

of the mysteries of God to reveal the things which had hitherto been kept secret, which many prophets and religious men who desired to see in vain, but which were now made known to all mankind, and in this way did bind on earth and loose on earth—pronounced the grounds of condemnation and the means of justification—here the saviour of life unto life and death unto death—thus opening and shutting the kingdom of God.

#### Extraordinary Powers granted to the Apostles.

Much of what has been said concerning the authority given to Simon Peter has an equal application to the preaching words of the Lord to the Apostles, collectively. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained. Undoubtedly these words, in their just and simple interpretation, convey an authority to remit or retain sin; nor can we be surprised if such an authority was committed to the twelve. We know that on some occasions at least, together with natural powers, they were also endowed with supernatural intelligence. John and Peter were able to read the heart of Phineas and see that he was faithful, and Peter showed the like discernment when he discovered the hypocrisy of Ananias. They who could heal the sick and recall the dead to life—or, on the other hand, as Paul could strike Elymas with blindness—might well be entrusted with the power of retaining or absolving transgressions. Other extraordinary powers were granted to the apostles. The circumstances in which they were placed, the work in which they were employed, required such a seal to the authority which they claimed. The Lord, therefore, gave testimony to the word of His grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by them. God wrought special miracles to be done by the hand of Paul unto those whose bodies were sick and who cried unto him; and the diseases departed from Timothy and the evil spirits went out of him. Again, they brought forth the sick into the streets, laid on beds and couches, that the least shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

#### No such Powers extended to their Successors.

Those who succeeded the apostles in the ministry of the Church had no such power extended unto them.—Why should it be? That greater power remained—the power of remitting and retaining sin or of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven, otherwise as belonged—as implied in our ordination service—to all who are lawfully called to minister in the Church, and so to declare the terms of admission and exclusion.—The link is entirely wanting which should connect the promise attending the commission of the apostles with the commission given to future ministers of the Church. And for evident reasons. Extraordinary powers were granted while needed, and no longer; but it is remarkable, further, that the apostles themselves have left no example of the exercise of special absolution.—Peter did not address his countrymen on the day of Pentecost and say—“Ye have confessed your sinfulness in crucifying the Prince of Life, and by the authority which He has given me I absolve you from that sin.” He uses the power of his keys in a very different manner in opening the door of the kingdom to them, saying:—“Repent ye, and be baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.” The same Peter, with his companion John, in healing the beggar at the gate of the temple, did not usurp their Lord's words, and announce to the cripple, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” He was satisfied with saying, “In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ rise up and walk.” When the gaoler of Philippi appealed to Paul and Silas, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” the answer was, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” Here we hear nothing of absolution. St. Paul's forgiveness of the Corinthian offender was no sentence of absolution. He merely signified his assent to the restoration if the Corinthian brethren were convinced of his repentance.

#### Traditions of men superseding the Oracles of God.

The simple assurance, “To whom ye forgive, I forgive also,” is a singular contrast to the solemn form of absolution which prevailed in a later age, when the traditions of men superseded the oracles of God. Yet this case the case of the Corinthian is the case of sin after baptism, between which and the sin of unbaptised persons a distinction is made which has no warrant in Scripture. One of the principal advocates of the system tells us there will be a difficulty in the case of very grievous sin of the Christian as to what is the amount of his restoration. How does he know he is restored? Is his reconciliation complete? Can he be restored

after any degree of sin? If he were not aware of the effect of a preconceived idea in blinding the eyes of the understanding, we might wonder at a doubt like this in the mind of a master of Israel, who has been all his life accustomed to the communion service of our Church, and heard the words there selected from the Scriptures and applied to all believers—“Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. “If any man will have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins.” Was it to the heathen—was it to the unbaptised—that St. John addressed the assurance which our Church has placed in the preparatory of her service—“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but, if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” That disregard of the context, and of the argument to which single sentences belong, which is common with a certain class of writers, has wrested the passage of the Hebrews from its proper purpose and applied it to all wilful sin; whereas St. Paul says no more than that, if those who have been enlightened by a knowledge of the truth, and have tasted of the Good word of God, fall away—fall, that is not into sin, but into apostasy, it is impossible to renew them unto repentance. In a former passage of the same epistle, St. Paul was warning his countrymen against a deliberate abandonment of the path which they had once deliberately entered.—Such an apostate is in a hopeless state—a hopeless state according to man—though what is impossible with man is possible with God. But there is this moral barrier against his return—that no motive can be proposed to him which he has not already resisted, and he has done such despite unto the Spirit of God that his recall to the faith and state of grace would not be in usual accordance with the Divine Being. He has sinned wilfully in renouncing the only name given under heaven whereby he may be saved; and to one who has rejected the full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice of the Son of God, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. To interpret such a passage like this as if it related to every sin—as if it were the sin of ignorance—would be to contradict the whole tenor of Scripture as well as the passage which I just now cited. We might, besides, allow the literality of St. John's word—“He that is born of God sinneth not.” Scripture must be compared with Scripture, for it contains no false doctrines.

