

ceses in British North America. It says, "Imagine the clergy of a poor diocese to receive once a year a true-hearted sympathetic visit from their Bishop, for consultation and encouragement! It is simply impossible now for a Bishop to accomplish one-third of the work required of him, if he would do all that his diocese demands. In many of our existing dioceses he cannot, as now circumstanced, carry out the ideal of a Bishop, as pictured by the venerable Bede, although the picture describes nothing more than a Bishop ought to be, and could be, if his duty were limited to a fair amount. East London needs a Bishop who would meet and consult with the clergy and church wardens, hold many Confirmations, preach, attend meetings on Church subjects, and be the Spiritual Father, Counsellor and Friend of every parish throughout the diocese. Such a man would be a cause of solid, lasting work, and true life in every direction. The Church does not need stimulus so much as solid and permanent work, such as she can secure, and is sure to obtain by an increased Episcopate."

Surely these are but the words of truth and soberness worthy of particular consideration by us all here in America.

All this is strong enough, but to our minds there is inseparably connected with the subject something of far greater importance both to our Church as a Communion, and to the spiritual life of every individual baptized member of it.

It must be remembered that we are an *Episcopal* Church, in contradistinction to the many religious bodies who have wilfully, or otherwise, ignored that Divine, scriptural,

and primitive order and office in the Church of Christ. But to be an overseer of the flock carries with it much more than supervision. There are certain rites which none but a Bishop can perform—notably in the present consideration that of Confirmation.

Confirmation is recognized by the Church both as a personal assumption of the Baptismal vows which were made, on each individual's behalf, in infancy by others, and also as a preliminary step and means of reception into full communion and admission to partake at the Holy Table of the gifts God has provided for the sustenance of the Faithful; and likewise (most important truth) a means of grace *in itself* whereby special strength and blessing are to be obtained by special outpouring of God's Holy Spirit.

Is all this the Church's idea? Does she claim these as blessed Truths? If they be so, and are taught by every clergyman calling her Mother, whether he be "high" or "low," must it not appear a mere hollow pretense to the minds of those who judge only by appearances, when they find the poor weak ones shut out for three years from these helps, these blessings these spiritual gifts, and allowed to wander unaided and unsupported through a world where a power beyond that of man's own strength is needed to enable him to fight successfully the good fight of Faith? And not only to the outsider must it seem so, but must it not also weaken the religious principles, and check the religious aspirations of the baptized, of the many who would wish to receive further gifts of Divine grace?