

although it begins to be healed, because the Holy Spirit is efficacious even in infants themselves, and cleanses them." The precise nature and extent of the spiritual change which then takes place, the Church has no further defined than by the general assertion that it is a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness, and that every person rightly baptized is made thereby a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. This change is otherwise expressed by the single word "regeneration."

I suppose that few amongst us will be found to deny that all who receive baptism worthily are, in some sense of the term, thereby regenerated. The Church declares, in very general and positive language, of all who, having been duly baptized, are afterwards brought to be confirmed, that Almighty God has vouchsafed to regenerate them by water and the Holy Ghost, and has given them forgiveness of all their sins, but this declaration, it is said, is to be restricted to such as have received baptism worthily; and this raises the question whether all infants may receive baptism worthily. What is the *obex* or bar which in any case disqualifies an infant for the worthy reception of that Sacrament? Actual sin it cannot be. Original sin, or inherited sinfulness of nature, is the only bar which can be imagined. But to remedy the consequences of this original sin is the very object of baptism. It is therefore so far from being a bar to the reception of that Sacrament that it is the very reason for its administration. "Nothing," says Bishop Pearson, "in the whole compass of our religion, is more sure than the exceeding great and most certain efficacy of baptism to spiritual good; that it is an outward and visible sign indeed, but by it an invisible grace is signified, and the sign itself was instituted for the very purpose that it should confer that grace."

"One baptism for the remission of sins." If this *credendum* of the Universal Church be true, how can we admit the truth of an assertion that original sin must be remitted by a preventent act of grace before an infant can be worthy to be baptized? The 9th Article—"Of original or birth sin,"—declares that, in every person born into the world, this sin "deserveth God's wrath and damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerate, and although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized (in the Latin it is *remittis*), yet the Apostles doth confess that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin." Words cannot more clearly convey the notion that original sin is forgiven to them who are regenerate—that is, to them who believe and are baptized—though its infection still remains in the lust of the flesh. And this, let me remind you, by the way, points out the great difference in point of doctrine between the Church of Rome and our own as to the effect of baptism. The one contends that not only the guilt, but the very essence and being of original sin, is removed by baptism; the other teaches that although the guilt is forgiven in baptism, the corruption of nature remains even in those who are so regenerate. The notion of the Church of Rome lies at the root of its grand error—that of justification by inherent righteousness. I am aware that a question has been raised whether that clause of the Nicene Creed—"One baptism for the remission of sins,"—has any reference to the forgiveness of original sin. But what other reference can it have in the case of infant baptism, which we know to have been the practice of the Universal Church when that Creed was framed about the year 325? The doctrine of original sin. The writings of his great opponent, St. Augustine, abound with passages which prove the belief of the Church Catholic to have been that original sin was remitted in baptism, not before nor after it.—That remission in baptism of the guilt of original sin, for the sake of the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ (Christ being the meritorious cause of their remission, baptism the instrument), is also the doctrine of our Church, following in this, as in other respects, the teaching of the early Church, cannot reasonably be doubted. It is plainly asserted in the Catechism, prayed for in the office of baptism, and made a subject of special thanksgiving both in that and in the office of confirmation. Nor is it less distinctly set forth in the Homilies, from which the following extracts may suffice:—"We must trust only in God's mercy, and that sacrifice which our High Priest and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, once offered for us upon the cross, to obtain thereby God's grace and remission, as well of our original sin in baptism as of all actual sin committed by us after baptism, if we truly repent, and unfeignedly turn to him again."

"Our office is, not to pass the time of this present life unfruitfully and idly after that we are baptized or justified. . . . We are, therefore, washed in baptism from the filthiness of sin, that we should live afterwards in pureness of life."

The same language was held by Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Becon, Hutchinson, Bradford, following the steps of Luther and Melancthon, all of whom taught that remission of sin and the gift of the Spirit were the effect of baptism.

That this doctrine was held by our greatest Divines is so notorious as to render citation almost unnecessary.

"Baptism," says Hooker, is a sacrament which God hath instituted in His Church to the end that they who receive the same might thereby be incorporated into Christ, and so through His most precious merit obtain as well that saving grace of imputation which taketh away all former guiltiness, as also that infused Divine virtue of the Holy Ghost which giveth to the powers of the soul their first disposition towards future newness of life."

