good will towards men. If he receives it unworthily, he eateth and drinketh condemnation, not pardon; if worthily, it is the body and blood of Christ, freely given for the redemption and sanctification of his soul and body. Oh, with what earnestness will he prepare for that solemn act! So far, he is a priest unto himself; for he is one of that elect generation and Royal Priesthood who are one with Christ, and Christ with them. Such an one is prepared for that General Confession, publicly made to God and his Church, which precedes the Absolution which the Bishop, or in his absence the Priest, is authorized to pronounce in connection with the Holy Eucharist.

But there are other Christians, who, in the searchings of heart requisite for this high solemnity, are troubled by doubts and scrup-
ples best known to themselves, whether their souls are in a fit state of preparation for worthy receiving. What are these to do? They do not mend their condition by turning away from the Holy Table. On the contrary, they turn away from the Holy Ghost, who alone can pardon their sins and strengthen them to contend for the mastery in their fearful struggle against the world, the flesh and the Devil. Supposing they had a bodily disorder, undermining their health, and if unchecked, bringing them down by slow yet sure approaches to the gates of death. In such a case, what would be the dictate of common sense? Would they not resort to a medical man in whom they could have confidence, both as to skill and discretion? Unwilling to expose to an unfeeling and pitiless world the infirmities and diseases of which they are conscious, would they not pour into the ears of a physician, with all the minuteness which their case requires, and all the frankness which he would demand, the diagnosis of their malady? Yet, startling as the assertion may appear to those who use words in confined meanings and with narrow associations, this is neither more nor less than auricular confession. By all the rules of honourable intercourse, the physician is bound to inviolable secrecy. Many a limb has been saved, and many a life lengthened by this confidence. And what is to prevent a penitent Christian who wishes to approach the Lord's table, but is troubled with doubts and fears, from pouring his troubles into the ears of an affectionate and pious pastor who is able to give him godly counsel and advice for his soul's health? I am unable to conceive of any defect in this analogy, unless it be that men are more willing to confide in a physician for the benefit of their bodies, than they are to confide in a priest for the benefit of their souls. But let a man be convinced that he has no choice in the matter; that he has to do with men only as the Ministers of God; that he must by Confession lay open his most secret sins before the Holy Ghost, whom he cannot deceive; that he must then come and receive the absolution of them in the Holy Communion: let him once be convinced of all this, and a principle of faith is at work within him, far superior to every other consideration. If he cannot convince himself that in his secret communings with his Maker, he is duly prepared to receive those holy mysteries, he will go to his spiritual physician, whom he himself has chosen as the earthly guardian of his soul, and open his grief. It is the tenderness of a
man's conscience only, which can render auricular confession compulsory. All attempts to enforce it will be ineffectual. Like the fable of the traveller, the sun and the wind, the cloak will be drawn tighter by violence, and voluntarily thrown aside under the warming rays of religious conviction.

VII.

Let us now turn to the Pastoral Letter, and see in what respects it is at variance with the above statements. I am happy to see so many points of agreement, that I despair not of conciliating your approbation, even where we seem most to differ. It would be unbecoming in me, stranger as I am to the questions at issue in the Diocese of North Carolina, to say more than this: that whatever agitation there may be, a recurrence to the simple principle of Absolution, in the two Sacraments generally necessary to salvation, will easily allay it. The names of Ravenscroft and Hobart are dear to your Diocese. Both came up to the same Church principles which have ever been the standard of Connecticut. You quote Bishop Ravenscroft (p. 28, 29) "speaking of the ends of the ministry towards the children of God," as saying "'The first is, the communication of the Gospel to mankind, in order to recover them from the ruin and misery of sin, and from eternal death as its wages. The second is, to transact the conditions of this recovery, receiving the submission of penitent sinners, and by administering to such the divinely instituted pledges of pardon and adoption into the family of God,'" &c. "Instituted pledges of pardon and adoption," says the Bishop; and, I ask, what are these but the two Sacraments? You confess (p. 29) that the Bishop "speaks incidentally" as to the purpose for which you quote him, "not having made priestly absolution the immediate subject of either of the discourses which have been cited." I have not his works to refer to; but I feel confident he would have admitted no priestly absolution to those who neglect the Lord's Supper.

