

methods in vogue outside her pale—of deliberately forcing subscriptions by advertising the names of large donors. When these donors are business men, such items in the newspapers have a well-recognized pecuniary value. It is a shame to see this degradation of an act which should be religious.

THE GEIR AND LATIMER MURDER CASES.

On the same day (6th April) there appeared in the *Mail*, of Toronto, particulars of two remarkable cases of murder and punishment therefor, which appear to us to have an important and opportune bearing on the subject of "circumstantial evidence" and "capital punishment"—two subjects which are found to have a connection so frequent now-a-days, that one cannot be fully considered without some reference to the other. The Geir case most fully illustrates the danger and practical injustice of convicting—at least of inflicting upon the convict the dreadful ultimatum of capital punishment: while the other case illustrates the folly of treating a convict with carelessness who does not receive the punishment of death.

IN THE GEIR CASE,

Franz Geir was atrociously murdered in 1879, and his son was convicted—on circumstantial evidence—of having done the deed. He was condemned to death by decapitation. On the 4th of April, 1893, at Berlin, in Prussia, a man named Schreiber, on his death bed, confesses that he it was who committed the murder for which young Geir was convicted and punished. Had it not been for the imperial clemency of wise old Emperor William, the mistake of justice would have been more irremediable. Happily the Emperor had a rooted dislike to capital punishment, and commuted Geir's sentence to imprisonment for life. For fourteen years the poor fellow has been doing hard prison labour at Sonneburg, near Frankfort. Now he hears of his release. What a gross injustice those fourteen years have been to him, and how impossible even for imperial powers to restore any fraction of them to him whose they were!

IN THE LATIMER CASE

the evidence seems to have been of the same character. The crime—or supposed crime—in this case was matricide; as the Geir murder was supposed to be parricide. The man was convicted and received, according to the law of Michigan, a life sentence. While serving his sentence, he lately succeeded in poisoning one of his keepers in order to escape. He has been recaptured. Now the question arises, would it not have been wiser to put him out of the way at once—out of the world, in fact. No doubt it would have been better for the poisoned keeper, [and safer for the public in general, including another keeper who escaped the same fate by a very narrow shave. That is, under the circumstances of such very inefficient prison discipline as prevailed in that particular prison.

WHERE DID THE FAULT LIE?

certainly not in the sentence, but in the faulty way it was carried out! People may say, "Ah, I told you so, you see he has murdered some one else: so he really did murder his poor old mother after all." This is a *non-sequitur*. It is quite possible that, smarting under the injustice of his imprisonment for a crime of which he was not really guilty, Latimer was driven to desperation, and in fancied self-defence fought for his life and liberty at the expense of his keepers. We do not say that it is so; but so far as the evidence went, it may well have been so. One of these days, somebody may

CONFESS ON HIS DEATH-BED

—just as Schreiber has done in the Geir case—that he (not Latimer) murdered Latimer's mother. It is not more improbable in this case than it seemed in the other for fourteen years. Only in the Latimer case, there will be, besides the unjust imprisonment of the man and the ruin of his life, the additional horror of having caused the death of the prison keeper in his efforts to recover his liberty. Such denouements occur too often to be set aside as improbable. Of course, it may be pleaded that, even if you confine capital punishment and life imprisonment to cases where the sentence has been based on the evidence of witnesses—rather than circumstantial evidence—still the witnesses may lie, may perjure themselves, may swear the prisoner's life away. No doubt such things happen occasionally, very rarely; but then the responsibility, blame and future punishment rest on the false witnesses and perjurers—with whom God will deal. In the other case, where only circumstantial evidence is relied on as a basis for life sentence or capital punishment, the responsibility and blame rest on the laws of the country where such a cruel error of action is tolerated. Far better follow old Emperor William—and give every prisoner the benefit of doubt and a chance for life, even if he has to wait for it for years in a prison—though even that is hard measure for an innocent man or woman.

CONFIRMATION.

We are moved to write the following by the comparative silence with which Canon Mason's Book, *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism*, has been received. This book, while showing a great deal of care and pains in its composition, and some wide (if not original) research, is so marked by error that we had expected it to have been received with a cry of horror. Those of our readers who were then old enough will remember the roar of indignation which broke forth upon the publication of *Ecce Homo*, and yet this work of Canon Mason's contains doctrines which we have no hesitation in denominating heretical and which are to a large extent the same as those of *Ecce Homo*, only in some instances drawn out (more covertly, perhaps) to greater extravagance.