With this plain and comprehensive statement of the beneficial effects of baptism may be coupled another from the same great luminary of the Church, which although it does not in terms specify the forgiveness of original sin, necessarily includes it:—"We take not Baptism nor the Eucharist for bare resemblance or memorials of things absent, neither for naked signs and testimonies assuring us of grace received before (which is Mr. Gorham's theory), but, as they are indeed and in verity, for means effectual whereby God when we take the Sacraments delivereth unto our hands the grace available unto eternal life, which grace the Sacraments represent or signify."

And in a passage immediately following that which has been quoted to show that Hooker considered the Church to speak of infants baptized only as the rule of "piety alloweth us both to speak and to think," we find this statement, plainly shewing that he believed all infants to receive regeneration in baptism, whether they be elect or not. Cartwright, whom Mr. Gorham follows, had spoken of a grace that would make a man a Christian before he came to receive baptism in the Church; and Hooker says:—

"When we know how Christ in general hath said that of such is the kingdom of heaven, which kingdom is the inheritance of God's elect, and do withal behold how His providence hath called them unto the first beginning of eternal life, and presented them at the well-spring of new birth, wherein original sin is purged—besides which sin there is no hindrance of their salvation known to us as themselves (Cartwright and his party) will grant, hard it were, that, having so many fair inducements whereupon to ground, we should not be thought to utter, at the least, a truth as probable and allowable in terming any such particular infant an elect babe, as in presuming the like of others whose safety, nevertheless, we are not absolutely able to warrant."

He then goes on to say that—

"Baptism implieth a covenant or league between God and man, wherein as God doth bestow presently remission of sins and the Holy Ghost, binding also himself to add, in process of time, what grace soever shall be further necessary for the attainment of everlasting life; so that every baptized soul receiving the same grace at the hands of God tieth himself likewise for ever to the observation of His law."

The question, we perceive, of which Hooker speaks, is not whether that or that infant is regenerated in baptism, but whether, being regenerated, it can also be certainly pronounced elect? The early Calvinistic Divines, who held the doctrine of election, predestination, and perseverance, never doubted, on the one hand the certainty of baptismal grace, nor, on the other, its defectibility.

"The ancient predestinarians" (says the present Bp. of Bangor) "never questioned the certainty of regeneration in baptism, because this doctrine was consistent with their theory, for though they maintained that the elect, or the pre-destinate, are endued with the gift of perseverance unto the end, and will finally be saved, yet they believed that God bestows at his pleasure every other kind and measure of grace on those persons from whom He withholds this special grace of perseverance. They, therefore, hold in common with the rest of the Church, that forgiveness of sins, and the Holy Ghost, are bestowed in baptism; nor do they imagine that there is any necessary and indissoluble connexion between regeneration and eternal salvation."

Two names scarcely less illustrious than that of Hooker, are those of Barrow and Pearson. The former speaks of "each member of the Church singly being, in holy baptism, washed from his sins and made regenerate, or adopted into the number of God's children, and made a partaker of Christ's death." The latter declared it to be "the most general and irrefragable assertion of all to whom we have reason to give credit, that all sins whatsoever any person is guilty of, are annulled in the baptism of the said person." The settled opinions of the early Lutheran Divines, as well of Luther himself, are apparent from the *Loci Theologici* of Gerhard, a text-book of Lutheran theology. "Infants," he says, (I quote M. Arnold's translation) "do not resist the Holy Ghost and His operation, and therefore faith and salvation are undoubtedly conferred upon them." Again, "they detract from the efficacy of the Sacraments on the side of defect, who argue that the Sacraments are only signs of grace either already conferred and received without the use of Sacraments, or not to be conferred until some later time. Zuinglius, especially, had disseminated this error in his writings."

With these testimonies before me, I could not bring myself to admit that Mr. Gorham's theory of the comparative, if not the absolute, inefficiency of baptism could be reconciled with the language of our authoritative Formularies, according to any just rule of interpretation.

It appeared to me that he went to much greater lengths in depreciating the sacramental character of baptism than any writer of our Church with whose works I was acquainted, except the opponents of Hooker—that he left far in the background those who maintained the hypothetical, the conditional, or the charitable theory of baptismal efficacy, in his assertion that in all cases the forgiveness of original sin, the grace of regeneration and adoption into the family of God, are not the effects or results of baptism, but of a preventent act of grace, where a baptized infant possesses them, or of a subsequent act of grace, where they follow at some later time after baptism.

