

Poetry.

CONFIRMATION.

The shadow of th' Almighty's cloud
Calm on the tents of Israel lay,
While drooping pennons twelve
Till he arise and lead the way.

RUBRICAL CONFORMITY

THE CHURCHMAN'S DUTY,
AND AS SUCH RECOGNIZED BY OUR BISHOPS, DIVINES,
AND RITUALISTS, IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES;

In a Charge delivered to the Clergy of the United Dioceses
of Down and Connor, and Downargy, July 4th and 5th,
1843, by their Diocesan.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—After the long
addresses, to which I endeavoured to draw your
attention, and that of our brethren in the other division
of the united diocese in the last summer, it may seem,
perhaps, that you might well be spared the task of
listening again, on so early an occasion, to an exposition
of my sentiments. And indeed I should not be
inclined to address you again after so short an interval,
if I were not prompted by a desire of speaking to
a particular question, for the purpose of giving, if it
please God, greater efficacy to the sentiments which
I have already expressed.

2. Once, and again, and still more often perhaps
in the course of my late charges, I assumed that the
most inflexible rule of our ministerial conduct and
actions is a faithful adherence to the laws of the Church,
in her Book of Common Prayer. This rule I assumed
as one, about which there could be no material difference
of persuasion in the minds of the Church's ministers.
As, however, the obligation of this rule appears
to be not universally acknowledged: as there are
those in the present day who seem to think that
an observance of the laws of the Church is a sort of
open question, which the clergy may decide, each for
himself, as to its practical operation upon their ministerial
actions; and as even there are not wanting some,
who allow themselves to speak with levity and disrespect
of a careful observance of the Church's laws in
her rubrics, and who scruple not to stigmatize such
an endeavour to make her laws the rule of their
actions, by some hard and injurious appellations: I trust
that a few words on this occasion will not be deemed
superfluous, in fuller exposition, and for the clearer
and firmer establishment, of the authority of the
rubricated directions of the Church.

3. The first ground which shall be stated is "the
nistration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies,"
as containing the Statute law upon the subject, passed
in England in the 14th year of King Charles the 2nd,
and much to the same effect in Ireland, in the 17th
and 18th of the same reign. The motives to the enactments
that follow are stated to be "in regard that nothing
conducing more to the settling of the peace of the nation
(which is desired of all good men) nor to the honour of
our religion, and the propagation thereof, than an universal
agreement in the public worship of Almighty God; and to
the intent that every person within this realm may
certainly know the rule, to which he is to conform in
public worship, and administration of the sacraments,
and other rites and ceremonies of the Church of England;"
and the first enactment accordingly is, that "all and
singular ministers shall be bound to say and use the
Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, Celebration and
Administration of both the Sacraments, and all other
the public and common prayer, in such order and
form as is mentioned in the said Book annexed
and joined to this present Act, and intitled, The
Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the
Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the
Church, according to the use of the Church of England."
In the Irish Act, for "the Church of England"
is substituted the "Church of Ireland."

"This, I say, is the injunction of the Statute, enacted
by the authority of the kings, lords, and commons in
parliament assembled: to which, therefore, as part
and parcel of the law of the land, we are bound to be
obedient, for conscience sake." The Act is pre-
sented, in folio, quarto, and octavo; so that a clergyman,
or other minister, who may wish for more copious
information on the subject, will readily find it in the
volume provided for our clerical ministrations.

4. Our next authority shall be the injunction of
our spiritual rulers, the bishops and clergy of the
Church in convocation assembled; whose judgment
of the prescript form of divine service contained in
the Book of Common Prayer may be found in the
thirty-sixth English canon, and to the same effect in
the third Irish. They are usually appended to the
folio and quarto editions of the Common Prayer Book.
The judgment is, "That form of Liturgy or Divine
Service, and no other, shall be used in any church of
this realm, but that which is established by the law,
and comprised in the Book of Common Prayer and
Administration of Sacraments."

in itself considered, is but a small thing; yet the wilful
and contemptuous transgression and breaking of a
common order and discipline is no small offence before
God. Let all things be done among you, saith St. Paul,
in a seemly and due order: the appointment of the
which order pertaineth not to private men; therefore
no man ought to take in hand, nor presume to appoint
or alter any public or common order in Christ's Church,
except he be lawfully called and authorized therunto."

