

times newspaper (laughter), he (Dr. Cumming) would instantly turn round and say, 'Dr. Wiseman, I beg your pardon.' Now, what an impudent thing it would be in the cardinal if he were to go to the *Western Times* office and say, 'Dr. Cumming has sought absolution; he has committed an offence, and has asked forgiveness for that offence.' (Renewed laughter.) Now mark the distinction. If he (Dr. Cumming) took out of his rev. friend's pocket a half-crown, he should do two things: he should injure his brother by taking what was not his own, and sin against God by breaking His holy commandment. (Hear, hear.) The offence he had committed against his brother he could forgive; but the sin in the act, and struck against the throne of Deity; and all the priests in the universe had no power to forgive sin; for God only had the power. That, then, explained the whole theory of the confessional. If he committed any sin against man he should ask his forgiveness, for it was in the same spirit in which they said, 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us;' so for faults against ourselves we can forgive, and for the faults against the church, the church can give absolution, but for sins not against man nor against the church, but against his God, he would go to no priest nor prelate upon earth. (Cheers.) He would go where he knew he should be welcome, and would ask Him, through the blood of sprinkling, for mercy and forgiveness, and grace to help him in time to come. (Hear, hear.) Now let him quote a passage from St. James' epistle, 5th chapter, 'Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry, let him sing psalms.' The longer he read this book, the Bible, the more he was struck with its intense common sense. None other deserved the epithet of 'common sense inspired.' (Applause.) There was something in it that came home to the deepest common sense and depths of their human nature. He who gave them that book needed not to be told what was in man; he knew it all. 'Thus, 'Is any among you afflicted?'—the world would say, let him go to the opera and get rid of his despondency, but no, 'let him pray.' Again, 'Is any one merry?' the world would say, let him make a fool of himself; but no, 'let him sing psalms.' How beautiful the shadows of life and the sunshine of life, the ups of life and the downs of life, the gladness of life and the griefs of life, its gains and losses, bring them to Him, that the one may be sweetened and the other sanctified, and all made happy! (Cheers.) Reading further they found this passage, 'If any man among you is sick let him send for the elders.' The Church of Rome said, 'If any are sick let them go to the confessional,' and those individuals who imitated Rome meant very much the same thing, for they were very anxious to get in the thin end of the wedge wherever they could find a small opening. (Hear, hear.) It was not 'Send for the Hon. Mr. Liddle, or Mr. West, or Mr. Poole,' but send for the presbyters, so

that you might have good, honest, faithful preachers of the Gospel like Ridley, Cranmer, and Latimer, who preached God's truth to the heart. (Hear, hear.) What were these elders to do? Were they to confess the sick man? Not a word about confessing him. What then? 'Anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.' That miraculous practice, he believed, was confined to primitive times; but certainly he (Dr. Cumming) would rather be anointed by Mr. Liddell with gullions of oil, than he would allow him to confess and absolve him. (Laughter and cheers.) Mark the text. They were to bring to bear on the sick man, not absolution or the powers of confession, but the 'prayer of faith shall save him.' And it was added, if he had committed sin, not a priest should confess him, not a priest should forgive him; but if he had committed sins, they should be forgiven him. There was not a word about the priest's doing it. (Hear, hear.) But what was added? 'Confess your faults one to another'—mutually, and, therefore, it was time that the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Liddell, Mr. West, and Mr. Poole had done confessing their sentimental clients—their very weak sisters—(laugh), who were so weak that they were always at confession, and in getting absolution they never seemed to tire. (Renewed laughter.) The passion for absolution was like the passion for bonnets, (laughter)—it became more encroaching; it rose to a pitch that was intolerable among the social decencies of cultivated life. (Cheers.) 'Confess your faults!' If either of them were to confess to Mr. Liddell, he was bound to turn round and confess to them, not like the Irishman's reciprocity, 'all on one side,' (laughter), but they were to confess their sins one to another. (Cheers.)

There was a curious feature of the confessional to which he would just advert, and that was that penances prescribed could be performed by proxy. (Laughter.) It was positively explained in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, that one Christian might do penance for another, by superabundance of grace. Thus, A might have more grace than he had occasion for, although that was a sort of character which he, for one, had never met with. (Laughter.) B was a sinner, and by the aid of the superabundant grace of A, obtained absolution. A thus took on himself the dirty work of another, and was regarded as a consistent Christian. (Expressions of horror.) Could anything be more absurd or atrocious than this? (Hear, hear.) Such, then, were some of the principles of the system of the confessional. First, it was contrary to the word of God; secondly, in his conscience, on a careful investigation of the subject, he did not believe it was warranted by the Church of England. He admitted that there were certain expressions which, if he had the remodelling of the Liturgy, he would leave out. He thought that the services for the visitation of the sick could be properly expunged. He did not wish to dictate, for he was not a humble presbyter assuming to be a bishop; but on