

I am doing as much as a humble individual like myself can do to recognize the power of the Presbyters, and, with God's blessing, upon all occasions to set it forth. We are met together in Diocesan Synod this day—met for important purposes—met to ask you whether you advise me to put forth, as the act of this Diocesan Synod, certain declarations. The first of these you have all had submitted to you. Foreseeing that I should not be perfectly able to address you throughout *riçâ voce*, I have committed certain matters to writing, which, with your permission, I will read.

His Lordship then read the following paper:—
Diocesan Synods are the most ancient of all Synods, after the Apostolical. White Kennett in his "Ecclesiastical Synods," says, at p. 198:—

"The next Synods were Diocesan. For, after the destruction of Jerusalem, at least, all Bishops were of equal character, and had within their own respective districts the separate care of Church affairs. So that every Diocese was an absolute Church within itself, and had full authority over its own members. So, as the Bishop and his colleagues, who were select Presbyters, held their peculiar Synods. From the time that Church government was here established, I believe our Bishops had the right of calling their own Clergy to a Synod, and to enter upon debates, and draw up rules," &c.—p. 200.

This right appears to have been constantly exercised according to the judgment of the Bishop, in invoking his Clergy. That Diocesan Synods did not necessarily imply that all the Clergy were summoned to meet is apparent from what had just been cited from Kennett, respecting select Presbyters; but it is still more apparent from an actual instance of a Diocesan Synod, to be found in "Wilkins's Concilia" i., page 369—

"Acta Synodi apud Wigorniam a S. Wolstano habitæ anno 1092." "Ego Wolstanus, gratia Dei Wigorniensis episcopus decrevi synodum congregare in Monasterio S. Marie. Hac synodus habita est anno 1092. Ad hanc synodum invitati convenerunt omnes sapientissimæ personæ de tribus comitatibus nostræ diocesis."

This practice of not calling together all the Clergy of the Diocese to the Diocesan Synods is recognised by the most celebrated professor of civil law, at the time of the Reformation, in the middle of the sixteenth century, Francisus Duarenus, who in his great work, "De Sacris Ecclesiæ Ministeriis et Beneficiis," i., c. xi., thus says:—

"Tametsi solemne orinariumque sit, Sacerdotes qui Ecclesias regunt ad Synodum convocare, non etiam ceteros clericos et Archimandritas, seu Monasteriorum Præsules: tamen si justa aliqua causa Episcopum moveat, his etiam mandare potest, ut ad Synodum accedant."

Thus recognising the right of the Bishop to require the attendance of all, but recognising also his right to exercise his discretion. In small Dioceses it seems to have been very usual to summon all; yet this is not without exception. For it appears by an instance given in Wilkins IV., 228, that in the year 1561, a "Diocesan Synod," expressly so called, was celebrated by Thomas Davies, Bishop of St. Asaph, to which the Clergy of a single Deanery was summoned.

"Concilium Diocesanum Assaphense celebratum in ecclesiâ Cathedrali Assaphensi a Thomâ Episcopo Assaphensi. Die Mercurii 12 Novembris. Quo die et loco Reverendus Pater Dom. Thomas Assaph, Episcopus convocato eorum co Clero Decanatus de Roze, statuit ordinavit," &c.

Whereas, so late as in 1683, a Diocesan Synod of the whole of the Clergy of that small Diocese is recorded in Watkins IV., 608, in the larger Diocese of Norwich (which was indeed a Diocese containing more Clergymen than almost any other in England), the Diocesan Synod was held annually; and Dean Prideaux (in his directions to Churchwardens, p. 178), says:—

"Diocesan Synods were kept up in the Diocese of Norwich, and all the Clergy of the Diocese constantly attended at them every year—that is, the Clergy of Suffolk at Ipswich, and the Clergy of Norfolk at Norwich."