5. Such are the general enactments of the law, both
of the State and of the Church, with respect to the
use of the Book of Common Prayer in our official ministrations:
the object of those enactments being to
procure universal agreement and conformity in our
public worship.

6. Let us now see how the law applies particularly
to every minister, and to what personal engagements
he is thereby subjected. First of all, to the canon just recited, the thirty-
sixth English, or the third Irish canon, every candidate
for the holy order of deacon does "by subscription
declare his consent, and to every thing contained
therein," before he is received into the ministry;
thereby pledging himself to use "the prescript Form
of divine service, contained in the Book of Common
Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and
none other."

7. Secondly, before his admission into the holy
order of priests, the candidate subscribes the same
declaration, and thus repeats the same pledge.

8. Thirdly, at the time of his admission into that
order, the candidate promises conformity to the same
rule of divine service: for when the Bishop demands
of him "in the name of God, and of his Church, and
in the presence of the congregation of Christ there
assembled," "will you give your faithful diligence
always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments,
and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath com-
manded, and as this Church and Realm hath received
the same, according to the commandments of God:
so that you may teach the people committed to your
care and charge with all diligence to keep and observe
the same?"—the candidate makes answer, "I will do
so, by the help of the Lord."

9. Fourthly, before a curate is admitted to his cure,
he again, by subscription before the bishop, declares
his consent to the canon, concerning "the prescript
form of divine service in the Book of Common Prayer."

10. Fifthly, before an incumbent is admitted to his
benefice, he again, by subscription before the bishop,
declares his consent to the same canon concerning
"the prescript form of divine service."

11. Sixthly, this subscription, previously to admission
either to holy orders, or to a cure, or a benefice,
is accompanied with an express declaration by word
of mouth, that he, who is about to be admitted, will
"conform to the Liturgy of the United Church of Eng-
land and Ireland, as it is now by law established."

12. Finally, every beneficed person, within a short
time after being in actual possession of his benefice,
does, upon some Lord's day, openly and publicly be-
fore the congregation assembled in the church, "de-
clare his unfeigned assent and consent to all and every
thing prescribed in and by the Book of Common
Prayer;" repeating at the same time in the presence
of his people the same declaration of conformity to
the liturgy, which he had previously made to the bi-
shop. It may be added, that, if at any time he ex-
changes his benefice, or is admitted to any new pre-
bend, he renews these declarations and engagements.

13. Thus, besides the general obligations for conformity
to the Book of Common Prayer, imposed by
the laws of the realm and the Church, every individual
minister, whether deacon or priest, whether curate
or incumbent, has taken upon himself personal
pledges, and has made personal promises, on the faith
of which he was admitted to his order or station in
the Church.

14. And these obligations, promises, and pledges
of the ministering clergy derive, if possible, additional
strength from an ordinance of the Church with respect
to her bishops, to whom she allows no dispensing
power in this behalf, but expressly pronounces their
authority to be subordinate to, and positively prohibits
it from interfering with, hers. For in her preface
"concerning the service of the Church," she ordains,
that "forasmuch as nothing can be so plainly set forth,
but doubts may arise in the use and practice of the
same; to appease such diversity, if any arise, and for
the resolution of all doubts concerning the manner
how to understand, do, and execute the things con-
tained in this book," namely, the Book of Common
Prayer—"the parties that so doubt, or diversely take
any thing, shall always resort to the bishop of the
diocese, who by his discretion shall take order for the
quieting and appeasing of the same;" but then this
authority is given to the bishop on the special condition,
for so it follows in the ordinance, "that the same
order be not contrary to any thing contained in this
book." Whence it appears, as remarked by a very
sensible and judicious ritualist, Archbishop Sharp of
Northumberland, about the middle of the last cen-
tury, that in all points, where the rubrics are plain
and express, the ordinary has no authority to release
any minister from that obedience which he owes to
the Church in what she commands in her rubrics,"
and that, in such points, "he is as much prohibited
from making innovations as the meanest parochial
minister."