There is no better test often of the truth of a proposition than a consideration of the logical outcomes of it. Now of Canon Mason's doctrine of Confirmation the result is that Confirmation and Baptism should ordinarily be administered at the same time or as nearly so as possible (p. 480, note), and that to make this possible it would be better to postpone the christening of infants for some years! A more complete *reductio ad absurdum* it would be hard to find. The reader will perceive the extraordinary nature of the logic employed. Because in the early Church infants are confirmed and given the Holy Communion immediately after their baptisms, therefore the Church of England should defer Holy Baptism until children come to years of discretion, when they can receive the Holy Communion and Confirmation! With laws of logic thus constructed, any conclusion whatever can easily be reached. Now what are the two chief heresies of Canon Mason's work? They are:

I. That a soul can "be regenerated and grafted into the Body of Christ" without receiving the Holy Ghost.

II. That after our Lord's Baptism, the Holy Ghost dwelt in him in a different way from that he had before.

Of each of these errors (and they are fundamental, striking at the very root of the Christian religion) we shall speak somewhat fully.

I. THESIS.

That the Holy Ghost is not given to a person until he has been confirmed. This is the theory which Canon Mason tries to prove, and to the insisting upon which nearly his whole work is devoted. It may be well to state this in Canon Mason's own words. "In so special and unique a

sense does this gift belong to Confirmation, that notwithstanding all previous operations of the Holy Ghost upon the soul, the baptized but unconfirmed believer may, unless the divine action departs from its ordinary course, be truly said not to have received the Holy Ghost." (p. 414.)

We have no idea of following him through the dreary waste, and point out to the reader how many of the quotations are utterly inadequate to prove the point for which they are adduced, nor to expand them so as to show that with their full contents they often do not seem to properly bear the meaning put upon them; nor do we propose to argue with Canon Mason upon the interpretation of texts of Holy Scripture, which if we did, our private judgment upon the matters in hand would be quite as worthless to our readers and in itself as Canon Mason's. What we shall do is this:—First, point out that the thesis is contrary to the Book of Common Prayer and therefore cannot be taught conscientiously by any clergyman of the Anglican Church; secondly, we shall show that the thesis is contrary to sound theology; and lastly, we shall set forth the accepted doctrine of all Catholic theologians upon the point.

1. The baptismal service distinctly prays for the "infants" presented for Holy Baptism (which the rubric orders "the People" not to "defer longer than the first or second Sunday next after their birth or other holy day falling between."); "Wash them and sanctify them with the Holy Ghost;" "give thy Holy Spirit to these Infants." The minister reminds the godfathers and godmothers that they have "prayed that our Lord would vouchsafe and sanctify them with the Holy Ghost. Also that our Lord hath promised in His Gospel to perform these things that ye have prayed for," etc. In the form of baptism of those of riper years the matter is still more clearly set forth—"Doubt ye not, therefore, but earnestly believe that He will favourably receive these present persons . . . that He will . . . bestow upon them the Holy Ghost," etc. Such then is the teaching of the Anglican Church upon the subject, and therefore must be the teaching of every honest clergyman of that Church.

2. We now show how the thesis of Canon Mason is heretical. In Holy Baptism we are regenerated; now in the order of thought this involves the following steps: First, the life of Christ is communicated, imparted to us (all our past sins, original and actual, being forgiven of free grace), thus we are justified. But by the infusion of the life of Christ we are made partakers of the divine nature and therefore *ex necessitate* the Holy Ghost dwells in us. This cannot be denied without falling into heresy with regard to the Holy Trinity. The Holy Ghost must dwell in every soul that is "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven," and as this wondrous union is wrought by the Holy Ghost, so it is continued only by His indwelling, and were the Holy Ghost to leave a soul for a single instant, that soul would cease to be "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven." It is for this reason that both Holy Scripture and the Prayer Book are so careful to keep the new birth "of water and of the Spirit" always together, lest men might forget (as Canon Mason seems to have done) that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." This then may serve to show what is Canon Mason's heresy. We now proceed to set forth the truth as clearly as we can.

3. The crucial passage of Holy Scripture, which is quoted by the Council of Trent as proving that Confirmation is a true and proper Sacrament of the new law, and which (no doubt for the same reason) has just been placed as a Lesson in the American Confirmation Office, is Acts viii. 17, where we read of the Apostles, "then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Now these Samaritan converts had been baptized by St. Philip the Deacon, and therefore had in Holy Baptism received the Holy Ghost. What does it mean then when we read in verse 16 that "as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus?" The meaning is perfectly clear when we give a just weight to the word "fallen" in the verse we have just quoted and to the word "saw" in verse 18, "when Simon saw that through laying