This lasted to the time of the Great Rebellion in 1641. These cases sufficiently shew that it is not necessary that all the Clergy be actually brought together in order to constitute a Diocesan Synod; but that all be consulted and advised in such manner as the Bishop should deem best; for a Diocesan Synod is the Bishop consulting his Clergy. Accordingly, Archbishop Usher, in his "Reduction of Episcopacy unto the form of Synodical Government revived in the ancient Church," proposes that in the Diocesan Synod all the Rectors and Incumbent Pastors (or a certain select number of them from every Deanery in the Diocese) might meet under the Bishop. The Bishop in ancient times, had his Clergy residing with him in his Cathedral, and these urban Clergy were his council. These were succeeded by Deans and Chapters, who were the councils of the Bishop; and the meetings of Bishops with these councils seem to have been sometimes called Diocesan Synods. In Henry VIII.'s time, when the appointment of the members of the new Chapters was, in great part, assumed by the Crown, these capitular councils seem to have ceased.

Now, the present Synod fulfils the condition of the Bishop consulting the whole body of his Clergy, in as perfect a manner as is possible. For, not only are the Dean and Chapter members, *ex officio*, of the Synod but also there are representatives of every Deanery in the Diocese, the Clergy of which have been ready to send representatives to it; and of the thirty-two Deaneries in which the Diocese is divided, thirty have actually chosen representatives. But more than this; all the Clergy, in their respective Deaneries, have actually been consulted on every particular which is to be brought before the Synod for its consideration, and the observations which every one of them might wish to make on one main particular have been already sought and duly weighed. It is impossible, therefore, to advise a more perfect mode of obtaining the judgment of the Clergy at large and of every individual than is afforded by the constitution of this Synod, and by the course adopted in respect to it. To call a Synod of all the Clergy in a Diocese so large as this, would be, in effect, to throw the whole power into the hands of those who are nearest to the place where the Synod might be held. That the voices of its members are free I need not say, but yet I will say that in no single instance have I expressed even a wish for the election or non-election of any individual Clergyman, much as I rejoice at the election of all those whom I see present. In a word, I rest the matter of the election of those who attended the Synod on this simple issue. If, as we have seen, a Bishop of Worcester had and exercised the right of inviting to a Synod those whom he himself judged the wisest of the Clergy of the three counties comprised within his Diocese, can it be wrong for the Bishop of another Diocese to invite all his Clergy to select from among

themselves in their several Deaneries those whom they shall judge the wisest and the fittest to convey their counsel to their Bishop on the points on which he seeks that counsel?

I have hitherto said nothing of the fancied or pretended illegality of the Diocesan Synods. These Synods are almost as old as the Church itself, older than the union of the Church with the State. But it is most remarkable, in connection with the question of the legality of such Synods, that at no time and in no country has the temporal law interfered with them by any enactment whatever. This is especially the case in our own country. Even the statute of Henry VIII., c. 19, which forbade the holding of national or provincial Synods without the consent of the Crown, did yet not forbid the holding of Diocesan Synods, which were, and always had been, called by the Bishops on their sole authority. In the "Reformation Legum," a work completed in 1551, and avowedly drawn up mainly as a compilation of the ancient Canon law of England, by Commissioners appointed under the authority of the statute itself, Diocesan Synods are treated as a well-known institution in every Diocese, and the continuance of them prescribed. Their actual continuance is recognized by letters of the Queen's Council to the several Bishops, especially by one of the date of 1573, subscribed Lord Burghley, and others his fellows, calling on the Bishops "in their Visitations and Synods, to keep all Churches in their Dioceses in one uniform and godly order."

Again the 119th Canon of 1603, with equal explicitness, speaks of Diocesan Visitations and Synods as matters equally notorious. Of the entire lawfulness, indeed, of our Synods, there ought not to be a doubt, since the first minister of Her Majesty, speaking on the authority of the law officers of the Crown, has declared them to be lawful; yet ignorant and presumptuous agitators scruple not, in spite of this declaration, to affect to regard them as unlawful.

