

Poetry.

ORDINATION.

When this, the Congregation shall be desired secretly in their prayers to make their humble supplications to God for all these things, for the which prayers there shall be silence kept for a space.

After which shall be sung or said by the Bishop, (the persons to be ordained Priests all kneeling,) "Veni, Creator Spiritus," Rubric in the Office for Ordaining of Priests.

"Was silence in thy temple, Lord,
When slowly through the hollow'd air
The spreading cloud of incense soar'd,
Chang'd with the breath of Israel's prayer.

"Was silence round thy throne on high,
When the loud wondrous seal unroll'd,
And in the portals of the sky
Thine armies awfully repos'd.

"At this deep pause, that'er us now
Is hovering—comes it not of Thee?
Is it not like a Mother's woe,
When with her darling on her knee,
She weighs and numbers o'er and o'er,
Love's treasure hid in her fond breast,
To call from that exhaustless store
The dearest blessing and the best?"

"And where shall Mother's bosom find,
With all its deep love-learned skill,
A prayer so sweetly to be said,
As, in this sacred hour and still,
Is wafted from the white-robb'd choir,
Ere yet the pure high-breathed lay,
"Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
Rise floating on its dovish way."

"And when it comes, so deep and clear
The strain, so soft the melting fall,
It seems not to th' entranced ear,
Less than thine own heart-cheering call,
Spirit of Christ—thine earnest given
That these our prayers are heard, and they,
Who grasp, this hour, the sword of Heaven,
Shall feel them on their weary way."

"Of as thou or soothing eve
Over the Holy Fountain they lean,
Their fading garlands freshly weave,
Or fan them with thine airs serene,
Spirit of Light and Truth! to Thee
We trust them in that nursing hour,
Till they, with open heart and free,
Teach all Thy word in all its power."

"When foemen watch their tents by night,
And misty bands of war are near,
When Passion's storms are loud and high,
And hounding o'er remember'd sin
The heart dies down—O mightiest then,
Come ever true, and ever near,
And wake their slumbering love again,
Spirit of God's most holy Fear!"

John Hacket—who has sometimes been designated "the Ezra of his age," who was one of those who in very perilous times witnessed a good confession, and very forth to stem, as far as in him lay, the flood tide of apostasy—was born in the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-fields, in the Strand, near the place where Exeter house formerly stood, Sept. 1st, A.D. 1692. He was the only son of Andrew Hacket, a native of Scotland, who was a senior burgess of Westminster, and afterwards keeper of the robes to prince Henry, son of James I. Being a zealous protestant, he took great care of John's education, and sent him at a very early age to the college school, Westminster, where his talents and love for learning gained him the kind regard of his master, Mr. Richard Ireland. Dr. Lancelot Andrews, afterwards successively bishop of Chichester, Ely and Winchester, was then dean of Westminster, whose custom it was, when Mr. Ireland was absent from the school, to examine the scholars. He soon discovered the talents of young Hacket, continuing to show him kindness from that period till his own death.

Hacket was elected, with George Herbert (the name requires no epithet), to Trinity College, Cambridge, A.D. 1698; and Dr. Thomas Neville, the master of the college, who gave him the appointment, is said to have been so impressed with a conviction of his acquirements, that he declared to his father, "he would rather carry him on his back to Cambridge, than lose him from his college." He was there so much noted for his studies and great proficiency in learning and purity of conduct, that he was shortly elected fellow; and, continuing there for a few years in the charge of pupils, was in high reputation as a tutor. In 1618 he was ordained by Mr. John King, bishop of London, a skilful divine and promoter of missions to the new English settlements in America, who seems to have intended his preference; but in 1621 he was induced to accept an offer of a chaplaincy to Dr. John Williams, bishop of Lincoln, afterwards archbishop of York, keeper of the great seal; by whom he was recommended to be chaplain to King James, who in 1624 preferred him to the rectory of St. Andrew's, Holborn, and afterwards added to that of Cheam, in Surrey. These livings he held till the rebellion broke out in 1642, being constantly resident at one of them; and at his church of Holborn he was distinguished as well for his excellent preaching as for his good order in his parochial charge. As a proof of his activity and zeal, it is related that, finding the Church in much decay, he eagerly solicited his great friends to contribute to the rebuilding, and had obtained some thousands of pounds for that purpose; but the members of the Long Parliament, chiefly consisting of presbyterians, most iniquitously seized upon that fund, as they did also on a large sum of money collected for the repair of St. Paul's cathedral, to carry on their rebellious war against King Charles. The consciences of these members, like that of all other republicans, were of a most accommodating character. The spirit with which Dr. Hacket acted, may be inferred from his motto—"Serve God, and be cheerful." Little indeed does the world know of the cheerfulness of serving God—of the joyfulness of the children of Zion in their King.