15. Thus is established the paramount authority
of the rubrics, and the clergy's duty of obedience to
their directions. At the same time it is not irrelevant
to observe, that although the bishop be not invested
with any more discretion than the inferior ministers
of the Church, so as to deviate from the prescript form
of Divine Service, in respect either of addition or di-
minution, yet it belongs to him to see and require
that all things, contained in that prescript form,
be performed and administered as the law requires;
and that it is the duty of the minister, in compliance
with his vow of "reverent obedience to his ordinary,"
when so required, to perform and administer them in
that manner. It is his duty to the law indeed, in the
first place, so to perform and administer them; but
if he neglects or violates that, his primary duty, then,
on being admonished by his ordinary, it becomes his
duty to supply his former omissions, or to repair his
former irregularities, in pursuance of that reverent
obedience which he has promised to those, "to whom
is committed the charge and government over him,
following with a glad mind and will their godly ad-
monitions, and submitting himself to their godly judg-
ments."

16. Such then are the provisions, which the Church
has made for the conformity of her ministers to her
Book of Common Prayer: provisions which to my
mind seem utterly incompatible with the notion of
every minister being at liberty to do that which is
right in his own eyes, whatever may be the directions
of the rubric on the subject; provisions which do in-
deed constitute the rubric the legitimate, acknow-
ledged, and paramount rule of his ministrations;
provisions which allow no other authority whatsoever
to interfere with its supremacy. So that in the words
of the learned expositor of "the rubrics and canons of
the Church of England," already cited, "we may af-
firm in general, that we are under higher obligations
to observe the rubric, than any other ecclesiastical
law whatsoever; that excepting a very few cases, or
under some necessary limitations and reservations, we
are bound to adhere to it literally, punctually, and
perpetually; and that whosoever among the clergy
either adds to it, or diminishes from it, or useth any

other rule instead of it, as he is in the eye of the law
so far a non-conformist, so it becomes him to consider
with himself, whether in point of conscience he be not
a breaker of his word and trust, and an eluder of his
engagements to the Church."

If, I. This is, for the most part, what I had in my
mind to submit to you, my reverend brethren, at our
present meeting. Something more remains to be
added on the circumstances of the present address.

In the year 1822, I delivered a charge to the clergy
of Killaloe, which was published at their request, un-
der the title of "the Rule of Ministerial Duty enforced
and illustrated." And in the year 1829 or 1830, I
published a small volume, entitled "The Clergyman's
Obligations considered," wherein was comprised the
substance of the charge. Together with a distinct
statement of the rule and its authority, these publica-
tions contained such illustrations and applications of
it to practice, as the discussion naturally embraced;
the rule itself being considered under the threefold
division of obedience to the rubrics, the canons, and
the governors of the Church; and some excuses,
which are made for the non-observance of the rubrics
in particular, being specially noticed.

2. Upon this threefold division I have been unwill-
ing to detain you upon the present occasion; nor
have I dwelt on the illustrations and applications of
the rule; nor upon the excuses sometimes made for
clerical non-conformity, and their answers. But the
substance of what was then said upon the authority
of the rubrics, and upon the obligations of the clergy
to observe them, has been adopted into the present
address, as being of the greatest moment towards the
due discharge of our engagements. For when a sense
of that authority and of those obligations is deeply
impressed on a clergyman's mind, when he is clearly
persuaded of what he is bound and pledged to do;
he is equipped with the most effectual armour, under
God's grace, for doing it, and is prepared with an
answer to such seductions as might otherwise lead him
astray; and thus the evil spirit of latitudinarianism is
best met and defeated.

3. Which way does my appointed and acknow-
ledged duty lead me? What says the law to which
I am bound to be obedient? What obligations have
I personally incurred in agreement with its require-
ments? Upon what stipulations was I admitted to
my orders of deacon and priest, to my cure, or to my
benefice? In what way did I promise to give my
faithful diligence, always to minister the doctrine and
sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, teaching the
people committed to my care and charge, with all
diligence to keep and observe the same, not therefore
suffering the people to mistake and mislead me from
keeping and observing them? What form of divine
service, and none other, did I subscribe and promise
to use, conditioning for it without omission, addition,
or alteration? To what Book of Common Prayer, with
all and every thing prescribed therein and thereby, did
I declare my unfeigned assent and consent? To what
liturgy did I promise conformity? taking that liturgy
for my rule of conduct, and not the example of some
non-conformists? Questions such as these, my
reverend brethren, seriously proposed, and faith-
fully answered, and conscientiously allowed to pro-
duce their proper practical consequences, appear to
me of all things best calculated, with prayer for God's
blessing, for contributing to such "an universal agree-
ment in the public worship of Almighty God," to-
gether with the "peaceable fruits of righteousness,"
as was contemplated by the legislature of the realm and
of the Church, when they enacted the Statute for
uniformity, and laid the clergy under their several
obligations for the celebration of divine worship.