#### News Department.

##### INTOLERANCE AND INGRATITUDE.

If there is one country in Europe that owes a deep debt of gratitude to the English people, it is Spain.—Freed from foreign aggression by a vast expenditure of British blood and treasure, and sustained, for a time, among the nations by British influence, it might reasonably have been expected that she would, on all fitting occasions, have exhibited a proportionate desire to favour the land and its people, from whom she had received so much. But oddly enough, she has constantly shown a disposition the very reverse of this, and seems, indeed, to have neglected no opportunity of insulting her benefactor—illustrating the old maxim that men hate most those to whom they are most obliged. A curious instance has just come to light, which is exciting the unbounded indignation of our protestant fellow subjects in England. It seems that a Protestant in Spain was not recognized at all. He did not dare, living, to make open profession of his faith; and his friends dared not bury him when dead, save privately, and in some hole for which they paid an exorbitant price. After much indignant remonstrance, however, on the part of England, the Spanish Government has graciously declared that deceased British Protestants may now be interred in an assigned spot of ground—the locality being a filthy one, beyond the walls, where “no church, chapel, or any other sign of a temple, or of public or private worship will be allowed to be built.” It has further decreed, that it shall be an offence against the laws, if the body be conveyed to the ground publicly—if the mourners bear about them signs of their sorrow—if any prayer be uttered over the grave—if any minister appear on the occasion—if any service of a religious nature be attempted before the body be committed to the earth—if any stone be erected as a memorial after the sad scene is over.—Such an exhibition of infamous bigotry and intolerance the world has never before witnessed. Spanish Papists must be in real alarm for the security of their faith, when they consider it expedient to adopt such an unheard-of course. “We do not see,” says the *London*

*Times*, “how, under a law like this, any Englishman and Protestant dying at Madrid can possibly receive any other interment than that of a dog.”

“It is difficult,” says the leading English Journal again, “to speak with the respect due to a Foreign State of such legislation as this ordinance displays, and though we are loth to seek any incidental aggravations of a case so unapproachable in its own disgracefulness, we cannot easily forget that the nation thus treated by the Spanish Government, is that to which Spain is indebted for its own national existence.—British arms preserved it in its contest for independence and its struggle for constitutionalism, and at this very moment, when a favor is made of permitting Englishmen to receive the burial of brutes upon Spanish ground, Spaniards are indebted to Englishmen in an amount of money which would purchase half the territory of their kingdom. We do not, however, visit the whole responsibility of this infamous bigotry on the members of the Spanish Administration. The proceeding is too monstrous for any genius but that of Popery itself, it is the work, not of politicians, but of priests—and if Englishmen need any further evidence of what rampant Popery will dare, we commend to their careful recollection this preposterous law, by which dead Protestants are ranked with communicated malefactors, and forbidden to be buried in Spanish ground with any forms of decency or religion.”—*Ch. Witness.*

VAGABONDISM IN LONDON.—A Parliamentary paper lately published gives the following enumeration of children in the Great English metropolis, below the apparent age of fourteen, and found at large as mendicants and thieves. In 94 cases there were no traces of parents: 231 had parents capable of maintaining and educating them; 580 had parents capable of contributing to these purposes; 411 were sent out by parents to beg. Total number of children at large in London, 1,316. Another return gives an account of children similar age, not at large, but found in lodging houses as mendicants and thieves: 40 were without parents; 115 had parents able to maintain them; 1,190 parents capable of contributing; 433 sent out to beg. Total in lodging houses, 1,782. General total 3,098 juvenile mendicants and thieves. It is stated in a note to the return that the number of children living in idleness, without education, and neglected by parents are generally in the receipt of wages, amounts to 641 under fifteen years of age. Of these, 911 are charged with other offences than begging and theft. If such be the case in London, what must be the aggregate throughout the kingdom?

THE ENGLISH CHURCH AT GENEVA.—The highly interesting ceremony of the consecration of the church of the Holy Trinity, for the English congregation of Geneva, was performed on Tuesday, August 30, by the Bishop of Winchester, the Bishop of London having waived his right to officiate, at the request of the congregation, in consideration of the long connexion and intimate relations between the Bishop of Winchester and Geneva.

The bishop was met at the entrance of the church by Lieutenant-Colonel Williams and the committee and after performance of the usual service, he preached a very eloquent and powerful sermon from the text, 2 Thess. iii. 1, “Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.” He referred with pride and pleasure to the circumstances of the day—the readiness with which Geneva had assisted his countrymen in the times of the Marian persecution when Calvin, in 1555, had proposed that a new church should be given them, wherein to preach the Gospel—because (to use the words of the old archives) the English had formerly received other nations and given them churches, but it now pleased God to afflict them. His lordship contrasted very happily the present position of the English congregation with that of their ancestors, although each word received with the same spirit of cordial welcome at Geneva.

He then enlarged on the question of what was the true “Word of God,” not, he said, of their great opponent Rome, which made the Bible a sealed book and scrupled not to avow an open hostility to its circulation. He then called upon his English hearers to contribute largely and most liberally towards the discharge of the debt which the Committee had incurred and thanked the Government in the strongest terms for its liberality.

The church was much thronged, as well by English residents and visitors as by many of the most distinguished inhabitants of Geneva and its vicinity, and