

a pardon without the priest, or an immediate intercourse between the poor soul and its Saviour, is this (p. 59) from Dean Comber. Let us not be unthankful to the Dean, about it is but a *stunt*! *excursion* after all: "Though David might by his faith in the promises, have found some comfort, yet neither so sure nor so sweet, as when he receives it from the mouth of a special messenger—so he that cannot value this absolution from the priest, can no other way receive satisfaction to his doubts and fears, unless he expect to be assured of his remission by an immediate revelation, or can be content to stay till the day of judgment for the resolution of this great enquiry."

Not a word here of the joy of God's salvation by the Spirit as a comforter, or peace in believing! Not a hint from the Dean, and from his admiring follower, of the Spirit bearing witness with the spirit of the Christian, and so restoring that joy!

It is no redeeming trait in this part of the Provost's confession that he acknowledges Christ to be the dispenser of the pardon through his ministers duly commissioned; and that by one or more of the authorities quoted, the passion of Christ is acknowledged to be the only ransom or propitiation. So does the Church of Rome recognise the merits of Christ, when she remits us to penance and to priestly absolutions as the means through which these merits affect us. But through the entire tissue of these letters and the citations, the writers either invest with the only power of certifying pardon to the penitent his consecrated superiors, or (like Baxter) are adduced to serve the Provost's special pleading, to this effect, against the connection of the passages and design of the authors—"The absolution"—he brings in Wheatly on the common prayer as saying, "is more than merely declarative; it is truly effective,—insuring and conveying to the proper subjects thereof the very absolution or remission itself."

We could understand the writer of these letters as speaking of what may be allowed to be a help to the enquirer, in allaying his terrors and confirming his comfort, had he distinctly recognized the warrant to make immediate application to the blood of sprinkling—we do not refuse the part allotted to Christ's ministers in declaratively binding and loosing in Christ's name. But when he avows it to be his very doctrine (p. 62) of justification by faith, that faith sends us to Christ for remission of our sins "through sacraments and ordinances of his appointment;" when he quotes with approval Waterland's assertion that Paul was not justified till he was baptized, and that no warrant for God can be pretended to account any one justified before or without that ordinary mean; when we find him asserting or quoting the assertion that the sacraments are necessary to salvation; and insisting that our Saviour (in John 6,) (a passage he plainly does not understand,) affirms the indispensable necessity to spiritual life, of taking the Lord's Supper at least from and after its institution; we are at no loss to call his system by its right name. He not only puts sacraments in room of the word: he puts them in the room of Christ. He remits the disciple to a human and uncertain, instead of a divine source of relief.

He scarcely in words differs from those who exact penance to a sacrament. His system provides a place for it; and the attrition, contrition, and "satisfaction" which Romanists include in the conditions of their absolution, fit in wondrously with Bishop Sparrow's expositions of the terms of the pardon which the priest is to pronounce "alone" and "standing;" or the absolution of which Dr. Brett says, that it is effective to the remission of sins.

Through the whole of the Provost's argument, and in his citations from Anglican divines, some of them men who were fit instruments to have realised the design of the Stuart dynasty to take back England to Rome, we see the ceremonies put for the substance of religion—cause and effect reversed—the seal and confirmation of a blessed privilege made the only means of obtaining it—and sacraments which we all agree to honour, and in their own place affirm to be important to religious well being, are made essential to its very being: the vehicle of blessings which they presuppose as possessed already, while they minister as seals to spiritual assurance and increase.

How cuing to a poor inquirer the direct answer of the Apostles, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," compared with these circuitous modes,—this labor to fetch Christ from afar! We should like to hear a Trinity College Theologian discourse on Rom. 10, 8, 9—"the word is nigh

\*Dr. Whitaker seems at no small loss to explain how believers were spiritually, nourished before the institution of the Supper a difficulty arising from his misinterpretation of John 6, as referring to that sacrament: whereas it is just faith's spiritual communion with Christ that is meant: nor does the passage in Paul 1 Cor. 10, describing the supper under similar language mean more than that the privilege described in John 6, is in that sacrament symbolised, premoved, and sealed. As to baptism, it were curious to know in what state the Ethiopian Eunuch was before baptism, and after he believed with all his heart; or the converts in the house of Cornelius who had received the Holy Ghost, on their hearing and believing the Word; or Peter's converts, (Acts 2) who had all to confess their faith and repentance before baptism. Were none of those in a justified state till they received that rite? "Baptism saves us," says St. Peter. Yes, it seals salvation; but any one who studies scripture phrases may see that by the same reason by which he would assert that a man has no salvation before baptism, we might argue that he blessed Saviour was neither Lord nor Christ" before his exaltation, because (Acts 2) he was then "made" such; that is declaratively,—formally, invested with Lordly honors and powers. One half of the error we are now dealing with lies in neglecting the plainest rules of Biblical interpretation.

Few rules have more examples than this: that a thing is said to be, meaning manifested to be; or a person is said to do what he declares has to be done. See Gen. 41 16, Jer. 1. 10-18; John 15 8; (last clause) and that we should apply this rule to Acts 22 16, "Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins," common sense, as well as common hermeneutics determines.

thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart—that if thou shalt confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, (no mention of the absolving priest!) and believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved!"—Shall we be told, "Oh, that is the faith and confession before baptism: but for the believer conscious of sin after, there must be another prescription for him. Then, we would fain hear our Theologian on Paul's words—Gal. 2, 20—I live by the faith of the Son of God, &c.—He evidently means, I live on—I continue in life, I renew my strength,—No running to an earthly priest!—He tells us elsewhere of the only priest necessary to his access with confidence (see Heb. 4, or Eph. 2)—and John speaks of the sincere confession and the available propitiation in one breath, (1 John 2,) "an advocate"—one advocate, no intermediate one to whom either sitting or standing, you must do obeisance, and wait his time. Confession is enjoined—but no confessional; the duty of repentance is implied—but neither absolution nor penance is here as the formal condition of peace to the wounded conscience. And Peter, whom some put before Paul and John in such matters, just sends us to the same quarter,—“by his stripes we are healed”—Why should man impose his barriers,—and compel faith to accept its first relief through sacraments and ordinances? Your system hides the Saviour,—exalts priestly prerogative at the cost of detaining the disciple from him—and for aught we see, would soon elevate penance to the rank—not of a little but a great sacrament. The point to which it leads, is the confessional, and all the oppression of soul and conscience associated with that ghostly tribunal.

We began by saying such teaching is Romish by one-half. An intelligent Episcopalian replied, "yea, by three-fourth;" when we said this only a day ago in conversation,

#### EDITORIAL ITEMS.

**THE CENSUS.**—We would in a single word repeat what we stated in last number, viz: that it is most desirable that the Ministers should direct the attention of their people to the great importance of giving precise and distinct information to the census enumerators. Let them state distinctly that they belong to the "*Presbyterian Church of Canada, otherwise called, by way of distinction the Free Church,*" and see that they are correctly entered in the enumerator's Schedule.

**CONTRIBUTIONS FOR KNOX COLLEGE.**—It is earnestly requested that Congregations that have not already contributed for Knox College, will do so in the course of the present month.

**KEENE AND WESTWOOD.**—We have been requested to correct an error in Statistical table of Synod with reference to Keene and Westwood. Our correspondent states that the stipend is fully paid, and that there are no arrears.