The same remark may be made with regard to all the quotations from Hooker, which occupy nearly sixteen pages of the Pastoral Letter, (32-47.) Hooker is contending against the Papists as well as the Puritans; and he expressly denies the papal doctrine that priestly absolution, connected with repentance and confession, is a separate Sacrament. The constant practice of the English
Church, connecting all pardon of sin with the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, must be our rule in the interpretation of Hooker's words.

You quote Wheatley, also; but I cannot see with what purpose. His words are very pertinent, when Absolution is considered as a grace of the two Sacraments. Neither he nor Hooker ever contended against that voluntary auricular confession which the offices of the Church contemplate; though they did contend against that imperative and universal claim which makes it a condition of salvation.

There is another writer whose sermon you quote with approbation, but who seems to me to confound things essentially different. He speaks (p. 30) of the "Judicial Absolution of the minister, or the power of executing Church discipline;" but that refers to cases of Ecclesiastical censures, where notorious offenders are to be repelled from Communion, until they give evidence satisfactory to God's holy Church that they are truly penitent for their sins. They are then re-admitted to Communion. But this is a subject so entirely distinct from that which we are now considering, that we may well pass it by in silence. The same writer, however, delivers an opinion concerning the "declaration of Absolution" in our daily morning and evening prayer, so utterly at variance with the view I have taken, I think it necessary, especially as you adopt it, to say something more on the subject.

That Absolution derived its origin, as we know, from the Lutherans; but when you class the early Lutherans with the Calvinists and Puritans, and consider them as opposed to the English sacramental system, you do them injustice. In common with all the Theologians of the Latin Communion they were well read in the works of St. Augustin, the great doctor of that Church, and had imbibed his modes of thinking. The English divines were equally well acquainted with his writings, but less under his influence, because the early eminence of Oxford for Greek learning, had made them acquainted with the illustrious Greek fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries. This was long before the Puritans existed, and even before Calvin was born. The whole history of Martin Bucer and of Peter Martyr, their age, their countries, the places where they studied, exempt them from a charge which nothing but a modern spirit of party has framed. Both were men when Calvin was a child. The one was a German, the other an
Italian. The one was a Dominican Friar, converted by Luther at Worms, in 1521; the other a Canon regular of St. Augustin, at Fiesole, educated at Padua, and converted by Valdez, a Spaniard, when he was president of a college at Naples. Bucer was with Hermann, Archbishop of Cologne, who wished to introduce there the doctrines of the Reformation. If we had the prayer-book of Hermann, we might, perhaps, be able to trace from it the origin of the changes introduced into the English Prayer-Book of 1552. Independent of all such history, the very analysis of the Confession and Absolution in the morning and evening services, shows that their object was rather to prepare men's minds for the more solemn Confession and the only authoritative Absolution by the Holy Eucharist. Separate Absolution from that Sacrament, and it diverges inevitably into one or the other of these two forms of error. To a mixed congregation it is an unmeaning act; to a penitent, in secret confession, it is another and an unauthorized Sacrament. It leads, in both cases, to the neglect of the true Sacrament. If a man can be absolved without coming to the Eucharist, why should he come? If he can be absolved by the Priest on private confession and doing such penance as the priest requires, why should he come oftener than once a year?

I enter not into the question respecting the English Office for the Visitation of the Sick. I have never felt myself at liberty to use the Absolution which, in an extreme case, is there permitted; nor can I do so until it is restored in our Office, for the very same reason that I do not use the Athanasian Creed in the morning prayer. All Absolution being connected with the Holy Communion, it could not be pronounced in England to any but a faithful communicant, who had shown, in the course of a well-spent life, that he had conquered the enemies of his salvation, and was going where there is laid up for him a crown of glory.

And here a question arises, of great magnitude, to which I am led by your words at p. 55: "'Ceremonies and practices' have been 'introduced,' I know, wholly 'unauthorized' by the 'customs of this Church,' as established by the English reformers.' Do I read aright? or is this like the language of St. Paul to the Corinthians, only solemn irony? Your subsequent denial, (pp. 58,) "of the introduction of what are usually styled 'novelties'—unusual bowings, or crossings, or lighting of candles on the altar in the daytime"—relieves me. But still the question recurs, When we have
given up what we ourselves approve; for the sake of union and peace, shall we not adhere to the sacrifice until, by mutual consent, the terms are altered? Such has been the conduct of Connecticut.

