

First Book of Edward VI., of 1549, was removed when the book was revised, and the second substituted in 1552. The rubric in the Visitation of the Sick in the First Book stood thus: "Here shall the sick person make a special confession, if he feels his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession the priest shall absolve him after this form, and the same form of absolution shall be used in all private confession."

In the Second Book, the words "the same form of absolution shall be used in all private confessions" are expunged. And it is important to note that at the same review the book was relieved from another Romish practice in the same service. The Visitation of the Sick, as set forth in 1549, retained a form of extreme unction: in 1552 this was expunged, together with the authority for using a form of private confession.

The passage as to extreme unction expunged from the book ran thus:—

"If the sick person desire to be anointed, then shall the Priest anoint him upon the forehead or breast only, making the sign of the cross, saying thus:

"As with this visible oil thy body outwardly is anointed, so our heavenly Father, Almighty God, grant of His infinite goodness that thy soul inwardly may be anointed with the Holy Ghost, who is the spirit of all strength, comfort, relief, and gladness. And vouchsafe for His great mercy (if it be His blessed will) to restore unto thee thy bodily health and strength, to serve Him, and send thee release of all thy pains, troubles, and diseases, both in body and mind. And howsoever His goodness (by His divine and unsearchable providence) shall dispose of thee, we, His unworthy ministers and servants, humbly beseech the Eternal Majesty to do with thee according to the multitude of His innumerable mercies, and to pardon all thy sins and offences committed by all thy bodily senses, passions, and carnal affections; who also vouchsafe mercifully to grant unto thee ghostly strength, by His Holy Spirit, to withstand and overcome all temptations and assaults of thine adversary, that in no wise he prevail against thee; but that thou mayst have perfect victory against the devil, sin, and death; through Christ our Lord, who by His death hath overcome the prince of death; and with the Father and the Holy Ghost evermore liveth and reigneth, God, world without end. Amen."

Then followeth the 13th Psalm.

Thus at the same review of the Prayer-book all authority was withdrawn for practising extreme unction, and for using a form of private absolution; the Church was being further reformed, and was dropping some more of those ancient practices of the unreformed Church, which had at first been retained. At this same revision also in the Communion Office that other passage was expunged which contained the words in the address to communicant "requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession not to be offended with them that do not use to their further satisfying the auricular and secret confession to the Priest."

HOOVER.

I shall now give you one quotation to illustrate how our ancient hierarchy treated the subject. The 6th Book of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, which has all the weight of his great authority, though most of its chapters were probably transferred by accident to their present place from some other portion of his works, speaks very highly indeed of the power of the Clergy in this matter. Besides sec. 17. chap. 6, the whole of the 4th chapter expresses in strong terms the High Church view of Confession and Absolution,

and yet it is only in exceptional cases that he advises recourse to be had to the clergy. How does he sum up the whole?—

"In sum, when the offence doth stand only between God and man's conscience, the counsel is good which St. Chrysostom giveth. I wish not thee to bewray thyself publicly, nor to accuse thyself before others. I wish thee to obey the Prophet, who saith, disclose thy way unto the Lord, confess thy sins before Him, tell thy sins to Him that He may blot them out. If thou be ashamed to tell unto any other wherein thou hast offended, rehearse them every day between thee and thy soul. I wish thee not to confess them to thy fellow servant, who may upbraid thee with them, tell them to God, who will cure them; let God alone see thee at thy confession. I pray and beseech you that you would more often than you do confess to God eternal, and reckoning up your trespasses desire His pardon. I carry you not into a theatre or open court of many of your fellow servants, I seek not to detect your crimes before men; disclose your conscience before God, unfold yourselves to Him, lay forth your wounds before Him, the best physician that is, and desire of Him salve for them." If hereupon it follow, as it did with David, "I thought, I will confess against myself my wickedness unto thee, O Lord, and thou forgavest me the plague of my sin," we have our desire, and there remaineth only thankfulness, accompanied with perpetuity of care to avoid that, which being not avoided, we know we cannot remedy without new perplexity and grief. Contrariwise, if peace with God do not follow the pains we have taken in seeking after it, if we continue disquieted, and not delivered from anguish, mistrusting whether that we do be sufficient; it argueth that our sore doth exceed the power of our own skill, and that the wisdom of the pastor must bind up those parts which, being bruised, are not able to be cured of themselves.

THE HOMILIES.

I have no doubt that practically the great body of our divines have assented to the view of the Church of England doctrine which is well set forth in the Second Book of Homilies, in the second part of the Sermon on Repentance. This important passage I pray you now to excuse me for recalling to your memory by quoting it at length; it is well that you should ponder on the words as speaking the mind of our Reformed Church. The first part of repentance having been described as the contrition of the heart, the homily goes on—

"The second is an unfeigned confession, and acknowledging of our sins unto God, whom by them we have so grievously offended, that, if he should deal with us according to His justice, we deserve a thousand hells if there could be so many. Yet, if we will with a sorrowful and contrite heart make an unfeigned confession of them unto God, He will freely and frankly forgive them and so put all our wickedness out of remembrance before the sight of His Majesty, that they shall no more be thought upon. Hereunto doth pertain the golden saying of the holy prophet David, where he saith on this manner: "Then I acknowledged my sin unto thee, neither did I hide mine iniquity: I said, I will confess against myself, my wickedness unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the ungodliness of my sin." These are also the words of John the Evangelist: "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to make us clean from all our wickedness." Which ought to be understood of the confession that is made unto God. For these are St. Augustine's word: "That confession which is made unto God is required by God's laws," whereof John the Apostle speaketh, say-

ing, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to make us clean from all our wickedness." Which ought to be understood of the confession that is made unto God. For, without this confession, sin is not forgiven. This is, then, the chiefest and most principal confession that in the scriptures and the word of God we are bidden to make, and without the which we shall never obtain pardon and forgiveness of our sins. Indeed, besides this there is another kind of confession, which is needful and necessary.

(To be Continued.)

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