

# Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, JULY 3, 1879.

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## THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain." In the entire visible creation, pain is not the exception, it is the rule. It is not the misfortune of great cities, or of civilized communities, or of peculiar temperaments. Children and savages are its victims, just as certainly as grown people and philosophers. In some shape or other it is the unseparable attribute of human life. And pain is a punishment. It is not the worst evil, or the real evil. It tells us that a worse evil than itself lies beneath it. It is the shadow of sin; and itself is of a remedial character. It is a purification; it burns out evils, which if they remained would fester within and destroy our life. And it is also of a preventive character. It is the sensitiveness of a protective organ which guards the delicate sense whether of truth or of right. And it is of God's mercy alone if the suffering in time shall issue in the glory that is eternal. That mercy has been displayed, and is therefore commended to mankind, for our imitation. This appears to be the teaching the Church desires to bring before us to-day, and is of the highest as well as of the most practical character.

The mercy of God is not a mere abstract attribute. It is a living person. Jesus Christ Himself—God and Man—is the personification of mercy. He compassionates our distresses: He feels our pain: He washes us from the stains we contract in our passage through this wilderness, by the application of His own most precious blood. In each joy, in each pain and sorrow, in each opposition we meet with, He is eminently near; and beyond them all—beyond the horizon which our eye cannot now pass—He still awaits us to crown these years of care and love through which He has tended us, by receiving us at length with the arms of His mercy into our eternal home.

## "SACRAMENTALISM AND SACERDOTALISM."

SACRAMENTALISM and Sacerdotalism are both of them absolutely essential principles of the Christian religion. As far as we know, there is no religion on the face of the earth but Christianity that can be said to have incorporated into its system the principles which should be understood by the term Sacramentalism. Sacerdotalism belongs to most religious systems that have yet appeared in the world—some few only being excepted. The Mosaic religion was unquestionably Sacerdotal. The principle is also, inseparable from any form of Christianity, unless we except Socinianism, which, indeed, has no right to be classed under so venerable and so holy a name as that derived from the name of "the Great Apostle and High Priest of our Pro-

fession." But, however that may be, Socinianism (including its various branches) is the only system claiming to be Christian that repudiates the principle of Sacerdotalism. Mohammedanism also discards it, as well as Confucianism and some other isms, of no consequence to the object of this article.

First, of *Sacramentalism*. The strict meaning of the word *Sacrament* may be said to be a solemn ceremony producing or recognizing an obligation. Among the Romans it meant a military oath, or at other times, a pledge made by plaintiff and defendant in certain law-suits. In our ecclesiastical use of the term, however, we are no more confined to the original meaning of it than in the case of the word *mystery*, or even in that of the word *priest*. Early Christian writers, although they evidently signalize Baptism and the Lord's Supper as occupying a different position from all other ordinances, yet they give to the word *sacrament* and its corresponding Greek term *mystery* a more extended application, as denoting *any sacred sign*. Our own Church, while giving a definite explanation of the term in the Catechism as confined to the forenamed two, furnishes in the Homilies a recognition of a wider use of it. In the first part of the *Sermon of Swearing* in the First Book of Homilies, she speaks of the "Sacrament of Matrimony." And in the Homily *Of Common Prayer and Sacraments* in the 2nd Book we find this paragraph:—"As for the number of of them, if they should be considered with regard to the exact signification of a Sacrament, namely, for the visible signs, expressly commanded in the New Testament, *whereunto is annexed the promise of free forgiveness of our sins, and of our holiness and joining in Christ*, there be but two, namely, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. For although *absolution hath the promise of the forgiveness of sin*, yet by the express word of the New Testament it has not the promise annexed and tied to the visible sign, which is imposition of hands. For this visible sign (I mean laying on of hands) is not expressly commanded in the New Testament to be used in Absolution, as the visible signs in Baptism and the Lord's Supper are:—and therefore Absolution is *no such sacrament* as Baptism and the Communion are. And though the ordering of ministers hath this visible sign and promise, yet it lacks the promise of the remission of sin, *as all other sacraments*, besides the two above named do. Therefore neither it nor any other sacrament else, be such Sacraments as Baptism and the Communion are. But in a general acception, the name of a Sacrament may be attributed to anything, whereby an holy thing is signified."

We may remark in passing that, although it is most desirable to adopt such phraseology as shall indicate the paramount value and importance of the two Sacraments of the Gospel, yet from the authorized documents of the Church we see that we have no right to accuse of disloyalty to her those who may apply the term Sacrament in a lower sense to other institutions of Christianity beside those two. Our business just now, however, is to show how inseparable *Sacramentalism* is from every part of the teaching of our Church—*Sacramentalism*, that is which involves the use of the two great Sacraments in the Church, their supreme importance derived from their necessity to salvation (when they can be had), the grace inseparable from them (when

rightly administered and not unduly received). Nothing short of this teaching would satisfy any party in the Church of England, either in Cranmer and Ridley's time, at the close of the Reformation, and the final revision of the Prayer Book in 1662; certainly nothing short of it would satisfy any of the formularies of the Church which have the slightest bearing upon the subject.

In "the third part of the *Sermon of Salvation*," supposed to be the "Homily of Justification," referred to in our Eleventh Article, we read:—"Our office is not to pass the time of this present life unfaithfully and idly, *after that we are baptized or justified*." In "the first part of the *sermon of the worthy receiving the Sacrament*," it is stated: "Neither need we to think that such exact knowledge is required of every man, that he be able to discuss all high points in the doctrine thereof; but *thus much we must be sure to hold, that in the Supper of the Lord there is no vain ceremony, no bare sign, no untrue figure of a thing absent*." . . . And, to be brief, thus much more the faithful see, hear and know the favorable mercies of God sealed, the satisfaction by Christ towards us confirmed, and the remission of sins established. Here they may feel wrought the tranquility of conscience, the increase of faith, the strengthening of hope, the large spreading abroad of brotherly kindness, with many other sundry graces of God."

We find *Sacramentalism*—or the grace of the Sacraments, flowing from the use of them as the principal means of grace in the Church—just as explicitly taught in the Articles; which although never intended or understood to form a complete summary of our faith, would yet fall very far short of the object of their compilation if they contained no reference to so important a subject. The 25th Article states expressly:—"Sacraments ordained of Christ be . . . certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace and God's good will towards us; by which He doth work invisibly in us." And again in the Catechism, intended to instil into children's minds the first principles of religion:—"What meanest thou by this word Sacrament? I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace . . . as a means whereby we receive the same and a pledge to assure us thereof." Several subsequent questions and answers in the Catechism which we need not repeat, are equally explicit. Surely these passages from our authorized formularies must convince every honest man that the vulgar and ignorant outcry against *Sacramentalism* among those who *miscall* themselves churchmen indicates a radical and total disloyalty to the Church of which they claim to be members.

As for the New Testament it is full of the same principle; and this fact would lead us to believe that this Sacred Book is but little read by the Anti-Sacramentalists:—"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit," said Christ, "he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." On this passage, John Wesley, in his treatise on baptism, which has not been expurgated, pithily remarks: "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder." "Repent," said St. Peter, "and be baptized for the remission of sins." The same apostle tells us that "Baptism doth now save us," and that the effect of it is "not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God." And St. Paul,

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