Let it be remembered that this Diocese was fully organized five years before the organization of the whole union; that the daily service of England, excepting her state prayers, was its rule; that the Communion office set forth by Bishop Seabury in Convocation, was in its arrangement far more agreeable to ancient and primitive usage than that we now have; and it will be seen how much Connecticut sacrificed. Yet, from 1790, when the New Prayer-Book was received, she never violated the terms of compact. I could quote, in proof of this, her proceedings for many years. The Laity were in general so satisfied with their Bishop and Clergy, that they neglected to send deputies to the Annual Convention. The Bishop and Clergy were actually compelled to exhort them to comply with the Constitution and Canons of 1789. This they did with the utmost good faith. However opposed Bishop Seabury was to the innovations of the American Prayer-Book, not one jot or one tittle of its requisitions was ever violated. Its options only were considered as coming within the scope of Diocesan Authority.

It has ever seemed to me to be a wonderful overruling of God’s providence, that the very changes introduced into the American Ritual lead us back to the original arrangements of the English Reformers in 1549. Separate the Matins from the Communion Service by any interval of time; restore the celebration of the Eucharist on every day for which a Collect Epistle and Gospel is especially provided; and you have at once the general arrangement of Archbishop Cranmer, and the Convocation of 1548. I speak from my own experience when I say that the Morning Service, even as it has been lengthened by the subsequent revisions, need not occupy more than half an hour. Let there be a space of time then given, in which the parishioners may be engaged in the duties of the Sunday School, and we have every thing in proper harmony. During the same time, the Priest might be informed how many would that day present themselves for communion; and this would be his guide in the consecration of the elements so as to avoid any violation of the Rubrics.

These suggestions lead me to notice the affirmation that “no clergyman in your Diocese is free from the charge of rubrical irregularity; and the expression of your own conviction that the
Church intended the rubrics rather as general directions, than as inflexible laws." (pp. 58, 60.) That there may be cases of necessity in which a departure from the rubrics is inevitable, no one will deny; but these are extreme cases which cannot be pleaded in defence of irregularity. If there be a customary violation of rubrics, the fault is in the want of courage and firmness in the clergy. As far as my experience goes, the laity are generally disposed to obey the rubrics, if the reason of that obedience is properly laid before them. If I were subject to the scrutiny of the questions you have asked, I could with a safe conscience have answered them all in the affirmative.—These have I kept from my youth up, and have taught others to keep them. Even in Boston, where the puritan spirit is so dominant, I had very little trouble in enforcing the general observance of the rubrics. I explained their wisdom in the course of a few lectures, which I had occasion to repeat only once in the course of five years. When occasionally some new member of my parish came to commune with gloved hand, or any other irreverent or unseemly practice, a gentle remark in private, explaining the practice of the Church, was sufficient to remove all that could offend. I have never witnessed in England or elsewhere, a more devout reception of the Lord's Supper, than such as was common in my own parish; and I am bold to say that many of the Presbyters of Connecticut, even in its most rural districts, carry out the provisions of the rubrics with as much care as I have. Experience has taught me through the course of my life, the value of the maxim uttered by a Scots Presbyterian, that in public worship, *what is left to the discretion of the minister, is left also to the indiscretion of the man.*" This reason a strict and even punctilious regard to the rubrics seems to me the only way of preserving that beautiful order in external things which is so conducive to internal harmony.

But to return to the Pastoral Letter: there are two or three expressions which trouble me, because I am unable to ascertain their authority or precise meaning. When you say (p. 62) that "that doctrine of 'sacerdotal absolution' was cast into the shade when its true and proper form was removed from general use into 'the order for the visitation of the sick,' " I am constrained to ask,
When was that form in "general use?" or of what "general use" do you speak? Certainly not in England. Mr. Palmer has sufficiently shown the great antiquity of the form of absolution used in our Communion Service, from 1549 even to this day.* The Absolution you speak of as "the only true and proper form," was in the Visitation Office, then inseparably connected with the Communion of the sick, and nowhere else, as I can perceive, in the Prayer Book of 1549.