Dr. Hacket next obtained the archdeaconry of Bedford and a canon residentiaryship of St. Paul's; he was diligent in promoting every effort that was made for peace; and consented to be named as one of a committee, with several eminent bishops and presbyters, to consider certain reforms then proposed in the liturgy and government of the Church. While thus employed, a bill being brought before the house of commons for the abolition of the cathedral clergy, he was chosen by the heads of that body of clergy to plead the cause of the Church at the bar of the house. He appeared there on the 12th of May, 1641, where, we are told, he spoke with such persuasion in defence of choral music, and in praise of the noble edifices supported by cathedral institutions, and the encouragement thus afforded to scriptural preaching and sound learning, that for a time the spoliation then meditated was deferred; the authors of the measure foreseeing that it had been put to the vote, a large majority would have refused their sanction to the act of sacrilege.

His speech concluded with these prophetic words:—"Upon the ruins of the rewards of learning to structure can be raised up, but ignorance, and upon the chaos of ignorance no structure can be built but prophanity and confusion." The public confusion and profanation still increasing, the bishops were deprived of those votes in the legislature which they had enjoyed from the first conversion of these kingdoms to the Christian faith; and Dr. Hacket retired to Cheam, which he kept during the usurpation. St. Andrew's and his dignities were taken from him; he was imprisoned for some time by the rebel army, under the earl of Essex; but the committee of the Long Parliament, then sitting in Surrey, and labouring for the removal of scandalous ministers, were unable to find any pretext for ejecting him. Scandalous ministers, indeed! If it had not been for these scandalous men, what now would have been the spiritual state of our land? He continued to use the liturgy of the Church of England till its public use was forbidden. Of his integrity in so doing we have the following instance:—"Although subjected to heavy penalties during these barbarous and bloody times, he continued to read the service in the parish church of St. Andrew's, Holborn. One day while on his knees, like a second Daniel with the lions in view, a sergeant with a body of soldiers entered the Church and threatened him with instant death if he did not leave off. 'Soldiers,' said the intrepid soldier and servant of a higher and better Master, 'I am doing my duty, do you do yours,' and with a louder and firmer voice he continued the service. Thus, in the language of the psalmist, 'made he even his enemies to be at peace with him; for the soldiers, awed by his courage, left him to finish the service.'

Dr. Hacket was more fortunate than the majority of sufferers, in having his life spared to the restoration, when he was appointed by lord Clarendon to the bishopric of Gloucester. This he declined; but in about a year afterwards, was promoted to the see of Lichfield and Coventry. He was now nearly seventy years of age, and had been the father of a large family. The cathedral had been reduced by the civil wars almost to a heap of ruins. The stone roof, and the timber and lead above, the glass and iron from the windows, the organ and all the internal decorations, were completely destroyed or carried off among the spoils. The loyalists had used it as a garrison for the king, and a marksman from the roof had killed with a musket shot, the rebel general, lord Brooke, as he was leading his troop to summon them to surrender. He had taken possession of Lichfield, and was viewing from a window St. Chad's cathedral, in which a party of the loyalists had fortified themselves. He was cased in complete armour, but was shot through the eye by the ball. Lord Brooke was a zealous puritan, and had formerly said he hoped to see with his eyes the ruin of all the cathedrals in England. It was a superstitious remark of the loyalists that he was killed on St. Chad's day, by a shot from St. Chad's cathedral, which pierced that very eye by which he hoped to see the ruin of all cathedrals. The adherents of lord Brooke pointed their artillery at the building, battered down the spire, and a great part of the fabric; two thousand shot of great ordnance and fifteen hundred hand-grenades having been discharged against it before it surrendered. This was a comfortable sight to the bishop; but the morning after his arrival he set his own carriage-horses to work, with other teams, to carry away the rubbish; and, as soon as it was cleared, procured builders and artisans to restore the pile. In this he was successful, contributing himself a great part of the expense, and aided by benefactions from the gentry of the neighbouring counties, so that before his death he saw the whole church completely restored. He also laid out a large sum in repairing his residence house at Lichfield, the former having been destroyed in the rebellion, and did much to settle a pious and laborious clergy in his diocese. He did not allow his advanced age to be a plea for idleness, but was indefatigable in the exercise of his episcopal functions, and being a regular and constant preacher. The times in which he lived were peculiar, and it required the greatest exercise of zeal and prudence to restore the church to that station and rank which it formerly held. Enemies were on every side—popery here, puritanism there: the *via media* was the grand object of his anxiety. The people received him as he travelled in his visitations with the greatest marks of esteem; and thousands came to receive at his hands the long neglected rite of confirmation. Having dedicated the restored cathedral on Christmas eve, 1669, he died on the 28th of Oct. 1670. He was buried in the cathedral, where a handsome monument was erected by his memory by his son, Sir Andrew Hacket, one of the masters in Chancery. A great bell was raised by him to its place in the steeple of the cathedral; the first knell it sounded was for his own departure.

The only portion of his writings which is known to have been published under his name, is "A Century of Sermons," which had been preached by him; to which is prefixed a short account of his life, by the editor, Thomas Plume, D. D., afterwards archdeacon of Rochester, fol. 1676. The life of archbishop Williams, in folio, abridged by Ambrose Phillips, is also referred to him. A small treatise however, "Christian Consolations," has been ascribed to him; a new edition of which has lately been published, with his name affixed as the author.