Let me add one word on the subject of preventent grace. It has been well observed that the supposition of preventent grace in the case of infants, only shifts the difficulty one step backward, for, if infants be not qualified to receive baptismal grace, how can they be qualified to receive preventent grace? If their being born in sin unfits them for the one, so must it for the other. The preventent grace of which some of our older Divines have spoken, refers to the baptism of adults who must be pre-disposed by the Holy Spirit to seek for the benefits of baptism, and enabled to believe with the heart unto righteousness.

Suffer me also to offer a remark upon the notion that the efficacy of baptism in some measure depends, in the case of infants, upon the faith and prayers of those who offer them at the font, that the sacrament is more or less efficacious as the parents who present their children to be baptized are more or less alive to the solemn importance of the rite, and more or less earnest in prayer for its complete and final effect. Not to dwell on the consideration, that if this notion be true, it seems to exclude from the spiritual benefit of baptism all children of wicked or thoughtless parents, I must confess that it seems to me somewhat akin to the error condemned in our 26th Article, viz. that the unworthiness of the minister hinders the effect of the sacrament, and the answer appears to be nearly the same in both cases.

"That the effect of Christ's ordinance is not taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith rightly do receive the sacraments ministered unto them, which are effectual because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men."

The Church considers the efficacy of the sacraments to depend upon Christ's institution and promise—the fulfilment of which depends upon their right administration and worthy reception—and surely an infant's fitness to receive baptism cannot depend upon the feelings of those who present it. In the case of an adult this is perfectly clear. That the ultra effect of baptism may depend in some measure, upon the faith and prayers of parents and sponsors none will be found to deny; and this consideration cannot be too forcibly urged upon those who present their children at the baptismal font, and upon those who superintend their education. But this is a very different thing from making the immediate effect of the sacrament to depend upon the prayers of those who are present at its administration. To those men who hold this notion I

would recommend the following remark of the truly pious and charitable Archbishop Leighton; it is contained in a letter published in his select works.—

"To your other point touching baptism?—truly, my thought is, it is a weak notion taken upon trust almost generally, to consider so much or at all the qualifications of the parents. Either it is a benefit to infants or it is not. If not, why administered at all? But if it be, then why should the poor innocents be prejudged of it for the parent's cause, if he profess but so much of a Christian as to offer his child to that ordinance? For that it is the parent's faith gives the child a right to it is neither clear from Scripture nor any sound reason; yet, in that, I heartily approve your thought that you would make it, as it most fitly may be, an inducement to the parents to know Him and His doctrine and live conformably to it, under whose name they desire their children to be baptized."

It is obvious to remark that much of the controversy which has so long (and, unhappily, with so much acrimony on both sides) been going on respecting the effect of baptism, has arisen from the different meanings in which the word regeneration has been employed. It is greatly to be desired that some agreement should be come to as to the sense in which it is used by the Church. If this were done, I believe that the difference between contending parties would, in many cases, be found to be really much less than they appear to be. I do not venture to give a precise definition of what is meant by the word regeneration, but I would offer a suggestion which may pave the way to a common understanding. I need hardly remind you of the different passages of Holy Scripture in which a man is said to be born of water and of the Spirit; to be born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; to have been begotten again of God; to be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; to have been begotten again of God unto a lively hope; to have been born of God, and and to sin not; to have been begotten of God, and to keep himself. Now, he who is born because thereby the son of him to whom he is born, by whom he is begotten; and, therefore, to be born of God, or begotten of God, means to be made a child of God; and regeneration, or the being born again, means that a person is made the child of a father whose child he was not before. Regeneration by baptism, a child of God, and with reference to God's no longer regarding him with displeasure, but with favour, a child of grace. So in the Collect for Christmas Day, we are spoken of as being regenerate, and made the children of God by adoption. It is obvious that this regeneration carries with it remission of sins, as the Church prays that the "infant coming to holy baptism may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration;" and afterwards thanks God, "that it hath pleased Him to regenerate that infant, to receive it for His own child, by adoption, and to incorporate it into His holy Church." So far, I apprehend, many will be found to agree with us as to the nature and effect of Baptismal Regeneration, who will, perhaps, draw back and hesitate when we proceed one step further, and maintain that such a change of state necessarily implies the conferring of some inward spiritual gifts upon the subject of it.

