

the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit, and implying establishment and progress to full grown Christian character and privilege, and the solemn self-dedication to God by renewal of the baptismal vow.

If it is not a sacrament like Baptism and the Supper of the Lord it is not because it is not an outward and visible sign or an inward and spiritual grace, but simply because it is not declared in Scripture to have been given us by Christ Himself, although we may well believe that, instituted by the Apostles, it was among the instructions which they received from Him during the forty days that He was with them after His Resurrection.

Let our readers look into this matter, and they will find that Confirmation becomes a necessity not only as the link which connects the baptized with the communicants, but as a means of receiving a special outpouring of God's Holy Spirit to confirm, strengthen and develop the spiritual life in each baptized member of His Holy Church.

One great reason, it may be, why a high view of Confirmation has been lost sight of has been the infrequency of the Bishops' visits and the consequent appearance of indifference on the part of the Episcopate to the rite. Certainly to keep a parish three whole years without the opportunity of receiving Confirmation does on its face convey the idea to the mind that the Bishops themselves do not recognize or value the gifts which God pleases to make them the humble and honored instruments of conveying; and no doubt very many in every parish, perhaps including the clergyman himself, be-

cause of the infrequency of its administration, have grown to look upon the rite as a mere indifferent form. This view may have been strengthened by the permissive clause of the rubric which enables a clergyman to receive as communicants those who have not been confirmed—a permission intended, no doubt, to be exercised only in extreme cases and under peculiar circumstances, but which has grown in too many places to be of frequent occurrence, if not of general practice. We can only hope that the increase of population and the subdivision of Dioceses, so that Bishops may be able to visit Parishes more often than they can now, may result in more attention being given to this Divine Rite. It may be safely affirmed that if a recognition of the importance of Confirmation is ever to become general it will follow the more frequent administration of the rite.

THE CHURCH IN BRITAIN BEFORE ST. AUGUSTINE.

If the Church had no existence in Britain before the arrival of St. Augustine, A. D. 590, how does it come to pass that when Constantine assembled a council of divines from the Provinces, at Arles in Gaul, to deliberate on certain points of discipline, concerning which the clergy were in perplexity, there were amongst those who thus met together the Bishops of York, of London and of Caerleon? Council of Arles, A. D. 320, from St. Augustine, A. D. 590, leaves 270 years existence of the British Church prior to St. Augustine.—*E. C. P.*