It is somewhat difficult to understand, why such an institution should be censured by any at all versed in the usages of the ancient church, and perfectly incomprehensible why it should be condemned by presbyterians, who stand committed to respect it, not only by the reformation usages of the Church of Scotland, but by the importance attached to it by some of the more eminent authorities of their own denomination. With regard to the office itself, the Church of England has never, to my knowledge, placed it upon the foundation of a divine ordinance. It is regarded by her as one of those ecclesiastical regulations which a church has a right to make on the score of their propriety and tendency to edification, and in favour of which she can undoubtedly claim the sanction of the Christian Church from a very early period. Bent, as it would seem, on the destruction of an institution, as much their own as ours, our opponents struggle to limit the time of its creation to the age of Augustine. A slight investigation of antiquity might have saved them from this error; or if they shrunk from the labour of that enquiry, a reference to the centuriators of Magdeburg—upon all sides confessed to be most accurate annals of the progress of usages and opinions—would have instructed them that they, taking their stand upon Tertullian's Treatise on Baptism, had admitted the sponsorial institution to have been in the Church at least two centuries before the era the presby-

assign to it.* Learned men have found it even higher up the stream than this, and think, that the identical and natural manner in which Tertullian alludes to it is a conclusive evidence of its being, not a new, but a settled institution in the Church of his day. So much for the unnecessarily disputed point of its antiquity.—With regard to the office itself, it seems to me that our opponents, in taking up the ground they have done,—that is, in making the profession of the sponsors to be the mere declaration of their own personal belief and religious intentions for the satisfaction of the Church—have assumed an unsound position as ever occupied by ministers, and shown themselves unequal to embrace the mastery theology of such divines as Hooker and Calvin. The sponsors are not at the baptismal font to declare any thing concerning their own religion. The Church of England, by requiring that every sponsor should be a communicant—that is, a person who has ratified his baptismal engagements at the Lord's table, and is considered by the Church in communion—satisfies herself as to his personal orthodoxy. For what more could any man proclaim respecting himself by a verbal confession of his faith, than what he declares by taking his place at the table. The Church has no more assurance of a man's views being sound and his intentions pious, by any reply he may make to questions, than she has by his adoption of the prayers and dedication of our communion service. It seems to me that the Church, in putting interrogatories to the sponsors, and receiving replies from them, goes on the principal of requiring pledges before she admits a child into the circle of her adopted children. She cannot lose sight of the fact that she is a regular and a religious society, and that it is of the nature of all societies, which are in any degree peculiar or exclusive, to require from all who desire to be members of them, certain assurances that they will be members of their rules. In every admission to any society this is done, either formally by declaration, or tacitly by implication. And the Church, standing in the midst of the unbaptized world as an exclusive society, would not be justified in taking any into membership and into a participation of her privileges, without demanding from them a pledge that they will conform to her principles and usages. Were it otherwise, she would cease to be a society, and degenerate into a lawless combination. It is this assurance that the sponsors in baptism convey to the Church, and without which she could not consistently confer the initiatory rite. The question which she has to entertain is not whether the offspring of her members have a claim on her for admission into membership, but whether she, as the guardian of certain privileges, is justified in admitting them, without taking a single security that they will not violate her laws, and affix dishonour to her. And therefore when the parent or sponsor leads the infant to the Church, she admits the validity of their demand on behalf of that child, but requires them to make it safe for her to comply with it, by entering into stipulations on its account. There is no doubt that an individual might have an hereditary claim on the monarch, for a high office under the crown, but there is also no doubt that the monarch would not act upon that claim by conferring it, without first requiring the applicant to take the oaths of office. And this distinction it is which the divines of past ages saw so clearly, and which is strangely overlooked by the shallow of our own times. Thus we find Hooker arguing:—"The law of Christ requiring therefore faith and newness of life in all men, by virtue of the covenant which they make in baptism, is it to wish that the Church in baptism exacteth at every man's hand an express profession of faith and an irrevocable promise of obedience, by way of solemn stipulation?" Thus Calvin (to whose authority, perchance, our opponents will bow with deeper deference than to Hooker's) says—"We stipulate of them who present children that they shall instruct them, when adults, in that faith in which they are baptized. If no one becomes security, undoubtedly baptism is profaned."—And again, in one of his epistles to Knox—"Meanwhile, we confess that a sponsor is necessary, for nothing could be more preposterous than that those should be inserted into the body of Christ, whom we do not hope will be his disciples. Wherefore, if no relation appears who pledges his faith to the Church, and undertakes the care of teaching infants, the thing is a mockery, and baptism is polluted."—To the very same effect writes Beza—an author whom our opponents do not scruple to pronounce "unfavourable to our system of sponsors,"—"To use a convenient form of prayer and explanation of the nature of baptism, and sponsors to undertake for the child's religious education, being rites of an innocent simplicity and gravity, and in no wise symbolical, and free from giving the least occasion to superstition, who would dare to condemn; unless he will undergo the apostle's censure, who commands—'Let all things be done decently and in order.'" These quotations will sufficiently shew in what light the divines of other times regarded the office of the sponsor.