It is surely unreasonable to suppose that where there is a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness, there will not be given the principle of a new life of righteousness; that where obedience is required there should not be imparted what Bp. Jeremy Taylor calls *carum onum* carried with it the principle of bodily life, so the second 'or spiritual conveys the principle of spiritual life "Being engrafted in Christ or His Church," says Bishop Wilson, "we receive grace and a new life from Christ as really as a branch receives life and nourishment from a good tree into which it is grafted." In this sense, as well as with reference to the general resurrection, it is true that "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." We cannot conceive of God that he should freely receive into His family, by adoption, those who are washed with the laver of regeneration, removing thereby the bar of original sin which rendered them so long as it continued, incapable of salvation, without giving them, at the same time, such a portion of His Holy Spirit as may enable them to take the first steps in the path of eternal life. As regeneration itself is the work of the Holy Spirit, we may be assured that the grace which regenerates will not desert him whom it has regenerated. I do not see how this can be denied by those who suppose an infant to undergo in baptism such a moral change as fits him for admission into the kingdom of heaven. But this surely is a very different thing from that moral change which must take place in the adult Christian, who is invested with personal responsibility, and capable of seeking for or resisting the influences of the Holy Spirit. The regeneration which we believe to be the effects of baptism in no way lessens the necessity for conversion and spiritual renovation in those who fall from the grace so given, nor of continual efforts on the part of all to be so renewed and strengthened by the Holy Spirit as to be enabled finally to accomplish that work of which baptism is but the beginning. On the contrary, they furnish the strongest imaginable motive to vigilance and self-examination, and earnest prayer for larger and larger measures of grace. We do not hold the inward grace given in baptism is indefeasible [? indefectible] but that they who have been once regenerate, may depart from grace given, and fall into sin. We believe that the grace so given is an initial and seminal grace, which must be cherished and developed, and made fruitful by proper culture and training, and by a diligent use of all the means of spiritual improvement which God has given us in His Word, His Church and His Sacraments. Not only is the first imparting of grace necessary, but growth in grace is required, in order to the final efficacy of our baptismal privileges, and so the Church prays that the infants whom it has pleased God to regenerate with His Holy Spirit, and to receive for His own children, by adoption, may afterwards "crucify the old man and utterly abolish the whole body of sin." And at Confirmation she beseeches God that He will "daily increase in them His manifold gifts of grace," and that they may daily increase in His Holy Spirit more and more.

I am of opinion that the real doctrine of our Church, as to the effect of baptism, is correctly stated in the following words of one of the most learned of her sons Bishop Beveridge:—

"Although our Blessed Saviour saith to Nicodemus that except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, yet He doth not say that every one who is so born shall inherit eternal life. It is true that all that are baptized or born of water and of the Spirit are thereby admitted, into the Church or kingdom of God upon earth; but except they submit to the government and obey the laws established in it, they forfeit all their right and

title to the kingdom of heaven. They are brought into a state of salvation, but unless they continue in it, and live accordingly, they cannot be saved. Baptism puts us in the way to heaven, but unless we walk in that way we can never come thither. When we were baptized we were born of water and of the Spirit, so as to have the seed of grace sown in our hearts sufficient to enable us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit to overcome temptation—to believe aright in God our Saviour, and to obey and serve him faithfully all the days of our life. But if we neglect to perform what we then promised, and so do not answer the end of our baptism by keeping our conscience void of offence toward God and toward man, we lose all the benefit of it, and shall as certainly perish as if we had never been baptized."

Or I might adopt, as a still shorter expression of the Church's mind, the language of a late learned and judicious Prelate, Bishop Van Mildert:—

"They who agree with our Church understand by regeneration that first principle of holiness—that beginning of the spiritual life of which baptism is not only the sign but also the pledge—assuring us of its actual conveyance. Thus far, and thus far only, they extend the meaning of spiritual regeneration, and this they maintain to be given in baptism. The ultimate efficacy of the gift they acknowledge to be dependent upon our subsequent growth in grace."

