

## INSTRUCTION IN REGARD TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH.

I have already urged upon my clerical brothers the duty of thoroughly instructing those whom they purpose presenting for confirmation in all things they ought to know, in connection with that apostolic rite ; but I feel that our clergy should go a good deal further. I fear that there is *amongst* our people, both old and young, great ignorance in regard to the Church of God. A great many persons in our communion, and almost the whole Protestant body outside our communion, are in entire ignorance of the English Church's existence prior to the time of Henry VIII. of England, and consequently are forced to the conclusion that our Church, under that monarch, separated from the Church of Rome, just as the Wesleyan Methodists separated from our Church in the last century, with no more authority for doing so ; and that, therefore we were equally guilty of *schism*.

We do not look to our public schools for instruction on the all important subject of religion. Because, alas ! such is the divided state of Christianity in our country, that our public school teachers could not be satisfactorily intrusted with that paramount duty. Others, therefore, must perform it. Those, to whom we have a right to look for the performance of this great duty, are the parents, sponsors and spiritual pastors of the members of the Church. Would to God ! that the old, goodly custom of catechising were revived amongst us. I firmly believe that such a course of instruction would be far more serviceable than most of the sermons now delivered from your pulpits. Let me then exhort you, my clerical brethren, to catechise the children of your Sunday schools *publicly in the church* during divine service, at least once a month, wherever it can be done. If you will give as much time and attention to the preparation of your catechistical instructions as you do to your sermons, you will find that after a little while you will be able to make this instruction not only very interesting to your young people, but also to the older members of your congregations. I have frequently heard the church people at Welland, both old and young, speak with great satisfaction and gratitude of the late Rev. John Stannege's catechising them. They said that they learned more about the Bible, the Church and Prayer Book, from it than from all the sermons they had heard during their whole lives. Of course the practice I urge upon you would involve no little trouble, but if it will be for the good of your people (as I am satisfied it will be, if you do your best), you surely will not regard that. The basis of your teaching should be the Church Catechism, which sets forth most clearly, in a most wonderful manner, our great privileges and duties, as covenant children of God—what we ought to "believe and to do" as such ; both in relation to our duty towards God and to our fellow-creatures too. It teaches us, more-

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