2. As to the objection made to sponsorial pledges, on the ground that "the sponsors do not intend to fulfil them," I shall leave such a gratuitous charge of intentional perjury levelled against all who have undertaken the office in the Church of England, to witner in the contempt it merits; and as to the objection built upon the ground of the impropriety of any pledges being given, I shall leave our opponents to contest that point with Calvin, with the ancient Church, and with the reason of things. If they themselves baptize without stipulating (as far as lies within the power of superstitious) the children admitted to membership shall be consistent and orthodox Christians, they have the assurance of their very highest authority, that the "ordinance is a mockery," and the whole proceeding "preposterous." They pretend that their denomination is a Christian Society, and yet have no universal test of membership. They require that its population shall be a Christian one, and yet take no security that it shall become such. They take children into covenant, and take them without pledges. This is of a piece with their whole system. But with us, so far as these regulations from being open to the animadversions heaped upon them, that they are, of all others, eminently calculated (if honestly carried out) to ensure that our children shall grow up in the admission of the Lord. The Church, by assuming that the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon the baptized infant (and the possibility, may, the probability of that, our opponents dare not deny) gives all encouragement to sponsors to labour in the religious education of their spiritual children. For there is placed before their eyes the grounds of a persuasion that they have within that child a material whereon to work, that their duty is not to cultivate the untill'd and unown'd ground, or to implant a principle of grace which it is beyond man's ability to confer, but to labour upon a principle already supposed to be existent, and so bring all likely means to bear upon it, as that in time it may exhibit itself in those thoughtful frames and serious impressions which indicate that the spirit is gradually assuming a supremacy over the flesh. And still further, the Church, by requiring the sponsors to promise that (as far as in them lies) the objects of their pledge "shall believe all the articles of the faith, shall renounce the world, the flesh and the devil, shall obediently keep God's will and commandments," supplies to them a most constraining incentive to exertion. For upon them

does she lay the solemn duty of redeeming the pledge they have publicly given. She has taken—and that with the most honest and simple-minded confidence—their assurance, that the children entrusted to their guardianship shall be all that they have promised they shall be; and she trusts, she expects that she will not be deceived. Upon their engagement she has taken the children, for whom they have professed a kindly interest, into her bosom; and she will not allow herself to suspect that they, in whom she has confided, have only spoken to delude, that they have obtained her gifts on false pretences, and were resolved, while making dole to trample on their obligations. And therefore does the Church tell them "that it is their parts and duties to see that the children be taught, so soon as they shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise and profession, they have made here by them." This is the point at which the sponsors are to aim, to realize the Church's expectations. The idea of what a young Christian ought to be, as sketched out for them in the services, the means by which that picture may, under God, become a reality, are suggested, the sponsorial responsibility is solemnly announced, and the sureties dismissed in possession of their new charge, to act like men of probity, of honour, and of religion, and after a while to lead back that child from the font to the table, as one upon whom their labour of love has not been in vain. It is true, most true, that they cannot command all this result. The increase is of God; yet the planting and the watering are of man; and as God demands from no man that which is beyond his power, he expects not that those sponsors shall make their charge such. Having toiled upon the field which the Church has given them to cultivate (so that that toil has been conducted in faith, in sincerity and in prayer), their task is done, their responsibility ended, their pledge redeemed. If they may not say to the Church "we have realized the conceptions of baptism," they may say, "we have done what we could." It is upon this principle that all suretyship is conducted. Who can tell when he enters into any engagement for another, that it will be unquestionably fulfilled? That result is in no one's power; but it is in every one's power to do his best towards it. And there is no more unfitness in the sponsors engaging that the child shall be what the Church expects, than there is in the preceptor pledging himself that the pupil shall be all that the parents expect. Both engagements are made with that implied and admitted reservation which enters into all pledges made on behalf of others.