4. Such questions as these naturally result from a
consideration of the authority of the rubrics, and the
consequent obligations upon the clergy, as traced in
the charge of which I have spoken. The season,
when that charge was delivered, was one of comparative
tranquillity, as to the spiritual condition of the
Church; at least some of the questions, which have
of later years disturbed the minds of her members,
and ranged many of them, unhappily, into conflicting
parties, and excited among them strong feelings of
jealousy and distrust, had not then been ventilated;
so that the argument of her authority and of her mi-
nisters' obedience was more capable of being discussed
on their independent grounds, apart from accidental
associations, and free from any admixture or suspicion
of partial prepossessions.

5. In such a season my views of our professional
duty were submitted to those with whom I was offi-
cially connected, and received by them, as I had the
satisfaction of believing, with assent and approbation.
Therefore it is, that instead of entering on a novel
train of observation for the attainment of the same
end, I have pursued the course which I had formerly
chosen and followed up, with the approval of those
whose minds were free from temporary impulses, such
as are too apt to impede a sound judgment. Such
impulses, however, if they are now acting upon others,
will not, I trust, operate upon you, my reverend
brethren, in your estimate of the claims, which the
Book of Common Prayer, with its rubrics, has perpetually
upon our observance, by virtue of the general laws
both of the realm and of the Church; and of the dif-
ferent special promises and pledges by which also, at
the commencement, and at several stages during the
progress of our professional lives, we have bound our-
selves to observe it.

6. A clear perception of our duty cannot, at any
time, but be of infinite moment. Such it appeared to
me, when, above twenty years ago, in a season of tran-
quillity I endeavoured to mark out the line of clerical
duty; equally such, at least, does it appear in the
present season of disquietude, when ministerial vows
are by many deemed to be of little or no obligation,
and, by many, all ecclesiastical authority is thought
scorn of and set at naught.

7. There are some, indeed, who would fain estab-
lish a connexion between a faithful submission to the
Church's authority, and the peculiarities of that sys-
tem of religious opinion, which has, within the last ten
years, been the occasion of so much commotion in the
Church, and against which I of late gave you several
charges; as if a strict sense of ministerial obligation
were a new thing among us; as if it had not been
professed and maintained at all times by our best
ritualists and most consistent and exemplary divines.
The judgment of one of the most eminent of these
there has been cause to lay before you in this address,
as it had been cited in support of the opinions deliv-
ered in my charge of 1822. But before the period
which reached from 1781 to 1783, during which
Archdeacon Sharp was counselling the clergy of North-
umberland on "The Rubrics and Canons of the
Church of England," in a series of Archidiaconal
Charges, many such judgments had been pronounced.

8. In his "Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles,"
first published in 1726, and afterwards enlarged in
1730, Mr. Venerer thus comments on the thirty-
fourth, "Of the Traditions of the Church." "Rites
and ceremonies," he remarks, "are in themselves
indifferent. Nevertheless, when these indifferent
things are established by the authority of the Church,
they ought to be observed by all, out of reverence to
that authority, because it is from God, who hath com-
manded us to 'obey those who have the rule over us,'
Heb. xiii. 1; and to be 'subject to the higher powers,'
Rom. xiii. 1; and hath left a power with the govern-
ors of the Church, to take care that 'all things be
done in the public worship, decently and in order,'
1 Cor. xiv. 40. And, therefore, whosoever wilfully and
openly breaks the traditions and ceremonies of the

Church thus ordained, is a schismatical person, a dis-
turber of the Church's peace, and, inasmuch as all
vice is a spreading and infectious nature, as St.
Paul tells us, 1 Cor. xv. 33, a wonder of the con-
science of the weak brethren, by inclining them to
follow his bad example. And, although private
admonition be necessary when men's faults are not
open and notorious, for then we are to 'treat them
as fathers, if they are old, and as brethren, if they are
young,' as we see 1 Tim. v. 1; yet, when the case is
otherwise, 'they that sin are to be rebuked before all,
that others also may fear.'"