This doctrine is briefly and touchingly summed up in the collect already referred to—"Grant that we, being regenerate and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit."

Those persons who charge the maintainers of what we believe to be the true doctrine of baptism, with the error of the Church of Rome touching the *opus operatum*, appear not to understand clearly what that error is. I cannot do better than quote the words of the present learned Bishop of Bangor, to show what the real difference is, in this respect, between the two Churches:—

"That baptism is the ordinary means through which God bestows the grace of regeneration is a doctrine common to our own Church and the Church of Rome. But the point on which our Divines insisted, in opposition to the teaching and decrees of that Church, was—that this grace is not communicated to or contained in the element, and from thence transferred to the souls of the recipients—that the outward sign is only an instrumental, and the Holy Spirit the efficient cause of regeneration—that it is not the water but the blood of Christ with which our sins are washed away. That the object of faith in the Sacrament of baptism is not any virtue contained in the water, but the promise of God in Christ, and that the necessity of baptism, when it may be had, depends not on any supernatural quality communicated to the element of water, but on the positive commandment and institution of Christ. It should be remembered that the Canon of a Council of Trent anathematizes those who affirm that the sacraments of the new law do not contain the grace which they signify."

Before I dismiss this subject, I would desire you to consider whether the vague and uncertain notions respecting baptism which have prevailed in the Church during the last hundred years, have not, in a great degree, been owing to the careless and irregular administration of the sacrament itself. The office mutilated; the font thrust into a corner, out of sight of the congregation; the directions of the Rubrics and Canons disregarded; the definitions of the Catechism unexplained. I cannot but think that if the Church's orders with respect to the administration of baptism had been always and everywhere duly followed out—had the people been accustomed to hear the solemn and affecting form by which their children have, or ought to have been grafted into the body of Christ's Church, and to bear a part in it themselves—had the baptismal covenant been more carefully and systematically put forward in the teaching of the Clergy, in connexion with all the duties of after life, the ordinance of baptism would have been better understood and more highly valued; the Church's intention would have been less a subject of doubt, and extreme opinions on either side would have found less acceptance.

And this leads me to remark that, deplorable as are the present divisions in the Church on the baptismal question, we may see some reason to be thankful that any question of a religious nature should have excited so wide and deep a feeling in the nation at large. I cannot but regard it as an indication of the growth of religious knowledge and principle in the people in this Christian country, when I see them taking so lively an interest in an inquiry respecting an article of faith; but, at the same time, it may well suggest to us the necessity of caution and charity, lest this awakened feeling should be hurried into either extreme—of a superstitious reverence for outward forms of a puritanical contempt for them. The thorough examination of this question before us cannot fail to issue in the establishment of the truth; but that desirable event may be regarded, and it will certainly be attained at the expense of much detriment to the cause of true religion, if the examination be conducted in a bitter and censorious spirit, and if anything of a personal feeling be mingled with that love of truth which ought to be the guiding principle of all controversy; we may not abandon nor compromise what we believe to be the truth, but we may let it be clearly seen that in our endeavours to establish it, we are actuated by a desire, not to obtain a victory over our antagonists, but to bring them to an agreement with us; or, if the truth lie on their side, to come to an agreement with them. Nor is it to be forgotten that, although the truth can only be one, there may be various shades of error, more or less detrimental to the integrity of Christian doctrine—more or less obstructive to the end which all doctrine is intended to produce, and it is to the attainment of these ends that we should direct the minds of our people, rather than to differences of opinion, which are not likely to weaken the foundation of their faith, nor to impair the motives to practical piety and holiness of life. But I can hardly extend this liberty to those, if such there be, who teach their congregations to undervalue the importance of a sacrament, its privileges, or its obligations.

[To be concluded in our next.]

DIocese of Prince Rupert's Land.

We copy the following from a speech made by Peter Jacobs, a Wesleyan Missionary, at a meeting held at Montreal. Mr. Jacobs is a Chippawa Indian. The *Montreal Witness* describes his appearance as follows:—

"His costume was a frock coat of dressed deer-skin, ornamented with quill work, together with leggings, moccasins, mitts and pouch of the same. On one side he wore a long hunting or scalping knife, and on the other a tomahawk. His swarthy countenance was lighted up by that peculiarly soft smile, and the tones of his voice were of that peculiarly mild and liquid kind