3. If then the institution itself be thus conceived in the purest spirit of Christian trust, and be thus recommended by the principles of the most consistent theology, is it necessary to defend that feature of it which consists in *others besides parents being required by us as sponsors?* In assailing this rule, our opponents take their usual care to put the point upon false grounds. It is not true, as they allege, that "we prevent parents at the baptism of their children from acknowledging their responsibility;" neither is it true that "we encourage them in the neglect of parental obligations;" on the contrary, the rubric before the confirmation service enjoins fathers and mothers to see to the religious education of their offspring. The principle of the church of England is this, that every child should have two sets of sponsors; one provided by nature, and the second by the impulse of that Christian kindness and fellowship, which suggests that "we should not look any man on his own first; (the child's natural parents) she supposes to be sufficiently constrained by the ties of innate affection, and therefore she wills not that they should appear before the congregation in the character of special ecclesiastical sureties. But inasmuch as the parents may neglect their duty, or be, by God's dispensations, removed from the church, she takes care that those who are to be brought up under her fostering care shall not be doubly orphaned, but provided with some who pledged to herself to attend to their religious welfare. Parents are bound to this duty in the sight of God; God-parents in the eye of the church. We substitute not the one control for the other, but we superadd the one to the other. Is it not strange, that our opponents should be so unlearned in the theology of their own school, as not to know that this system stands commended both by the correspondence of Calvin and the rubrics of Knox? The former of these distinguished men says—"We baptize not infants but in public; for it seems absurd that a public reception should have few witnesses. Fathers, unless hindered, are ordered to be present, that they may respond to the stipulations, together with the sponsors."—Again—"Parents should be obliged to offer their own children, and be the prime sponsors." The latter, in the rubric prefixed to the 'order of baptism,' enjoins that "the infant who is to be baptized shall be brought to the church on the day appointed for common prayer and preaching, accompanied with the father and Godfather," and instructs the minister to say to them, "To the intent that we may be assured that you, the father and the surety, consent to the performance hereof, declare here before the face of God's congregation the sum of that faith wherein ye believe and will instruct this child." The difference then between the practice of Geneva and Scotland, and the church of England is this, that all recognizing the propriety of the sponsorial office distinct from the parental, the first two require parents to be present at the time of making the engagements, and the latter regarding them as pledged without a formal pledge, secures for the child the protection of three others, distinct from and superadded to its natural guardians. And as for the advantages secured by this most justifiable provision, I cannot state them in words more true or Catholic than those of the French church:—"Sith it is a very ancient custom, and introduced for a good end, to wit, to testify the sureties' faith and the baptism of the infant, and also for that they charge themselves with the care of educating the child, in case that it should be deprived of its parents by death, and for that it doth maintain a sweet communion among the faithful, by a conjunction of friendship—they who will not observe it, but will by themselves present their own children, shall be earnestly entreated not to be contentious, but to conform to the ancient and accustomed order, it being very good and profitable."

ARCHBISHOP LAUD AND FISHER THE JESUIT.
(From *Life and Times of Archbishop Laud*, by J. Parker Lawson, M.A.)

The situation of the Church at this period was truly hazardous. Attacked on the one hand by the Papists, and on the other by the Puritans, it required the greatest skill in those who regarded the interests of the Reformation, and the welfare of Church and State, to restrain the hostile intentions of those factions. No sooner had the Parliament been dissolved, than the Papists began to exert themselves with the greatest activity. The Puritans were chiefly popular among the lower classes, who were sufficiently illiterate, and were generally treated with contempt by the higher orders of the kingdom. The Papists, however, who could also reckon a considerable number of adherents among the rabble, were more ambitious, and endeavoured to secure adherents among the nobility. For this purpose they laid a most crafty plot, and began first to practise on the Duchess of Buckingham, the lady of the celebrated court favourite; not doubting, that if they were successful in inducing her to recant, they might have some chance of favour

for their tenets from her husband. The famous John Fisher, the Jesuit, had undertaken the task of managing the lady, and he had succeeded so well, that she was beginning to think favourably of the superstition. But the Jesuit's designs were reported to the king, who was himself not wanting in ability to argue the matter, and who frequently discoursed to her on the subject. James, however, feeling interested in the lady, and resolving to silence the Jesuit at once by fair argument, advised the Duke to appoint a conference between Fisher and a learned divine of the Church, on the errors of the Romish superstition.—The Duke agreed, and Dr. Francis White, then Rector of St. Peter's, Cornhill, afterwards Bishop of Ely, was appointed to meet the Jesuit. Three disputes were held in the presence of the Duke of Buckingham, his mother, his lady, and the Lord Keeper Williams, on the 24th of May, 1622, the last was conducted by Laud. The result was as might have been expected: Laud was more than a match for the Jesuit in learning, and victory was declared on the side of truth.†

It is impossible here to give an abstract of Laud's admirable arguments. An account of the conference was published in 1624, and a justification of it published by the Archbishop himself in 1637, in connection with a pamphlet written by Dr. Francis White, entitled, "A Reply to Jesuit Fisher's Answer to certain Questions propounded by his most gracious Majesty King James." The ingenuity with which Laud detects the Jesuit's sophistry, the profound learning which he displays, and the intimate acquaintance which he appears to have had with the Fathers and Councils of the Church, prove the greatness of his genius, and his devotion to the Reformation.—"In this discourse," says he, "I have no aim to displeasure any, nor any hope to please all. If I can help on the truth in the Church, and the peace of the Church together, I shall be glad, be it in any measure. Nor shall I spare to speak necessary truth, out of too much love of peace; nor thrust an unnecessary truth to the breach of that peace which, once broken, is not so easily renewed again. And if, for necessary truth's sake only, any man will be offended, may take, nay snatch at, the offence which is not given, for that I know no protection. It is truth, and I must state it; it is the gospel, and I must preach it, 1 Cor. x. 16. And far safer it is in this case to bear anger from men, than a woe from God. And where the foundations of faith are shaken, be it by superstition or profaneness, he that stretches not out his hand as firmly as he can to support them, is too wary, and hath more care of himself than of the cause of Christ; and it is a wariness, that brings more danger in the end than it shuns. For the angel of the Lord issued out a curse against the inhabitants of Meroz, because they came not to help the Lord, to help the Lord against the mighty, Judges, v. 23. I know it is a great ease to let every thing be as it will, and every man believe and do as he lists; but whether governors in State or Church do their duty therewith is easily seen, since this is an effect of no king in Israel."

