

word “regenerate,” in the “Offices for the Ministration of Baptism for infants,” do declare that in our opinion the word “regenerate” is not there so used as to determine that a moral change in the subject of baptism is wrought in the sacrament.”

Whereupon, nine of the said Bishops, the Evangelicals, namely, McIlvaine, Stevens, Johns, Payne, Bedell, Vail, Whitaker, and the two Lees, unite in saying:—

“We now desire to express our gratitude to the Great Head of the Church for this result, and to bear witness to the fraternal and Christian spirit which led to the above declaration and animated throughout the full discussion, which terminated in its adoption. Although not the precise relief which was sought for, it is in our opinion a most important, timely, and beneficial measure. We do most earnestly commend this expression to the serious and candid attention of those brethren of the clergy and laity who have felt themselves burdened by the language of the baptismal offices, in the hope and trust that it will have weight in their judgment, relieve their minds, and satisfy their consciences.”

We can understand how “thankful for small mercies” men must feel, who have been heretofore obliged to use the terribly strong language of the Baptismal office and the Catechism. To us, it is a mystery how the High Church bishops could adopt such a Declaration, unless a way of escape were left in the word “determine.” It is possible that they could use the form of words agreed upon in the sense that while as a rule, spiritual regeneration does take place in Baptism, there are occasional exceptions, so that “the word is not so used as to determine that moral change in the subject of baptism is wrought” in every case.

Yet, in every case of Baptism, the Episcopal minister is required to say, “we yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, *that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with Thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for Thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into Thy holy church.*” In the Catechism every baptised child is taught to say, in answer to the question, “Who gave you this name?”—“My sponsors in Baptism; *wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.*” In Confirmation, the Bishop says, “Almighty and ever-living God, *who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost.*” The language of these offices is as absolute and universal as it can possibly be.

The American Prayer Book, however, is less positive than the English one. In the latter, the priest is made to say, after the Baptism, “Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is *by baptism regenerate;*” in the American, the words, “by baptism,” are omitted,—“that this child is regenerate.”

The House of Bishops have prudently confined themselves to a negative. Could they not, on a point so vital, so continually recurring, and on which any mistake is so dangerous, have told us what the office *does* mean? It says that “the child is regenerate by the Holy Spirit;” yet this not “determine that a moral change is wrought.” Then what is this “regeneration,” in which there may be no “moral change?” We are well aware that some explain it as meaning simply an outward union with the church; but *that* is explicitly mentioned