

reasoning can explain away: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God." We know that they are the Lord's own words, which the Church uses because they are His, and because the promise is given us of His presence with us "all days, even to the end of the world." We know that not the Bishop, but the Bishop's Lord and Master, can alone bestow this or any other spiritual gift. We know that this is given by the channel of a human instrument, because it pleases Him to work by human means, and to employ "earthen vessels." We know that the gift which the Lord bestows to render our ministry valid, and His sacraments effectual means of grace, is not to be confounded with the personal sanctification of the priest, which must be sought for by him as it is sought for by every Christian—by humble and constant prayer and diligent use of all the means of grace. But, on the other hand, he to whom the Church says, "Receive," must believe that the Church has wherewithal to give. And that this gift is the gift of the Holy Ghost for the effectual discharge of our ministrations is evident, for from the Spirit of God "every good and perfect gift" proceeds, and surely that gift which is bestowed on us "for the perfecting of the saints and the work of the ministry." When we have ourselves desired this office, when the Church, after due examination, has bestowed it upon us, when the Church calls us priests and our order a priesthood, it were an act of ingratitude and of cowardice to be ashamed of the name when we use the office. None of us taketh this "honor unto himself but he that was called of God, as was Aaron," and yet Aaron's priesthood was disputed. Aaron himself was "compassed with infirmity." "The people made the calf, *which Aaron made.*" And, in that great miracle, when water issued from the rock in Kadesh, Aaron shared in the unbelief which led to the exclusion of both Moses and Aaron from the promised land. If our priesthood be not the sacrificing of bulls and of goats it is none the less a real priesthood, because the Lord Jesus Christ confers it upon us. Aaron's was a typical priesthood. Ours comes from the Great High Priest in heaven, who says to us, "As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you." But does this gift make us arrogant? Does it not rather humble us in the dust? The more our priesthood is connected with the Word of Him who cannot lie, the higher it is above the ancient sacrifices of the Mosaic rites, the more true and real and awful it becomes, and the more holy we