Again: In your account of the interview with the young clergy in 1847, (p. 67,) you say that "wishing to devote themselves, soul and body, to Christ, agreeable to the 'Evangelical Counsels,' they offered me their services," &c. What are these Evangelical Counsels so strongly marked? You yourself seemed to have some suspicion, from the words of caution you addressed to them, (p. 68,) a caution so just and so suitable to a Bishop of our Church. The subsequent expression, "Perpetual members who must be unmarried men," requires some explanation; or, it may lead to the inference that these Evangelical Counsels involved a vow of celibacy.

I have but one more remark to offer; and that is upon the note on p. 69. I am as much opposed as you can be to unnecessary controversy with the Romanists; but when they continually attack us, and continually seek to draw away from the Church ignorant and unstable souls, we are bound to repel their sophistries, and save our brethren from the guilt of heresy and schism, by our duty to Christ, by all the obligations of our priesthood, by all that charity which the spirit of love engendereth. There is to be no acrimony. We must contend for Christ with the gentleness and meekness of Christ. How can they be true members of Christ until they have broken down the wall of separation raised by their own hands in the Creed of Pope Pius IV. ? How can they be of the same family with us, so long as they worship the creature, rather than the Creator, who, alone, is God over all, blessed forever?

VIII.

I have thus, Right Reverend and dear Sir, performed a duty which I think I owe, to you, as a friend whom I love, to the Apo-
tolic Ministry, of which, though in very different spheres of action, we both form a part, to the Diocese of which I am a member; and to the true Catholic Church in the United States, "reformed, protestant and free." I owe it to you; because I am persuaded that if you err, (and who does not err?) your motives are to glorify God, and promote the salvation of men. I owe it to the Apostolic Ministry, that they may not be blamed as taking too much upon themselves. As ambassadors of Christ, they beseech men to be reconciled to God; as ministers of the Holy Ghost they convey to their brethren in one common faith, the means of reconciliation and grace; but they are helpers of their joy, not having dominion over their faith nor being Lords over God's heritage. (2 Cor. i. 24; 1 Pet. v. 3.) I say not this as if I thought you were in league with the spiritual tyranny of Rome; for you have too often and too pointedly expressed to me your rejection of Roman errors, to allow of any suspicion that you can be false to your sacerdotal and Episcopal vows. I speak only in behalf of our ministry, to show that we do not arrogate to ourselves more than God has given us. Like the English reformers in 1549, we wish only to restore that holy condition of the Church, when they who were baptized, continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. (Acts ii, 42.)

I have said that I owe it to the Diocese of Connecticut. Trained up at the feet of one who was the intimate friend of Bishop Seabury, and his successor in office; of one who took a prominent part in the transactions of that agitated period from 1764 to 1813; of one who, as secretary of the clergy, conducted the correspondence of Connecticut with the Hierarchies of England and Scotland, and with Bishop Seabury, during his absence; of one who was a proctor for his brethren in the conciliatory convention of 1789, an original signer of its constitution, and employed in the revision of the Prayer-book; I have felt that I could vindicate the firm, steady and conservative character of this Diocese, better than almost any living man. I think I have vindicated it; though for the sake of brevity, I have left much that might be told, unsaid. What I have said, however, may be relied upon as certain. Connecticut has only to remain firm, and to continue to carry on the work which her first Bishop and clergy began, and she will be, by the migration of her sons, the mother of many Churches, professing the Apostolic faith whole and undefiled.
I owe it lastly to the Church Catholic in these United States, at a moment when her wonderful growth has alarmed the fears and jealousies of contending sects, to give my testimony, the result of much study, reflection and experience, as to her true central position. She is equally remote from Sectarianism, by whatever name it may be called. Her object is unity; while sect implies division. In the language of one who is himself not far from the kingdom of God, "The spirit of Sect, is the spirit of Antichrist." All sects, whether Papist or Protestant, by the very fact of their schism, have departed from the one faith, once delivered to the saints. They are only different points in the circumference of error, tending downward to that lowest point in which they will unite and drop into the abyss of Infidelity. It is our duty to preserve ourselves from their influence, and if any man approaches so near as to come within their power of attraction, let us feel for our brother as though he were a wanderer, endeavour to reclaim him from his error, weep over his fall, and rejoice over his recovery.*