Such is the eloquence of this great prelate, who was, when he wrote the above, in the See of Canterbury. This is the man whom his enemies charged as being a Papist, these are the sentiments of him whom sectarians have traduced as being of "infamous memory." But I will proceed to another extract, which I am certain the reader will peruse with interest, while here considering one of the most splendid actions of Laud's life. "Now one thing more," says Laud, "let me be bold to observe to your Majesty in particular, concerning your great charge in the Church of England. She is in hard condition. She professes the ancient Catholic faith, and yet the Romanist condemns her for novelty in her doctrine. She practises church government as it hath been in use in all ages, and all places, where the Church of Christ hath been established both in and since the days of the Apostles, and yet the separatist condemns her for anti-christianism in her discipline. The plain truth is, she is between these two factions, as between two millstones, and unless your Majesty look to it, to those trust she is committed, she will be ground to powder, to an irreparable dishonour and loss to this kingdom. And it is very remarkable, that while both these press hard upon the Church of England, both of them cry out against persecution, like forward children, who scratch, and kick, and bite, and yet cry out all the while, as if they were killed. Now, to the Romanist I shall say this: 'The errors of the Church of Rome are grown now (many of them) very old, and when errors are grown by age, and continuance, to strength, they which speak for the truth, though it be of an older age, are usually challenged for the bringers in of new opinions. And there is no greater absurdity stirring this day in Christendom, than that the reformation of an old corrupted Church, whether we will or not, must be taken for the building of a new. And were not this so, we should never be troubled with that idle and impertinent question of theirs, Where was your Church before Luther? for it was just there, where theirs is now: one in substance, but not one in condition of state and purity: their part of the same Church remaining in corruption, and our part of the same Church remaining in reformation. The same Naaman, and he a Syrian still; but leprous with Naam, and cleansed with us: the same man still. And for the separatist, and him that lays his grounds for separation, or change of discipline; though all he says, or can say, be, in truth of divinity, and among learned men, little better than ridiculous; yet, since those fond opinions have gained some ground among the people, to stand among them as are wilfully set to follow their blind guides through thick and thin, till they fall into the ditch together, I shall say nothing. But for so many of them as mean well, and are only misled by artifice and cunning, concerning them I shall say thus much only, they are balls of passing good metal, and tunable enough of themselves, and in their own disposition; and a world of pity it is, that they are rung so miserably out of tune as they are by them who have acquired power in and over their consciences. And for this there is remedy enough, but how long there will be I know not."

"The Scriptures," continues Laud, in another place, "where it is plain, should guide the Church; and the Church, where there is doubt or difficulty, should expound the Scripture; yet so, as neither the Scripture should be forced, nor the Church so bound up, that, upon just and farther evidence, she may not revive that which in any case hath slept by her.—What success the great distemper, caused by the collision of two such factions, may have, I know not, I cannot prophesy. And though I cannot prophesy, yet I fear that atheism and irreligion gather strength, while the truth is thus weakened by an unworthy way of contending for it. And while they thus contend, neither party consider that they are in a way to induce upon themselves and others that contrary extreme, which they both seem to oppose and to fear. The Catholic Church of Christ is neither Rome nor a con-

* See note, "Hume's Hist." 1643.
† Christian Consolations, &c., by John Hacket, D. D., bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. London: Burns, 1840. The compiler of this biography is indebted for many facts and dates to the memoir attached to this edition.
‡ There is no mention made of them by the early Fathers. But in the fourth century we find the following reference to them by Augustin, &c.—Plea, p. 558.
§ Pro equisq; personæ conditione et dispositione, etiam sacris, cunctisq; baptismi utilitate est; precipue tamen circa parvulos. Quid enim necesse est, sponsors etiam periculo ingere, &c.—Tert. de Bapt.
* Cent. Quarta, p. 86.
† Ecc. Pol. book v. sec. xii.
‡ Epist. Farello, p. 80.
§ Epist. (John. Cnox) eccl.
¶ Epist. to Bishop Grindall.
* Plea, 563.