9. In three discourses on "Decency and Order in
Public Worship," preached by Dr. Bisse in the
Cathedral Church of Hereford, of which he was
Canon, and published in 1723, occurs the following
recommendation of unanimity and uniformity, as well
as of decency and order: "Let the ministers them-
selves, as it is their bounden duty, teach and train up
their people in the knowledge and reasons of all things
contained in our established worship; not only of the
service itself, but also of the rites and ceremonies
appertaining to it; and, moreover, take care that they
observe them to do them." And it may be here noticed
by the way, with respect to a particular rubric, which
has been of late much controverted; namely, the first
paragraph after the Communion Service, which directs,
that "upon the Sundays and other holidays (if there
be no communion) shall be said all that is appointed
at the communion, until the end of the general prayer, for
the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth,
together with one or more of these Collects last before
rehearsed, concluding with the blessing," which respect,
I say, to that most plain and unambiguous rubric,
may be noticed from another work of Dr. Bisse,
"the Beauty of Holiness in the Common Prayer,"
set forth in Four Sermons, preached at the Rolls
Chapel in the year 1716. "That that rubric appears
to have been in common use at the said period.—
'For,' as he observes, 'after the sermon the congrega-
tion, though there be no communion, yet it is not
dispensed without prayers and the blessing. The
prayer for the Church Militant contains in it suppli-
cations, prayers, and intercessions, and of going
of thanks for all men, for kings, and all in authority, as
the Apostle directs, which expression of our universal
charity is highly necessary, when there is a celebration
of the Lord's Supper; but when there is none, yet,
being a general intercession, it is necessary to fill up
and complete the second service, which is a distinct
service, and in the first institution was performed at
different times.' My object, however, on this occa-
sion, is less to insist upon an argument derived from
the reason of the thing, than to give evidence of the
sentiments entertained and professed by our divines,
iminent at that period for station and character,
concerning ministerial observance of the laws of the
Church."

10. Proceeding then to other examples, I observe,
that in the "Supplement to his Commentary on the
Book of Common Prayer," published in 1711, Dr.
Nicholls says, with reference to the clergyman's ministrations,
as promised by his ordination vow, "all this
must be done with a just limitation, and under the
direction of the laws of the land, and the canons of
the Church, and not at the arbitrary pleasure of the
minister. They must not preach any doctrine but
what is warranted by the Articles of our Church, nor
administer either sacraments or sacramentals, or any
other public or open prayer, but according to the
offices prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, and
none other or otherwise, as the Act of Uniformity
speaks."

11. In "The Clergyman's Vade-Mecum," of which
the first edition was published in 1705, and the third,
now lying before me, in 1709, the author, Mr. John-
son, says: "Our Reformers transcribed nothing into
our Liturgy, but what was truly primitive, nothing but
what was borrowed by the Church of Rome from
other Churches, or what was used by that Church as
well as others, while her faith and worship were yet
unperverted; so that it may justly be said of our
Liturgy, that it is the most primitive and complete
collection of public devotion that is used in any
Church in the world. Therefore, no clergyman
ought to think the Liturgy too long." And soon after
he adds, "A clergyman is not to shorten
or curtail divine offices, to make room for a long
sermon. He that does this, does not conform to the
Liturgy, and so is false to his promise and subscrip-
tion, and liable to the censures of the Ordinary."

12. In his Sermon on "the manner of the institu-
tion of ministers with us," Bishop Beveridge, who
presided over the diocese of St. Asaph, from 1704 to
1707, commenting on the questions which "concern
their future behaviour, and diligence, and faithfulness
in discharging the office committed to them," remarks,
"Their answers are all so many solemn promises made
to God and his Church, to act accordingly; which
promises, being so solemnly made before God and his
Church, are certainly as binding as if they were made
upon oath, and ought to be as religiously observed.—
Inasmuch, that as all Christians, as such, should
always remember and keep the vows and promises
they made when they were baptized; so all ministers,
as such, should remember and keep those vows and
promises which they made when they were ordained.
For which purposes it is very convenient, if it
is necessary, for us often to read over the office of ordi-
nation, or at least that part of it which contains the
answers and promises which we made to God and his
Church, when we were received into the ministry of
the Gospel."