"When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" The question implied a doubt; and coming from the Searcher of all hearts, it should make us tremble. Yet it was connected with a parable, which taught that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. There must therefore be no despondence. Christ hath set in the body, some apostles, some prophets, some teachers; but all for the edification of the body. Our course of duty is plain. Through evil report, or good report; as deceivers, and yet true; whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear. We must

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*This letter was finished and sent to press several days before the news arrived of Dr. Forbes' guilt. The delay occasioned by the accumulation of work in the printing establishment, at this season, enables, and indeed renders it proper for me to add some remarks upon an event at which we may well mourn, not for ourselves, but for him. Like most of the unstable men who have left Jerusalem for Samaria, he began as a Calvinist, with low and loose views of the Christian ministry, regarding it rather as human than as Divine. Else how could he have committed the awful sin of violating vows to the Holy Ghost, and renouncing orders conferred by the Holy Ghost? He has but one or two steps more to complete the sacrilege. The Holy Ghost never confers the same orders twice, any more than He confers Baptism twice. The repetition of Orders as well as of Baptism, when both have been once validly received, is ipso facto null and void. Such has ever been the judgment of the Catholic Church; and every time the schismatic body he has joined repeats a valid ordination or a valid Baptism, it adds another to the black catalogue of its sins. Within the present year this unhappy man wrote a letter in which he spake of his "increased conviction of the Catholicity of our own mother." Did he say this sincerely? Or has he become so deep in the morality of St. (?) Alphonsus Liguori as to mean one thing while he led his abused correspondent to believe another? If he was sincere, what are we to think of his stability? If insincere, what are we to think of his honesty?
sow the seed of God’s word “with measured step, and unabating care.” In our vast country the Church is yet feeble; but there are signs like gleams of light on the distant hills, which quicken the footsteps of hope. The intelligent, the wise, the good of all parties among the laity, are beginning to see that we maintain the Catholic faith whole and undefiled; and that there is no other principle of external or internal unity. I have no fears for the Diocese of Ravenscroft, any more than I have fears for the Diocese of Seabury. Both, as the dictate of a pure conscience, will support their Bishop, when, like St. Paul, he exhorts them to be followers of him, as he also is of Christ. An accurate survey and delineation of the bounds of right and duty, will convince the laity that when, like the great Apostle to the Gentiles, we magnify our (office, Rom. xi, 13, 14, lit.: “glorify my ministry” or “service,”) it is that we may excite their zeal, and promote their salvation. On this subject, Bishop Seabury, though dead, yet speaketh in his discourse on the duty of the people towards Christ’s ministers. After saying that “the whole mystery of reconciliation with God through Christ is committed to the ministers of Christ,” he thus proceeds: “Hence arises a plain duty on your part, namely, to receive their instructions, to submit to their government, to reverence their authority, to partake with them in the ordinances of religion, and to preserve the unity of the Church in faith, in discipline, and in worship. If you attend not on their ministry, with regard to you, their appointment is vain; if you reject their government, you reject the institution of Christ; if you despise their authority, you despise him that sent them; if you refuse to partake in the ordinances of religion, you cut yourselves off from the communion of saints; and if you break the unity of the Church, in faith, or discipline, or worship, you fall under the condemnation of those Christians who walk disorderly and cause divisions, whom the Apostle advises us to avoid, lest the contagion of their example should infest the faithful.” (Discourses, Vol. 1, p. 36; Ed. 1793.)

I remain,
Right Reverend and Dear Sir,
in the best of all bonds,
the communion of the Catholic Church,
Your faithful friend and servant,
SAMUEL FARMAR JARVIS,
one of the Presbyters of Connecticut.

MIDDLETOWN, NOVEMBER 21ST, 1849.

To the Right Reverend Dr. Ives, Bishop of North Carolina.
Have in course of preparation a New Edition of the

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