

on of the Apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, etc." He "saw" it by some visible descent. The Samaritans had received the Holy Ghost as all others do, in their baptism; He was dwelling in them. But the visible descent, which in those early days accompanied the gift of Confirmation, had not yet taken place; the Holy Ghost "was not yet fallen upon them." St. Thomas explains how the gift of Confirmation may precede the Sacrament of Confirmation, and speaking with regard to those on whom the Holy Ghost fell upon the preaching of Peter before their baptism (Acts x. 44) he says, "they received miraculously the effect of Confirmation but not the Sacrament of Confirmation, for the effect of Confirmation may be conferred upon a man before Baptism, but not the Sacrament of Confirmation. For as the effect of Confirmation, which is spiritual strength, presupposes the effect of Baptism, which is justification, so the Sacrament of Confirmation presupposes the Sacrament of Baptism." (*Summa Pars III. Q. LXXII., Art. VI., Ad 3m.*) This bestowal of the Holy Ghost upon the unbaptized is to be considered as wholly exceptional, as exceptional as the visible manner in which it took place and the miraculous gifts with which it was accompanied, and from this we can draw no conclusions with regard to the regular and normal method of administering the sacrament of Confirmation in after ages, when the visible descent had entirely ceased and when the miraculous gifts had become rare. With regard to what the gift of Confirmation is there never has been, and it would seem that there never should be, the least doubt. It is clearly expressed in accurate theological language in our Confirmation office. In Baptism the persons were "regenerated by Water and the Holy Ghost" and had "given unto them forgiveness of all their sins." In Confirmation they get the "strengthening with the Holy Ghost and the daily increase in them of God's manifold gifts of grace," especially of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. In the very words used at the imposition of hands the matter is clearly set forth. The object of the Sacrament is to "Defend with heavenly grace" one who is already a "Child" of God, "that he may continue" what he is, and may "daily increase in thy Holy Spirit." It is not, then, the bestowal of the Holy Ghost upon a person who has not yet received Him, but the "renewing" of the Holy Ghost already given in regeneration with new and more abundant gifts. St. Thomas expresses this as follows: "It is manifest that in natural life there is a kind of perfection when one comes to man's estate and can do all the acts proper to manhood. It is therefore true that besides his birth by which one receives the life of the body, there is also increase by which he is brought to perfect age. Just so a man receives spiritual life in Baptism, which is the spiritual new-birth; but in Confirmation a man receives the perfect age of spiritual life, as it were." (*Summa Pars III. Q. LXXII. Art. 1.*) In exact accordance with this teaching of our Prayer Book and of St. Thomas, are the remarks in the commentary of the famous A Lapide on Acts viii. 17. As this is an admirable summing up of what the Fathers and Doctors and other commentators have said, we shall but quote his words: "The fulness of the grace received in baptism is given in the sacrament of confirmation. For this reason St. Cyprian calls it in his 73rd Epistle, to Jubaianus, 'the seal of the Lord with which Christians are perfected,' so that those who were already of the faithful become now soldiers, athletes and warriors for Christ. And St. Melchisedes [or whoever he may be] in his letter to the Spanish Bishops says, 'In baptism we are regenerated to life, in confirmation we are armed to the fight.'" "In the sacrament of confirmation the Holy Ghost is given: First, because there is given an increase of the grace received in baptism and consequently an increase of all virtues. Secondly, because there is given therein the fulness of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, and especially great strength for striving with the devil. Thirdly, the spirit and strength of confessing intrepidly the faith is given. Fourthly, often through this sacrament God performed great miracles, which are the works of the Holy Spirit and of his free-given grace." This then shall suffice for our treatment of the First Thesis, and we pass to the second, which is even more erroneous.

## II. THESIS.

That after our Lord's Baptism the Holy Ghost dwelt in Him in a different way from that He had before.

We have stated this thesis thus mildly, allowing the awful statements of Canon Mason to speak for themselves. Before penning the frightful words of blasphemy (for while no doubt unintentionally so, we can deem them nothing less) he seems to have had a struggle with his good angel; and only added these sentences "with many misgivings and with the heartfelt confession that the subject is far beyond human powers." We shall content ourselves with quoting a few of the most striking statements; the italics are our own. "Then was to come an outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon his human nature for which it was not fully ready till he was 'about thirty years of age' (St. Luke iii. 23.)" (p. 457); "then there burst upon him from heaven that which profoundly modified his whole human life thenceforth, and imparted to him, as man, powers which he had condescended to forego and which he now condescended to receive" (p. 458). "The Babe, from the first moment of his conception, was none other than the Eternal Son; but we are not led to suppose that he was the Christ, except by anticipation, until that historical moment when from the rending heavens, and accompanied by the Father's attesting voice, the Holy Spirit descended like a dove and abode upon him" (p. 458). We tremble as we write these awful words, and may God forgive us if by thus copying them we give them a publicity which they might not otherwise have. The worst is yet to come.