assign to it.* Learned men have found it even higher up the stream than this, and think, that the identical and natural manner in which Tertullian alludes to it is a conclusive evidence of its being, not a new, but a settled institution in the Church of his day. So much for the unnecessarily disputed point of its antiquity.—With regard to the office itself, it seems to me that our opponents, in taking up the ground they have done,—that is, in making the profession of the sponsors to be the mere declaration of their own personal belief and religious intentions for the satisfaction of the Church—have assumed an unsound position as ever occupied by ministers, and shown themselves unequal to embrace the mastery theology of such divines as Hooker and Calvin. The sponsors are not at the baptismal font to declare any thing concerning their own religion. The Church of England, by requiring that every sponsor should be a communicant—that is, a person who has ratified his baptismal engagements at the Lord's table, and is considered by the Church in communion—satisfies herself as to his personal orthodoxy. For what more could any man proclaim respecting himself by a verbal confession of his faith, than what he declares by taking his place at the table. The Church has no more assurance of a man's views being sound and his intentions pious, by any reply he may make to questions, than she has by his adoption of the prayers and dedication of our communion service. It seems to me that the Church, in putting interrogatories to the sponsors, and receiving replies from them, goes on the principal of requiring pledges before she admits a child into the circle of her adopted children. She cannot lose sight of the fact that she is a regular and a religious society, and that it is of the nature of all societies, which are in any degree peculiar or exclusive, to require from all who desire to be members of them, certain assurances that they will be members of their rules. In every admission to any society this is done, either formally by declaration, or tacitly by implication. And the Church, standing in the midst of the unbaptized world as an exclusive society, would not be justified in taking any into membership and into a participation of her privileges, without demanding from them a pledge that they will conform to her principles and usages. Were it otherwise, she would cease to be a society, and degenerate into a lawless combination. It is this assurance that the sponsors in baptism convey to the Church, and without which she could not consistently confer the initiatory rite. The question which she has to entertain is not whether the offspring of her members have a claim on her for admission into membership, but whether she, as the guardian of certain privileges, is justified in admitting them, without taking a single security that they will not violate her laws, and affix dishonour to her. And therefore when the parent or sponsor leads the infant to the Church, she admits the validity of their demand on behalf of that child, but requires them to make it safe for her to comply with it, by entering into stipulations on its account. There is no doubt that an individual might have an hereditary claim on the monarch, for a high office under the crown, but there is also no doubt that the monarch would not act upon that claim by conferring it, without first requiring the applicant to take the oaths of office. And this distinction it is which the divines of past ages saw so clearly, and which is strangely overlooked by the shallow of our own times. Thus we find Hooker arguing:—"The law of Christ requiring therefore faith and newness of life in all men, by virtue of the covenant which they make in baptism, is it to wish that the Church in baptism exacteth at every man's hand an express profession of faith and an irrevocable promise of obedience, by way of solemn stipulation?" Thus Calvin (to whose authority, perchance, our opponents will bow with deeper deference than to Hooker's) says—"We stipulate of them who present children that they shall instruct them, when adults, in that faith in which they are baptized. If no one becomes security, undoubtedly baptism is profaned."—And again, in one of his epistles to Knox—"Meanwhile, we confess that a sponsor is necessary, for nothing could be more preposterous than that those should be inserted into the body of Christ, whom we do not hope will be his disciples. Wherefore, if no relation appears who pledges his faith to the Church, and undertakes the care of teaching infants, the thing is a mockery, and baptism is polluted."—To the very same effect writes Beza—an author whom our opponents do not scruple to pronounce "unfavourable to our system of sponsors,"—"To use a convenient form of prayer and explanation of the nature of baptism, and sponsors to undertake for the child's religious education, being rites of an innocent simplicity and gravity, and in no wise symbolical, and free from giving the least occasion to superstition, who would dare to condemn; unless he will undergo the apostle's censure, who commands—'Let all things be done decently and in order.'" These quotations will sufficiently shew in what light the divines of other times regarded the office of the sponsor.

2. As to the objection made to sponsorial pledges, on the ground that "the sponsors do not intend to fulfil them," I shall leave such a gratuitous charge of intentional perjury levelled against all who have undertaken the office in the Church of England, to witner in the contempt it merits; and as to the objection built upon the ground of the impropriety of any pledges being given, I shall leave our opponents to contest that point with Calvin, with the ancient Church, and with the reason of things. If they themselves baptize without stipulating (as far as lies within the power of superstitious) the children admitted to membership shall be consistent and orthodox Christians, they have the assurance of their very highest authority, that the "ordinance is a mockery," and the whole proceeding "preposterous." They pretend that their denomination is a Christian Society, and yet have no universal test of membership. They require that its population shall be a Christian one, and yet take no security that it shall become such. They take children into covenant, and take them without pledges. This is of a piece with their whole system. But with us, so far as these regulations from being open to the animadversions heaped upon them, that they are, of all others, eminently calculated (if honestly carried out) to ensure that our children shall grow up in the admission of the Lord. The Church, by assuming that the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon the baptized infant (and the possibility, may, the probability of that, our opponents dare not deny) gives all encouragement to sponsors to labour in the religious education of their spiritual children. For there is placed before their eyes the grounds of a persuasion that they have within that child a material whereon to work, that their duty is not to cultivate the untill'd and unown'd ground, or to implant a principle of grace which it is beyond man's ability to confer, but to labour upon a principle already supposed to be existent, and so bring all likely means to bear upon it, as that in time it may exhibit itself in those thoughtful frames and serious impressions which indicate that the spirit is gradually assuming a supremacy over the flesh. And still further, the Church, by requiring the sponsors to promise that (as far as in them lies) the objects of their pledge "shall believe all the articles of the faith, shall renounce the world, the flesh and the devil, shall obediently keep God's will and commandments," supplies to them a most constraining incentive to exertion. For upon them