13. Dr. Comber, Dean of Durham, who published
his "Discourse upon the Office for making Priests"
in 1699, thus insists upon the "manner," in which
they are to administer doctrine, sacraments, and dis-
cipline, so as the Lord hath commanded in his word,
and so as the ecclesiastical laws of the Realm do
appoint. "We have," he says, "accurately prescribed
forms of all our ministrations, from which, if any
private minister might vary, and follow his own fancy;
it would breed infinite confusion, and endless scandals;
wherefore, after the example of our pious ancestors,
we oblige all the clergy to minister in the word and
sacraments, yea, and discipline also in one uniform
manner." So that for any minister to
come short of, or go beyond, this perfect constitution,
argues intolerable pride and folly, and discovers such
a presumption, as admits of no excuse, especially after
he hath so solemnly promised before God and many
witnesses, that he will administer all these according
to the rules of this Church. Moreover, since he is
now to take charge of a flock, he must not only rightly
dispense doctrine, discipline, and the sacraments him-
self, but must use all possible endeavours to bring his
people to do their part of these offices strictly and
conscientiously."

14. In 1695, Bishop Sprat thus charged the clergy
of Rochester, as to "the manner of doing their part
in all the ordinary offices of the public Liturgy."—"I
do not only mean," said he, "that you should be
very punctual in reading the Common Prayer Book,
as the law requires; that is, not only to do it con-
stantly and entirely in each part, without any main-
ing, adding to, or altering it. . . . If you do
not so, you are liable to a legal punishment and
censure."

15. In 1688, among "some heads of things to be
more fully insisted on by the Bishops in their addresses
to the clergy and people of their respective Dioceses,"
Archbishop Sancroft delivered from Lambeth the
following injunctions: "That the clergy often read
over the forms of their ordination, and seriously con-

sider what solemn vows and professions they made
therein to God and his Church, together with the
several oaths and subscriptions they have taken and
made upon divers occasions: that in compliance with
those and other obligations, they be active and zealous
in all the parts and instances of their duty. . . .
That they diligently catechise the children and youth
of their parishes, as the rubric of the Common Prayer
Book and the fifty-ninth canon enjoin, and so prepare
them to be brought in due time to confirmation. . . .
That they perform the daily office publicly, with all
decency, affection, and gravity, in all market and other
great towns; and, even in villages, and less populous
places, bring people to public prayers as frequently as
may be; especially on such days and at such times as
the rubric and canons appoint."

16. Among his "Rules and Advices to the Clergy
of the Diocese of Down and Connor, for their deport-
ment in their public and personal capacities," in 1678,
Bishop Jeremy Taylor called on ministers for an
observance of the "law," as the rule of conduct in
their respective cures, not without cautions against
irregular proceedings. "Fear no man's person in the
doing of your duty wisely, and according to the laws."
. . . "Strive to get the love of the con-
gregation, but let it not degenerate into popularity,
but not by omitting or spoiling any part of it." "Let
no minister of a parish introduce any ceremony, rites,
or gestures, though with some seeming piety and
devotion, but what are commanded by the Church,
and established by law. And let these also be wisely
and justly explicated to the people, that they may
understand the reasons and measures of obedience;
but let there be no more introduced, lest the people
be burdened unnecessarily, and tempted or divided."
And again, "Mark them that cause divisions amongst
you, and avoid them; for such persons are by the
Scripture called 'scandals in the abstract (Rom. xvi.
17): they are offenders and offences too. But if any
man have an opinion, let him have it to himself, till
he can be cured of his disease by time, and counsel,
and gentle usage. But if he separates from the
Church, and gathers a congregation, he is proud, and
is fallen from the communion of saints, and the unity
of the Catholic Church."

17. Bishop Sparrow, who bore the episcopal office
successively in the sees of Exeter and Norwich, from
1667 to 1686, in his "Rationale on the Common
Prayer," thus affirms the authority, the divine and
exclusive authority, of a rightly constituted ritual like
ours. "God," he says, "hath in general commanded
a public worship and service; but hath not, under the
Gospel, assigned the particular form and method.—
That he hath left to his ministers and delegates, the
governors of the Church, to determine, agreeable to
his general rules; which, being so determined, is
God's service and worship, not only by human, but
even by divine law also; and all other public services
whatsoever made by private men; to whom God hath
given no such commission, as *strange worship* (see
the 10th chapter of Leviticus, first verse) because not
commanded." And again, "The public worship of
God, prescribed, as we have said, by those to whom
he hath given commission, is the only true and right
public worship; and all other forms and methods
offered up instead of that, though ever so exactly
drawn, are strange worship, because not commanded.
It is not the elegance of the phrase; nor the fitness
of the composition, that makes it acceptable to God,
as his worship and service; but obedience is the thing
accepted. 'Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, or
any fat of lambs.'—1 Sam. xv. 22."