Having said so much of the Synod itself, I will now proceed to the first particular of the special business before us—to the proposed declaration of our adherence to the Article of the Nicene Creed, "I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins." But here, in the outset, we are met by certain statements, which, whatever we may think of them, seem to require some notice, because of the respectable authority which has put them forth. The Archdeacon of Middlesex, in a recent Charge to his Clergy, has said what follows:—

"On examining the 'History of the Council of Constantinople,' we find that the question before the Council was, whether baptism should be repeated in the case of persons who had been baptized by heretics or schismatics? St. Basil had shortly before asserted that baptism by heretics or schismatics was absolutely void, and that the sacrament in such cases ought to be repeated. His opinions were disapproved by the Council, and the seventh Canon was enacted, making this addition to the Creed. The assembled Fathers, objected to the repetition of baptism." "St. Epiphanius, in the longer of the two forms in which he gives the creed, says merely, 'I believe one baptism of repentance,' omitting all reference to remission of sins."

This is not an occasion for going into a detailed consideration of these statements. It is enough for the present purpose to notice two of the principal. One of his (Archdeacon Sinclair's) statements is, that the fathers at Constantinople took occasion to condemn an opinion recently put forth by St. Basil, that baptism by heretics or schismatics was absolutely void; and that on this account "the seventh Canon was enacted, making this addition to the creed." Now, in the first place, whoever will take the trouble to look into the seventh Canon, will see that it does not make this, or any other, addition to the Creed. It simply prescribes which heretics shall be received into the Church by baptism—and which, as heathens, by baptism. [And Henry says (lib. xvii. n. 7), that "these were the same, and of the same country, with those whom St. Basil mentions in his first Canonical Epistle to St. Amphilochius, and whose baptism he declares invalid." So that the Canon which the learned Archdeacon assures us was made to condemn the doctrine of Basil was in truth strictly conformable to that doctrine.] But in the second place, the Canon itself is treated by Bishop Beveridge and other of the most learned in ecclesiastical antiquities as undoubtedly spurious: "But the assembled Fathers had objected to the repetition of this sacrament." Where does this appear? Not in the acts of the Council, not in their Synodal Epistle to the Emperor Theodosius, or in their Synodal Address of Nestorius to the Council. It is not noticed by the almost contemporary historians, Sozomen, Sozomen, or Theodoret—in none of the copious commentaries of Balsamon or Zonaras. Where, then, we may be permitted to ask, did the Archdeacon find the fact which he has stated? There is one other statement on which I will remark—that "St. Epiphanius, in the longer of the two forms, in which he gives the Creed, says merely, 'I believe one baptism of repentance,' omitting all reference to remission of sins." This is quite true, but the charge ought to have told those who heard it, that the very same father, in the shorter of the two forms (which were, it seems, both present to the eyes of the writer), actually gives this article in the very same form in which it appears in our own Creed, *Ὁμολογῶν ἐν βάπτισμα εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*—"We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins."

But the Archdeacon says, that "in the Council of Constantinople we see no allusion whatever to infant baptism." It may well be that there was no allusion to the specific case of baptism of infants, but the real question is, whether the Fathers who inserted this article into the Creed maintained such doctrine respecting the grace of baptism as implies that this grace is always conferred on all fit recipients (among whom it is not pretended that infants are not included) in and by this sacrament. Now, of the Fathers who were present in the Council of Constantinople, there are four (and I believe only four) whose writings have come down to us—St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Gregory of Nazianzum, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. Amphilochius of Iconium. I will adduce some short extracts from the writings of every one of them on the efficacy of baptism, and its necessity to salvation.