"The central and chief thing observed," says Canon Mason, "was that a new relationship was then established between the human nature of our Lord and the personal Spirit of God" (p. 459). "The Holy Spirit . . . now laid hold of it after a new fashion, to work upon it and through it new results for the world at large. The second point was that . . . the heaven from which he had come was opened to our Lord's eyes, never to be closed up again, so that all Divine knowledge which was required for the salvation and enlightenment of mankind was unfolded to his human gaze." The reader will notice the limitations of this late-given wisdom. "The third was a deepened and heightened assurance of that which he had himself expressed before—the assurance of what he was and . . . of what he was to God, that . . . he was perfectly well-pleasing to the Father" (p. 459). "New powers were his; and the Spirit which had conferred them 'drove' him—'cast him forth' with the constraining might which he had now acquired over\*—." Surely this is enough. What possible belief can the person who can thus write have of the incarnation of the Son of God, and of the wisdom which a human soul gains by the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision?

Of course the descent of the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove at our Lord's baptism bestowed upon Him no gift whatever, no power of any kind, nor did it create any new relations between the sacred humanity and the Divine Spirit. Like our Lord's baptism, it was not for Himself but for others that the dove rested upon Him; He was baptized that He might "sanctify the element of water to the mystical washing away of sins;"† the Spirit descended and abode upon Him that John might be assured that He was the Christ. On this point St. Thomas says: "They who receive confirmation, which is the sacrament of the fulness of grace, are made like unto Christ, inasmuch as he from the first instant of the conception was 'full of grace and truth,' as we read in the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, which fulness of grace was declared at his baptism when the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape upon him. Wherefore also St. Luke says (iv. 1) that 'Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan.' For it was not fitting that Christ, the author of the sacraments, should receive the fulness of grace from a sacrament" (*Summa Pars III. Q. LXXII. Art. I. Ad 4m.*) St. Thomas in another place well quotes St. Augustine: "Nothing could be more absurd than to say that Christ re-

\* Ibid, p. 460.

† Baptism of Adults.

ceived the Holy Ghost when he was thirty years of age; but as he came to baptism devoid of sin, so also he came possessed of the Holy Spirit" (*De Trin.: xv. cap. 26*). St. Thomas had just explained that "all they who receive Christian baptism receive the Holy Ghost, unless they come unworthily, according as it is written in Matt. iii. 2: 'He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.'" (*Summa Pars III. Q. XXXIX. Art. vi.*)

How far Canon Mason has departed from orthodoxy, on both of these points, there can be no doubt. Where they would land him, were they carried out to their logical results, is not hard to see. These are no small matters; they are at the very root of all Christian doctrine, and the mere fact that such words can be written and read without rebuke from those who are vowed to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines, shows how seriously the Nicene faith is in danger. These are no matters for debate "in the schools," no *adiaphora*, no curious logomachies, no harmless latitudes allowed to differing "schools of thought" among the faithful, but they are a direct attack upon the Incarnation of the Son of God as the Catholic Church receives the same, as it has been revealed by God Himself, as it is contained in Holy Scripture, and as we are bound under pain of damnation to believe it. "Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ."—*Catholic Champion*.

## THE STORY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

## THE DRUIDS.

Before those days the islanders followed the faith of the Druids. Julius Cæsar (who invaded the island B.C. 55), has left on record a history of the rites followed by these open air worshippers, whose priests or philosophers exercised great power over their followers, and were reputed the wisest men of the age. "No one," says an old adage, "knows, but God and the holy Druid." They were supreme judges of the land, and had charge of the education of the young. The worship of the Druids was always conducted in the open air, groves or valleys surrounded by trees, especially oak trees, being generally selected.

An earlier mode of worship still is traced by some, in the stones set up in the mystic circles, such as we find at Stonehenge, at Avebury in Wiltshire, at Carnac in Brittany, and other places.

## THE LANGUAGE OF THE BRITONS.

The language of the Britons was Keltic, which agrees with the dialects known as Erse in Ireland, Gaelic in Scotland, and Cymry in Wales. The Gauls spoke the same language, and to this day the Prince of Wales is called, in French, *Prince de Galles*.

## THE LANGUAGE OF THE INVADERS.

The Roman invaders spoke Latin. After them came the German or Anglo-Saxon invaders, then followed the Danes, whose Kings, Sweyn and Canute, spoke the Norse, and it is from the five languages, Keltic, Latin, Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and French, we get our English.\*

## THE CHURCH IN BRITAIN.

The foundation of the Church in this country can be traced to three sources:—

- (1.) The Ancient British Church;
- (2.) To the Mission of Augustine, who evangelized the Pagans south of the Thames (principally in Kent);
- (3.) To the efforts of Irish and Scotch missionaries, who converted the Northern and Midland Counties.

"When was the Christian Faith first preached in Britain? is a question," writes Professor Bright,† "which it is impossible to answer." "We see," says the historian Fuller, "the light of the word shined here, but see not who kindled it." Some language of Theodoret, which associates St. Paul with the other Apostles, speaks of them as having evangelized the Britons; and though it is possible that St. Paul himself, as already stated, visited our shores, there is really no proof of his coming. In

\* See on this and other matters a pamphlet by Canon Trevor, *Our Parish* (1899). A capital history of a most interesting parish.† Bright's *Early Church History*, p. 1.