

To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Ontario :

MY LORD,—It remains to be shown that the Church of England in her "prefaces," "rubrics," and "articles," protests—equally with the Greek Church—against mere lay-agency in the administration of baptism.

The "articles," be it remembered, are not simply terms of agreement, having only the significance which expediency or political utility may give them, but "*articles of religion*," essentially matters relating to God and His laws; and to all who subscribe them, they are of obligation as "containing the true doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's word."

It follows, therefore, that what they account "*licit*" or "*licitum*" is to be understood by us as being, in the judgment of the Church, lawful or unlawful on the principles of religion:—otherwise, they cannot be "agreeable to God's word."

In order, then, properly to appreciate their force, it may be well to consult that superior authority on which they profess to be founded, on reference to which certain most important facts, (all of them involving the same principle) are forced upon our attention, viz:—

- 1st. That under the Mosiac economy, no man—whatever the emergency—dare approach the Divine presence in the administration of His *positive institutions*, except those who were first duly called and authorized by God so to do.
- 2nd. That ministration in Divine things, under the Christian dispensation, was founded on the axiom, "No man taketh this honor to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron," that is, by an *external commission* first given by God to Moses, and then by Moses, by Divine command, to His chosen priest.
- 3rd. That even Christ Himself, the great High Priest of our profession,—pressed as he was by the fearful necessities of a dying world, whom he came specially to save—even Christ Himself abstained from all official acts, and took not this office on himself, until, in the established order of God, He received His *commission* and inauguration thereto, from the hands of an officer, duly authorized to that end.
- 4th. That, in like manner, He, the Great Head of the Church, was pleased on the basis of the same principle of *external commission*, to perpetuate His own Ministry; committing to *it* (and so far as His words reach, to it *only*) all