The first is St. Cyril of Jerusalem, whose chief work is a series of catechetical lectures for the instruction of adult candidates for baptism. In such a work, it cannot be expected that we shall find any express declaration respecting the baptism of infants. It is enough if the principles therein stated imply the grace given in baptism to infants, who are confessedly fit recipients thereof. In his first, or introductory lecture, he says,—
"The bath of baptism we may not receive twice or thrice—for there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; and none but heretics are re-baptized, since their former baptism was not baptism."—*Introd. Lect. n. 7.*

Now upon this it is obvious to remark that it is quite inconsistent with the notion which we have just considered, that this article was introduced into the Creed for the purpose of condemning the doctrine that the

baptism of heretics was not baptism. That doctrine, we see, is in terms affirmed by St. Cyril, though doubtless he understood it, and wished that he should himself be understood, with due exceptions. But he proceeds—

"Great indeed is the baptism which is offered to you. It is a ransom to captives, remission of offences, the death of sin, regeneration of the soul, garment of light, the holy seal, indissoluble—the chariot to Heaven, the delight of Paradise, the grant of the kingdom, the gift of adoption."—*Ib. 16.*

Again—
"Glorious was he who baptized with water, but what to him who baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire?"—*Lect. iii. 9.* "Unless a man receive baptism he hath not salvation."—*Ib. 10.* "By baptism the sting of death is destroyed."—*Ib. 11.* "Now then when thou art about to descend into the waters, consider not the base element; look for its saving power by the operation of the Holy Ghost; for, without the two, thou canst not be made perfect. This is not my word, but the Lord Jesus Christ's who has the power to do it. He saith 'except a man' (*εἰ μὴ τις*, does not this include infants?) 'be born again,' and he enlargeth of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."—*Lect. iii. 4.* "Believe in the Holy Ghost, who even now, at the season of baptism, sealeth thy soul."—*Iv. 16.*

I might multiply similar citations from St. Cyril; but these shall suffice. I proceed to Gregory of Nazianzum. He says—

"Baptism is a casting off the flesh, a following of the Spirit, communion of the Word (*Λόγου κοινωνία*), the creature's restoration to rectitude, sin's deluge (*κατακλυσμὸς ἁμαρτίας*), illumination—a chariot to God, union with Christ in his pilgrimage—the key of the kingdom of Heaven."—*Orat. 40. 3.*

Again—
"This the Heavens congratulate, angels magnify for its kindred brightness; this is the image of the blessedness there [*i. e.* in Heaven], this we desire to praise, but cannot as it is worthy."—*Ib. 4.* "This is the grace and power of baptism, conveying, not a deluge of the world, as formerly, but a cleaning of the sins of each, and an entire ablation of all the obstructions and defilements by sin."—*Ib. 7.* "Cleaning the inmost parts, which, coming in aid of our first birth, maketh us new, instead of old—godlike, instead of beings for a time."—*Ib. 8.*

Can we, after this, doubt whether "the remission of sins" was not the chief point intended by these Fathers in their new article? But I must add one more passage from this Father:—

"Hast thou an infant? Give not opportunity to evil. Let him be sanctified from a babe. From his tenderest infancy let him be consecrated to the Spirit. Fearest thou the seal on account of the infirmity of nature? O poor-spirited mother, and oh little faith! Thou needest not amulets and charms for him, wherewith the Evil One enters in. Give to him the Trinity, the one great and glorious phylactery, *δὸς αὐτῷ τὴν Τριάδα, τὸ μέγα καὶ κάλον φουλακτήριον.*"

After this can any one gravely say, or expect to be gravely heard if he says, that infant baptism was not in the contemplation of the Fathers at Constantinople? I turn to the other, Gregory, of Nyssa, but I will be brief in my recitations from him:—

"Baptism," says he, "is purging of sins, remission of trespasses, cause of renewal and regeneration—of regeneration, to be contemplated with the mind's eye—it cannot be seen with that of the body. This benefit is bestowed, not by the water (for then would water be more exalted than all creation besides), but by the ordinance of God, and by the descent of the Spirit, mystically [that is, sacramentally] coming to our new creature." "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—"The Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh, or whether it goeth." "It bleaseth the body which is baptized, and the water which baptizeth." "If any man persist in troubling me with questions, how is regeneration brought about by the water, and the mystical work wrought in it, my very reasonable answer is—Make clear to me the mode of the generation of the flesh, and I will explain to thee the power which worketh regeneration as to the soul."—*S. Greg. Nyss. in Bapt. Chris. iii. 368—371.*

