

XXIII. Secondly, I object to parts of the service of the public Baptism of Infants. The following are some of the particulars:—

1. 'We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign him with the sign of the cross.' [Here the priest shall make a cross upon the forehead of the child.]—Where is the utility of this Popish signature?

2. 'Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's church.'—Where is the proof? Again, 'We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit.'

3. 'Note.—That there shall be for every male child—to be baptized, two godfathers and one godmother; and, for every female, one godfather and two godmothers.'—Where is the use of these persons?

4. 'Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain glory and pomp of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow, nor be led by them?' 'I renounce them all.' i. e., for the child, and perhaps had not yet renounced them for him or herself. But, supposing the latter done, yet, with all the explanation afforded, it is yet unexplained how the former can be done.

XXIV. Thirdly, I object to a part of the Catechism.

'Who gave you this name?'
'My godfathers and godmothers, in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.' The proof?

XXV. Fourthly, I object to the form of Absolution, in the service of the Visitation of the Sick, as savouring too much of Popery.
'I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'—If the priest here profess to forgive sins, is it not blasphemy? If he do not, is it not folly, and even worse, to use words which may deceive the unwary? 'Why doth this man thus speak blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God only?'

XXVI. Fifthly, the order of Confirmation is objectionable.

1. 'Do ye here, in the presence of God and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your Baptism?' Before a covenant is renewed, it must be first made; and the proof is yet to be found that the promise of the sponsors (however good in itself) is binding on other than themselves.

2. 'Almighty and everlasting God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins.' If all the young people who come to confirmation had regeneration and forgiveness, how is the priest or bishop to know it? If they have not, what an untruth does the bishop declare!

3. 'We make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy servants, upon whom (after the example of thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands, to certify to them (by this sign) thy favour and gracious goodness towards them.' Where is it learned that the Apostles ever practised such a ceremony as that of confirmation by this church? Surely it is not in the New Testament. Where is it learned that the hands of a bishop can certify to a sinner the favour of God? The whole ceremony of modern confirmation, as well as the system of godfathers and godmothers going before it, can hardly have a defence, and is open to constant attack, from reason or from ridicule. 'And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.'

XXVII. Sixthly, the ceremony of the Ring in the form of the solemnization of Matrimony is an old objection, but as strong as ever.

'With this ring I thee wed, and with my body I thee worship.'
If the word 'worship' signify here adoration, the act is idolatrous; and if it do not, why is it retained? why is not a better word substituted? 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'

XXVIII. Seventhly, the repetitions in the Sunday morning's service are very tiresome and blameable.