

According to the best expositors of Luke, ii. 41-52, Jesus Himself, at the age of twelve years, affords an example to the young in joining the Church. At that age the Jewish youth became "sons of the law"—members of the sacred commonwealth of Israel.

There is no hint in the New Testament of any separate rite intermediate between Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Confirmation, which the Roman Church calls a sacrament, and the English Church makes an Episcopal function or rite, has only an imaginary root in the following texts—Acts, viii. 14-17, xv. 32, 41, xix. 5, 6; Heb. vi. 2. It is exceedingly desirable that when young communicants are first received the occasion should be duly and solemnly marked more than any subsequent occasion of partaking. Up to that reasonable point some ceremony like confirmation is justifiable; but as a special function only valid when done by a bishop, it has no Scripture authority, and in its very theory is derogatory to the ordinary Christian ministry and the Christian Sacraments. Why should the two Sacraments themselves be intrusted to a certain minister, and the same person be deemed incompetent for that rite which is only a connecting-link between them?

A FIRST COMMUNION PRAYER.—Now that Thou has brought me to that age when I begin to look forward to the more active duties of life, I desire, O my God, gratefully to review Thy providence toward me since the unconscious years of infancy. I praise Thee for my being and its continuance, all the blessings received at the hands of parents and friends and teachers I trace to Thee. Especially do I thank Thee for baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and for all Christian nurture and admonition. Gracious God, I bless Thee for the holy incarnation of Thine only Son; for His life on earth; for His precious sufferings and death upon the cross; for His resur-

rection from the dead; for His glorious ascension to Thy right hand; for the giving of the Holy Ghost; for the Church, and for the hope of a heavenly inheritance.

At this season I desire, solemnly avowing myself Thine, to join myself with the company of Thy disciples by partaking of the sacramental symbols of Christ's body and blood. Prepare me, O God, for this most holy ordinance. Help me to repent of all my sins and forsake them. Increase and confirm my faith. Endow me with the supreme grace of charity. By thy holy Spirit I help me henceforth to live in Thy service. In duty direct me, in adversity sustain and comfort me, in temptation deliver me, and grant me to reach at last thy heavenly kingdom, where communion is perfect in the Church triumphant; for Jesus' sake. Amen.

MIOW, CENT. INDIA,

29th March, 1880.

MY DEAR MR. HERDMAN,—I have now the pleasure of acknowledging receipt of your favour of 30th Nov. last and also of the money you speak of in it, namely, £23.14, just received from Mr. Reid.

Accept, and kindly convey to the brethren of the Presbytery my warm thanks, for thus year by year entrusting to my care and putting at my disposal half of their annual contribution to Foreign Mission. And please assure them that their doing so affords me along with the increased power of carrying on the work I am trying to do, my peculiar pleasure, especially as a link and expression of the unity which still exists with those from whom it gave me much pain to be in any way separated, and to some of whom my heart is bound not only by personal friendship but by ties formed when I was privileged to stand beside them and see the Lord working so wondrously as I have never before or since seen.

[Mr. C. here refers to the revival movement in Pictou.]