18. And finally, in a sermon preached at Lambeth
Chapel in 1669; on the consecration of D. John
Dolben, Bishop of Rochester, and afterwards Arch-
bishop of York, and published by command of Dr.
Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. South
thus insists on the episcopal authority, with reference
to an enforcing of the Church's ordinances. The
Bishop's government, he says, "implies exaction of
duty from the persons placed under it. For it is both
to be confessed and lamented, that men are not so
ready to offer it, where it is not exacted. Otherwise
what means the service of the Church so imperfectly,
and by halves read over; and that by many who pro-
fess a conformity to the rules of the Church? What
makes them mince and mangle that in their practice;
which they must swallow whole in their subscriptions?
Why are the public prayers curtailed and left out;
prayers composed with sobriety, and enjoined with
authority; only to make the more room for a long,
crude, impertinent, upstart harangue before the ser-
mon? Such persons seem to conform (the signifi-
cation of which word they never make good) only that
they may despise the Church's injunctions under the
Church's wing, and contempt authority within the
protection of the laws?"

19. These quotations, my reverend brethren, bring
the subject before us under several points of view, but
they all concur in enforcing on the Church's ministers
the duty of celebrating the Church's offices after the
manner which the Church has appointed. They
carry up the subject through several consecutive
stages, from 1754 to 1666, which last date nearly
synchronizes with the date of the last Act for "Uni-
formity of Public Prayers" on the restoration of King
Charles the Second; and they record the sentiments
of some of our most eminent prelates, theologians, and
ritualists during that period. These will suffice to
prove that a strict observance of the rubric is not
a recent innovation, but that from the first, and at all
times, through the earlier and larger moiety at least
of the last century, it was the acknowledged duty of
the clergy and people of the Church.

20. Of later years a less strict observance of it has
been growing up and gaining strength amongst us;
whether it be that the governors of the Church have
not expressed such definite and decided sentiments on
ritual conformity as their predecessors in the episco-
pate, the Sparrows, the Taylors, the Sprats, and the
Beveridges, the Dolbens, the Sheldons, and the San-
crofts of a bygone age; or that the clergy have been
less apt to take counsel of our Souths, and Combers,
and Johnsons, and Nichollises, and Bisses, and Venerers,
and Sharps, in exposition of our liturgical provisions;
and thus interpreting, perhaps, the forbearance of the
ordinaries into permission, consent, or continuance,
and countenanced and encouraged by the latitudinarian
spirit which has marked the preceding and the last
half century, have adopted a less regular course, in
compliance with their own private accommodation and
convenience, and with the wishes and prepossessions
of others. But whatever may be the co-operating causes,
the root of the irregularity appears to be the want of
a deliberate, exact, and faithful estimate of our ordi-
nation vow. Awakened attention is calculated to
correct the evil, and to produce the opposite salutary
effects. Let the candidate for holy orders, or for a
license to a cure, or institution to a benefice, ponder
seriously his promises of "conformity to the Liturgy,"
to "the prescript form of Divine Service in the
Church, and none other," and, by God's help on con-
sequent good resolutions, clerical nonconformity will
cease from among us. The sense of the pledge is too
plain to be misapprehended; its application to palpable
to be evaded.

21. Thus then I have endeavoured to remind you
of your clerical engagements, and to establish you in
principles, which, having many years ago put them
forward with careful consideration, the experience of
a long intervening period has enabled me to examine
and approve. Accordingly, in conclusion, my reverend
brethren, I now say to you, what twenty-one

years ago I said to the clergy of Killaloe; and what
twenty years ago I said to the clergy of Down and
Connor, by circulating amongst them copies of my
charge of the preceding year. "The course which I
have been tracing before you is straight and simple;
it is no other than to guide your steps in the life of
lawful authority, according to your own stipulated
engagements. If ever our lawgivers shall see reason
to alter the provisions of our ecclesiastical laws, or to
relax the bond of ministerial conformity and obedience;
observations, such as have now been offered to your
thoughts, will become, perhaps, antiquated and obso-
lete. At present, however, it believes me to take
things as they are, and to frame our conduct accord-
ingly; you to perform your actual obligations, as
parochial ministers; faithfully, punctually, and con-
stantly; me, to see and require, in discharge of the
trust reposed in me, that they be faithfully; punctually,
and constantly performed. Thus may we have
mutually the satisfaction of reflecting, that we have
endeavoured each to 'fulfill our ministry,' and 'herein
have exercised ourselves, to have a conscience void
of offence toward God and toward man.' This reflection
will be our highest delight or our best consolation in
any success, whether humbly speaking, good or evil,
which may follow from such a discharge of our engage-
ments to the Church of God. Sufficient for us that
we have 'striven lawfully,' and laboured to be 'found
faithful;' the result must be left in the hands of God."

