

Increase of spiritual vitality, and the assurance of God's gracious help may well follow due compliance with this Rite. Our Heavenly Father always waits to be gracious, and when in His Presence, before His Apostolic ambassador and the assembly of Christians, we devote ourselves, body, soul and spirit, all we have and all we are, to His service, we cannot entertain a doubt but that He will accept the reasonable and well-pleasing offering. Here we must have special encouragement for reliance on the love and protection of Him who has said : "*I love them that love Me, and those that seek Me early shall find Me.*" (Prov. viii. 17.)

But besides this, taking lower ground, *may not so solemn an engagement exercise a salutary influence over the conduct all through life?* Most unquestionably. When tempted to yield to the seductions of an evil Heart, an evil World, an evil Spirit, will not the memory of this engagement fortify against temptation? Will it not constantly strengthen the heart to remember how body and soul have been enlisted in the service of Christ JESUS, our Lord, and all the life dedicated to His glory? Will it not give tenfold force to the question,—"*How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?*"—How can I sin against that God to Whom I bound myself by a pledge so binding and on an occasion so affecting ;—that God Who has been so gracious, adopting me into His family, and condescending to make a covenant even with me ;—that God Whose I am and Whom I serve, and Whose all-seeing eye marks every deed, every word, every thought !"

My brethren, I know from ministerial experience, that the memory of this Ordinance has thus been a most beneficial, I might say, a most magical monitor. Pardon my quoting the words of a dear young friend, a parishioner of mine in bygone years, words that I deemed worthy of preservation at the time :—