I conclude with one extract from Amphilochius, the fourth of these Fathers. In his tract "In Domini Circumcisione" (pp. 13—15), he says,—

"Jesus was circumcised according to his own law on the eighth day, not to teach men to be circumcised, but to cause circumcision to cease, or rather pluck up the presumption in favour of the old and useless, and to reveal the power of the new and saving circumcision [baptism], that he might annul that which was after the flesh, and give vigour to that which was after the Spirit, and prove the weakness of the former, but set forth the might of the latter. To this end, having trained all the holy Apostles and Disciples in the law of the latter, and having practised them in the circumcision according to the flesh, he translated them to the circumcision of the spirit in baptism, that having through them, cancelled the spirit of bondage, the spirit of grace and adoption might live anew in this Divine baptism in Christ Jesus."

Such was the teaching of the Fathers, who, in the Council of Constantinople, inserted in the Creed the article "one baptism for the remission of sins," in order, as it is shown by Bishop Bull, to meet the heresy of the Valentinian gnostics, of whom Irenæus says, "that they were brought by the artifices of Satan to a denial of Christ's baptism, which is regeneration into God, and so to the casting off the whole of our faith *εἰς ἐξάρτησιν τοῦ βαπτίσματος, τῆς ἅλης τοῦ ἀναγεννήσεως, καὶ πάσης τῆς πίστωσης ἀθέσει.*"

And let me remind you that this was not the only addition made to the Creed by this Council. The Creed of Nice stopped at the words, "and in the Holy Ghost." All the articles, therefore, which follow, respecting "the Holy Catholic Church, the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come," were, as well as the "one baptism for the remission of sins," deemed by the Fathers necessary to a full confession of faith; all therefore were added. "Remission of sins," was previously in the Roman or Apostles Creed. The Fathers at Constantinople expanded this by declaring that baptism, the one baptism of Christ, is the instrument by which this remission is given.

I trust that this lengthened statement has not wearied you, and will not be deemed altogether useless. For, although the sense in which the article of the Creed is to be understood rests not on the authority of those who composed it, but on the acceptance of it by the Catholic Church as witnessed and handed down by the Second General Council, yet it is satisfactory thus to review a small part of the exact testimony borne to the faith by the most eminent of the Fathers who were present at that Council; and we have been especially called on to do this, I repeat, by the recent attempt, hasty and ill-advised I must not scruple to call it,

which has been made by an Archdeacon of another Diocese in a charge to his Clergy—to rob the Catholic doctrine on baptismal grace of the support it has always hitherto derived from our acknowledging in the Creed "one baptism for the remission of sins," and to make that article to be no more than an assertion that one baptism—baptism once—is all that is required; he has said, that to derive from it that remission of sin to all infants in baptism is not only true, but also an essential article of faith, is "so preposterous an inference, that the Fathers who inserted the article would have expressed their indignation" at any who should dare to make it.

An appeal to the words of those Fathers themselves has shown us how discreetly or indiscreetly this has been said.

And now I come to the declaration itself. Before I propose it, I would call you all to witness how anxious I have been to consult your judgments severally upon it, and the judgments of the Clergy of the Deaneries from which you come. I thank them and you for the suggestions which have been made to me. I have availed myself of them, and have adopted virtually almost all of them, as I think you will perceive when you hear the declaration, as I now submit it to you, whether to advise its acceptance or rejection.

The Rev. E. C. Philpot, Chaplain, then read the Declaration on Baptism, as revised, and which we published in our paper last week.

The Bishop then said: I hope the reading of this Declaration will satisfy you that I have correctly stated that I availed myself of all the objections and observations that were offered to me. As this declaration has been much considered by you all, it may be right, perhaps, at once to ask the question, whether you advise its acceptance as an act of this Synod? If, however, any one wishes to speak upon the subject, I am sure I am not desirous to stop them, else I should propose at once that those who do assent will say "aye."