CONDITION OF IRELAND.
(By a Correspondent of the New York Commercial
Advertiser.)

I have gone into the huts in all parts of the coun-
try, and often found the family with no other pro-
visions than potatoes, and those sometimes without salt.
A pig, to be sure, was almost invariably a member of
the family, and you will sometimes find him lying on
the same straw, and covered by the same ragged cov-
erlet that envelops the children. Are these and
pictures? They may be, but they hardly give you an
adequate idea of the poverty and degradation of the
Irish; the colouring is too faint rather than too vivid,
and yet I have come to two conclusions which will
seem stranger than any thing else,—first, that the
condition of Ireland, has been improving within twenty
years, and second; that no man, woman, or child,
need suffer by hunger or cold or sickness in all Ire-
land; and that the traveller should not give aims to
those who beset him at every turn.

Take the poorest town in the South or West of Ire-
land, that is most thronged with squalid beggars, and
examine thoroughly, and you will find that not one
need suffer who would rather work than beg. You
will find in the neighbourhood a work house, estab-
lished by the Government; a new, sightly, and com-
fortable building, with a flower garden in front and a
vegetable garden in the rear; you will find it neat;
and orderly; you will find the inmates well clad, well
fed, kindly treated, and coerced to no more labor than
is for their physical and moral well being.

There are one hundred and twenty-five of these
establishments scattered about the island, of various
sizes, according to the population; but all under one
general board of overseers, all built upon the same
plan, administered in the same way, and watched with
the keenest eye, by vigilant, able, and humane inspec-
tors.

I have been in more than one of them, and inspect-
ed every part from the cellar to the attic; I was fur-
nished with a sort of visitatorial power; by authority;
and exercised it fully; and I am ready to testify that
they are administered with great skill, and great hu-
manity. Every proper applicant is admitted, and
kindly treated, and allowed to depart upon giving no-
tice, which in most cases is unreasonably short; some-
times as short as four hours. Parents are not sepa-
rated from their children, if these are under two years
of age; nor more than that of the good of both, if they
are older. All the inmates are kept clean, and warmly
clad; they have good; healthy food, in abundance;
they have their own spiritual counsellors; they are
well treated in sickness, and kindly cared for on
all occasions.

The children—it is a pleasure to see their round,
rosy, happy faces—it is a guarantee of their kind
treatment to see them gather round the officers and
pull at their coat tails; and it is a promise of better
things to come to see them in the school room digging
away with dogged resolution to master the distin-
guishing traits of B and P.

Believe me, let the repeaters say what they may—
let the landlords say what they may—let the lazy
beggars say what they may—the union work-house
system of Ireland, is a public establishment; it is
wisely and humanely administered; and its founders
and administrators deserve well of their country for
their noble efforts. I know not what party started it;
I care not what party oppose it; I, a stranger, an
unprejudiced person, one, too, not unacquainted with
the modes of public charity in our own and other
countries, have examined this closely and thoroughly;
and I say it deserves all commendation. I enter not
into the question of the propriety of public elemosy;
I only say that if they must be (and the condition
of Ireland seemed to render them necessary,) I see
how they could be better.

Why, then, you will say, if such comfortable pro-
vision is made for the poor, why will they beg? Are
the houses full? By no means. Out of Dublin I found
not a single work-house with anything like its full num-
ber. I entered one which had been open three months;
and would hold three hundred persons—it had but
twenty! Another, in another town, had been open ten
weeks; it would hold also three hundred; and it had
not a pauper inmate—not a solitary one—and it had
had but one, who, finding the place very full, and very
orderly, and very clean, went out to the dirt, and the
excitement, and the freedom of vagabond beggary.
There are tens of thousands of poor in the almshouses;
but few of them are from the standing army of beggars.