does she lay the solemn duty of redeeming the pledge they have publicly given. She has taken—and that with the most honest and simple-minded confidence—their assurance, that the children entrusted to their guardianship shall be all that they have promised they shall be; and she trusts, she expects that she will not be deceived. Upon their engagement she has taken the children, for whom they have professed a kindly interest, into her bosom; and she will not allow herself to suspect that they, in whom she has confided, have only spoken to delude, that they have obtained her gifts on false pretences, and were resolved, while making dole to trample on their obligations. And therefore does the Church tell them "that it is their parts and duties to see that the children be taught, so soon as they shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise and profession, they have made here by them." This is the point at which the sponsors are to aim, to realize the Church's expectations. The idea of what a young Christian ought to be, as sketched out for them in the services, the means by which that picture may, under God, become a reality, are suggested, the sponsorial responsibility is solemnly announced, and the sureties dismissed in possession of their new charge, to act like men of probity, of honour, and of religion, and after a while to lead back that child from the font to the table, as one upon whom their labour of love has not been in vain. It is true, most true, that they cannot command all this result. The increase is of God; yet the planting and the watering are of man; and as God demands from no man that which is beyond his power, he expects not that those sponsors shall make their charge such. Having toiled upon the field which the Church has given them to cultivate (so that that toil has been conducted in faith, in sincerity and in prayer), their task is done, their responsibility ended, their pledge redeemed. If they may not say to the Church "we have realized the conceptions of baptism," they may say, "we have done what we could." It is upon this principle that all suretyship is conducted. Who can tell when he enters into any engagement for another, that it will be unquestionably fulfilled? That result is in no one's power; but it is in every one's power to do his best towards it. And there is no more unfitness in the sponsors engaging that the child shall be what the Church expects, than there is in the preceptor pledging himself that the pupil shall be all that the parents expect. Both engagements are made with that implied and admitted reservation which enters into all pledges made on behalf of others.

3. If then the institution itself be thus conceived in the purest spirit of Christian trust, and be thus recommended by the principles of the most consistent theology, is it necessary to defend that feature of it which consists in *others besides parents being required by us as sponsors?* In assailing this rule, our opponents take their usual care to put the point upon false grounds. It is not true, as they allege, that "we prevent parents at the baptism of their children from acknowledging their responsibility;" neither is it true that "we encourage them in the neglect of parental obligations;" on the contrary, the rubric before the confirmation service enjoins fathers and mothers to see to the religious education of their offspring. The principle of the church of England is this, that every child should have two sets of sponsors; one provided by nature, and the second by the impulse of that Christian kindness and fellowship, which suggests that "we should not look any man on his own first; (the child's natural parents) she supposes to be sufficiently constrained by the ties of innate affection, and therefore she wills not that they should appear before the congregation in the character of special ecclesiastical sureties. But inasmuch as the parents may neglect their duty, or be, by God's dispensations, removed from the church, she takes care that those who are to be brought up under her fostering care shall not be doubly orphaned, but provided with some who pledged to herself to attend to their religious welfare. Parents are bound to this duty in the sight of God; God-parents in the eye of the church. We substitute not the one control for the other, but we superadd the one to the other. Is it not strange, that our opponents should be so unlearned in the theology of their own school, as not to know that this system stands commended both by the correspondence of Calvin and the rubrics of Knox? The former of these distinguished men says—"We baptize not infants but in public; for it seems absurd that a public reception should have few witnesses. Fathers, unless hindered, are ordered to be present, that they may respond to the stipulations, together with the sponsors."—Again—"Parents should be obliged to offer their own children, and be the prime sponsors." The latter, in the rubric prefixed to the 'order of baptism,' enjoins that "the infant who is to be baptized shall be brought to the church on the day appointed for common prayer and preaching, accompanied with the father and Godfather," and instructs the minister to say to them, "To the intent that we may be assured that you, the father and the surety, consent to the performance hereof, declare here before the face of God's congregation the sum of that faith wherein ye believe and will instruct this child." The difference then between the practice of Geneva and Scotland, and the church of England is this, that all recognizing the propriety of the sponsorial office distinct from the parental, the first two require parents to be present at the time of making the engagements, and the latter regarding them as pledged without a formal pledge, secures for the child the protection of three others, distinct from and superadded to its natural guardians. And as for the advantages secured by this most justifiable provision, I cannot state them in words more true or Catholic than those of the French church:—"Sith it is a very ancient custom, and introduced for a good end, to wit, to testify the sureties' faith and the baptism of the infant, and also for that they charge themselves with the care of educating the child, in case that it should be deprived of its parents by death, and for that it doth maintain a sweet communion among the faithful, by a conjunction of friendship—they who will not observe it, but will by