The Venerable Archdeacon Moore Stevens (of Exeter) said that whatever doubt and uncertainty he might have entertained with regard to one or two passages in the first Declaration, they had now, by its judicious alterations, been removed. He might at one time have felt some doubt as to the propriety of holding a Diocesan Synod, but he had never felt the least upon the doctrines which his Lordship has stated in the address.

It now being time for even song in the Cathedral, the Bishop observed that the Synod, of course, could not sit whilst service was celebrating, and, therefore, it would be necessary to adjourn for a short time.

The Rev. Dr. Harris, of Torquay, suggested that as the alterations made in the Declaration, since the printed copies had been sent to the Clergy, were very material, and, he must add, also very satisfactory, it would be desirable to afford time for their consideration.

The Bishop entirely concurred in this suggestion, and expressed his desire to consult the wishes of the Synod as to the day when the consideration of the Declaration should be resumed. He was willing to proceed with it either after service this afternoon, or tomorrow, or Friday.

After a brief conversation, it was determined that the Declaration should be reprinted, and considered tomorrow, Thursday.

The Synod then adjourned till four o'clock. At the adjourned meeting the Bishop took the chair, and called upon his Chaplain to read the Declaration of adherence to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England.

The Chaplain read the Declaration on Secession from the Church which we gave in our paper last week, but as there are some slight verbal variations between that and the official copy of the Declaration as passed by the Synod, we publish the latter.

DECLARATION II.

Deeply deploring the cases of defection from our Communion, which have occurred in the last ten years, even among the Clergy, which cases, few as they may be, in comparison of the whole number of Clergy, are yet numerous, when compared with those which have occurred in our Church at any former period within the last one hundred and ninety years; we hereby solemnly record our own hearty, and with God's blessing, unalterable attachment to the Church which He has called on us to serve, cordially accepting its doctrine as set forth in its Articles of Religion and Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and thankfully acknowledging its Ministry by Bishops, Priests and Deacons to have descended to us in unbroken succession from the Holy Apostles;—and we further record our full conviction, that Secession from this Church, being a sound part of the Catholic Church, to any other religious community, is, in itself, an act of schism, and as such, perilous to salvation, and in particular that secession to the Roman community in England is not only an act of schism, but involves also the abandonment of truth for error."

The Bishop observed, with reference to the phrase "for the last 190 years," he had inserted it as meaning from the time of 1660, after the Great Rebellion. That there was a numerous secession during the Great Rebellion was, he believed, certain, though he could not now tell to what extent. It was to a much greater extent than that in the last ten years; but he had inserted the words in order to limit the period.

A short discussion followed upon the Declaration, in the course of which several verbal alterations were proposed and considered. The alterations were moved by different clergymen, with the view of more clearly defining the meaning of the Synod, there being no opposition whatever to the object and purpose of the Declaration. Eventually, after one division, by which the words "in particular" were introduced in the clause concerning secession from the Church, the Declaration was carried with only five dissentients.

The third Declaration was then taken into consideration.

The Bishop said this was a Declaration, and not a Protest. A Protest, he held, must be directed against authority abused; but in the case which had called this forth there was no authority abused, for there had been an absolute assumption and usurpation of authority, on the part of Rome, which did not exist. The Synod, therefore, could not protest; whatever they did must be in the nature of a declaration.

The Declaration was then read. The Declaration on the Pope's intrusion of a schismatical Bishop of Plymouth was printed in our paper last week, but for the reasons stated above we reprint it from the official copy, as passed by the Synod. It was carried unanimously, on the motion of Chancellor Harington, and the Synod adjourned to the next day.

DECLARATION III.

Whereas the Bishop of Rome hath taken upon himself to name the Town of Plymouth, in the Archdeaconry of Totnes, in our Diocese of Exeter, to be a See in subjection to the said Bishop of Rome—and this is professed to be done for the greater convenience of the "Popish Recusants" or Refusers of the Catholic Communion of the Church of England: