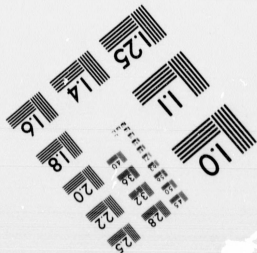
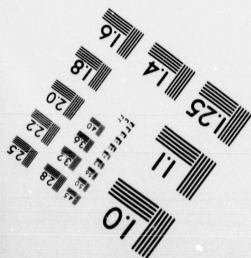
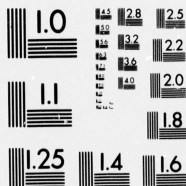


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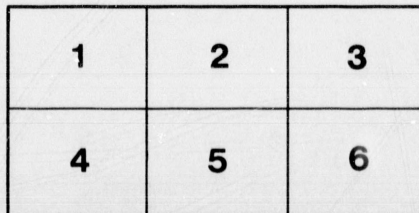
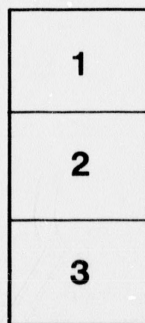
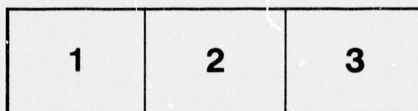
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Can. Pam. Cole, J. S.

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# CONFIRMATION TRACT:

TOUCHING A FEW

## PRACTICAL AND VITAL QUESTIONS,

IN THAT CONNECTION, NOT USUALLY TREATED.

BY

J. S. COLE, B. A.,

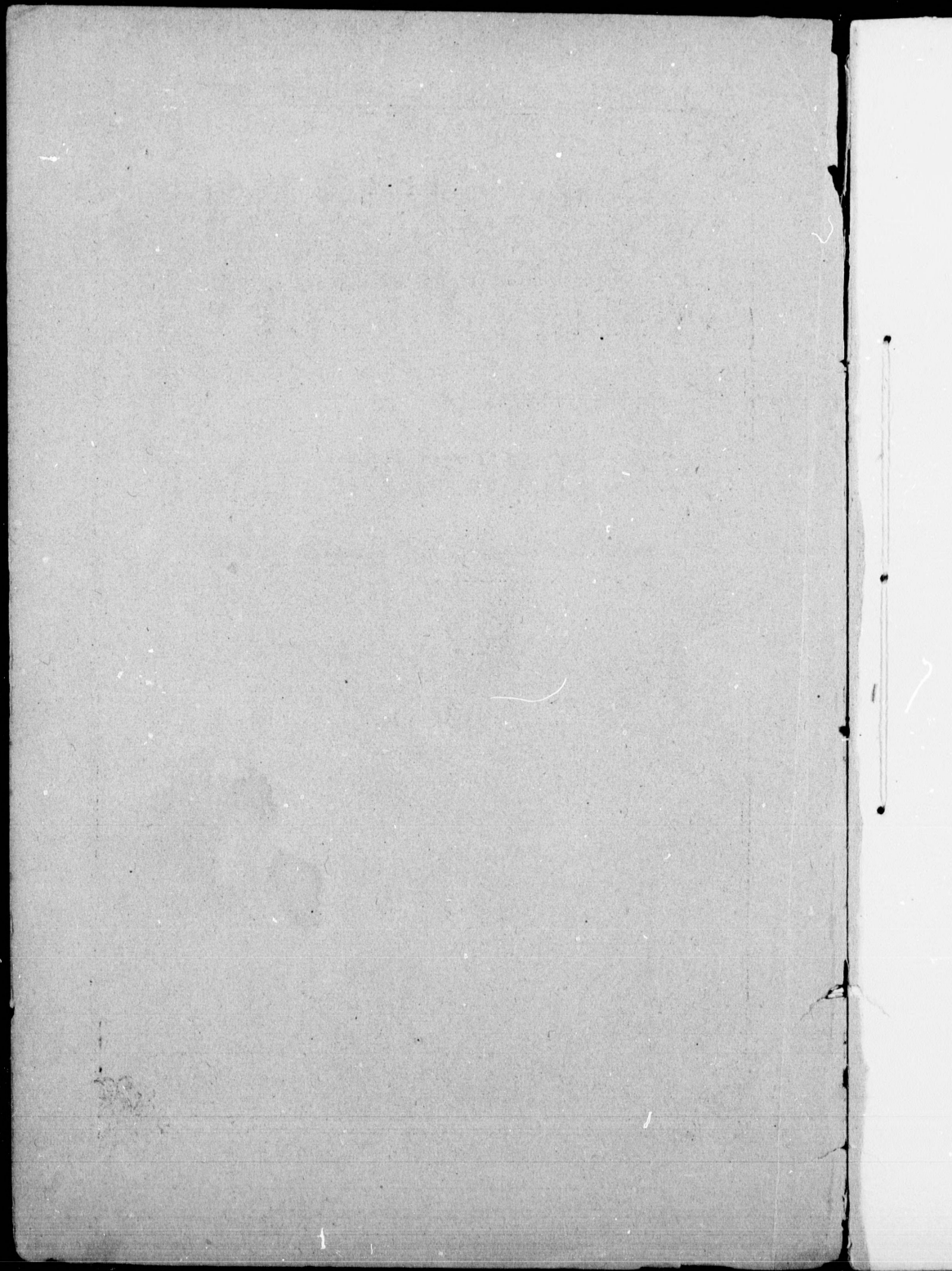
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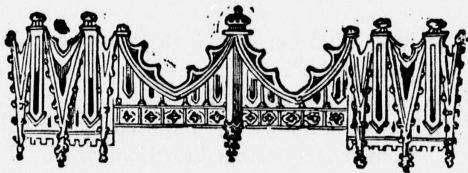
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# CONFIRMATION TRACT

TOUCHING A FEW PRACTICAL AND VITAL QUESTIONS  
IN THAT CONNECTION, NOT USUALLY TREATED,

By J. S. COLE, B.A.

PRESBYTER IN THE DIOCESE OF ALGOMA, ONTARIO.

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## QUESTIONS.

- I. What is God's Message to Man through Christ ?
- II. What is the Sacramental System of Christ's Church ?
- III. Is Confirmation Scriptural ?
- IV. Was "Laying on of Hands" used only in the case of those to be ordained to the Ministry ?
- V. Was it intended to convey miraculous gifts only ?
- VI. Can we infer from Scripture that Confirmation was ordained by Christ Himself ?

- VII. Is it of Vital Importance to continue it in the present day ?
- VIII. What is Confirmation ?
- IX. What is the knowledge required by the Church from those presented for Confirmation ?
- X. What is the doctrine of Prayer ? If you do not receive an answer to your Prayers, from what five causes, one or all, does this arise ?
- XI. Should you for some time before Confirmation pray *daily* for God's blessing on the step you are about to take, on your Fellow-candidates, your Bishop, and your Clergyman ? And have you a right to expect the blessing you pray for ?
- XII. What are the *principal* duties for Christians not mentioned in the Ten Commandments given by Moses to the Israelites ?
- XIII. In professing Religion must you give up what are called "Worldly Amusements" ?
- XIV. In what sense must the Christian be "not of this World" ?
- XV. What is the nature of the Pledges taken in the Sacraments touching the question of Temperance ? Are those Pledges sufficient, or is the Christian bound to take some further Pledge ?
- XVI. What is the teaching of Scripture with regard to the *Signs* of Salvation ? and how does the teaching of thousands of Denominational Pulpits obscure this teaching ?



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

## I. WHAT IS GOD'S MESSAGE TO MAN THROUGH CHRIST?

ANS. He that believeth *and is baptised* shall be saved.

Q. How comes it that Paul, in announcing the message to the Philippian gaoler, *seems* to suppress one half? how is it that our Lord founded his promise on two conditions and his apostle, seems to give forth only one? How shall we reconcile the two messages?

ANS. In the first place, neither message was complete; our Lord's was only a summary; Paul's only an introduction. We find that within one hour of the apostle's having delivered his message he had instructed the gaoler as to baptism, and had actually baptised his whole family or household. Neither message was *final*, that is, as it was given; belief requires explanation as including obedience, (in baptism as in other matters), and baptism requires explanation as pointing to much which a single word cannot hint at. The two messages are practically the same; and other passages of Scripture will enable us to paraphrase thus:—He that believing, joins my Church for the purposes for which I founded it, and remains therein a living member, working obediently in it and for it, becoming my disciple, and entering on and continuing in a sacramental course, the same shall be saved. It would be useless outwardly to join the Church for false purposes, as faith would be absent; useless to join and then to leave it; useless to join it without some

obedience and some work ; while it is a contradiction and seems therefore to be a denial of one's faith, to receive Christ's first sacrament, and yet, having the opportunity, to neglect His second sacrament. It is, at least, an act of wilful disobedience.

However short the message, much is contained in it, because much is to be understood by it, as Scripture itself shews, and that I have not, in the above paraphrase, gone beyond Scripture, a glance at the following passages will suffice to prove. The message is large not only in the spirit of its promises but of its conditions.

"He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Matt. x. 22.

"I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat." Matt. xxv. 31-46.

"For we being many are one bread and one body ; for we are all partakers of that one bread." 1 Cor. x. 17 ; also Matt. vii. 12.

## II. WHAT IS THE SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM OF THE CHURCH ?

ANS. The Church invites, nay commands, all Christian parents to come and dedicate their offspring to God at an early age. The child is to be taught as soon as it can understand, to look back at the vows and pledges under which it is living and to remember its high and holy privileges ; taught also to *look forward* to the day when it shall itself solemnly renew the pledge of Christianity in sight of the congregation, and dedicate itself afresh to Christ. *Alas what evils*

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*have arisen through not keeping these things present in the child's mind!* But the young person is not left here, but is commanded further to come frequently to the Lord's table and there to dedicate himself afresh to God, "and here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee." And does not such a system, even setting aside for the moment all mystery connected with it, specially commend itself to the judgment and to common sense; nor less so in these days when we hear so much of the value of taking pledges; and should it not inspire us with heartfelt gratitude to Him who has had, in this, such tender solicitude for his young followers?

### III. IS CONFIRMATION SCRIPTURAL?

ANS. It is true that some modern bodies of professing Christians have discarded this practice, handed down from apostolic times; and it is true that Confirmation, under that name, is not taught in Scripture; perhaps even it is to be regretted that the rite is now spoken of under two names; but when we turn to our prayer books to learn what the ceremony is as administered in the Anglican branch of Christ's Church we find the title "The Order for Confirmation, *or* laying on of hands upon those that are baptised, and come to years of discretion."

See Hebrews vi. 1, 2. "Therefore leaving the *principles* of the doctrine of Christ let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the *foundation* of (1) repentance from dead works, and (2) of faith toward

God, of (3) the doctrine of baptisms, and (4) laying on of hands, and (5) of resurrection of the dead, and (6) of eternal judgment."

Acts viii. 14-20. "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that *Samaria* had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost; (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on *them*, and they received the Holy Ghost."

Acts xix. 1-6. "And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, unto what then were ye baptised? And they said, unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied."

Q. What do these passages prove?

ANS. We first see that the "laying on of hands" was a rite practised by the apostles. Secondly, that they enable us to answer the following question:

IV. WAS LAYING ON OF HANDS ONLY USED IN THE CASE OF THOSE TO BE ORDAINED TO THE MINISTRY?

The bulk of the population in Samaria having been baptised, the apostles sent there, laid hands on them without distinction, not on some few specially set apart for the ministry. There is not the slightest ground for supposing that *Samaria was ordained*. Nor could the apostle have mentioned laying on of hands as a principle or foundation of the Christian religion, if it had been intended for the few. In Hebrews vi. 1, 2, the apostle gives, as it were, the alphabet of Christian teaching and practice, meant for all; and the laying on of hands is, as it were, one of the letters of the very alphabet of Christ's religion.

V. WAS THE LAYING ON OF HANDS INTENDED TO CONFER MIRACULOUS GIFTS ONLY?

ANS. No; because those who received the rite, received the Holy Ghost; and we learn that miraculous gifts are not the highest gifts of the Holy Ghost. "To *one* is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to *another*, the word of knowledge by the *same* Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues. But *all these* worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, *dividing* to every man severally as he will." I Cor. xii. 8-11. But further, none of these

gifts was the highest gift conferred ; for " though I speak with the tongues *of men and of angels*, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal ; and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have *all faith*, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, *it profiteth me nothing.*" 1 Cor. xiii. 1-3. And in verse 13 : And *now* abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. And the apostle teaches that all other gifts are *transitory* ; the spirit of love which is the spirit of God, the mind of Christ *never faileth*. The Spirit's gift of Himself is the all-important one.

VI. CAN WE INFER FROM SCRIPTURE THAT CONFIRMATION WAS ORDAINED BY CHRIST HIMSELF ?

ANS. We would answer this question by an illustration. Suppose the owner of an estate to be leaving the neighbourhood where he had been living, and to leave his estate in the charge of a friend or bailiff, and suppose that we heard his parting instructions to this effect : " Mind and do all those things I spoke of, and remember to put me up a new house." Now, if shortly after the owner's departure, we find the bailiff spending large sums of money on bridging over a gully, for instance, what do we at once conclude ? I say that, *if we knew him to be an honest man*, we should at once conclude that he was, in so doing, carrying out those wishes of the proprietor to which we heard allusion made, but which we did not actually

hear. This is just our position with regard to our Lord, and the laying on of hands. See the last two verses of Matthew :

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching *them* to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded *you* : and, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.”

There were many things taught by the Lord Jesus not recorded in the gospels ; and, when he had left the earth we find the apostle making this laying on of hands a matter of extreme importance, since they did not remit its administration to the deacon who could baptise, but sent two of their own number. The first step in Christian life could be taken under a deacon ; the second step, the higher steps, could only be taken under the highest officers of the Church. The apostles sent two of their number to confirm Samaria, without any apparent deliberation, as if their instructions were minute on this head. Can we for one moment suppose that they did this without their Lord’s authority ?

#### VII. IS IT OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO CONTINUE CONFIRMATION IN THE PRESENT DAY ?

ANS. If confirmation were ordained by the lips of the Lord Jesus, and if the apostles made so important a matter of it as to confer the rite themselves only, then must it indeed be a vital matter ; and if the apostles were to teach their converts to observe all things Christ had commanded to them, then we see that this was to continue. For we see that our Lord

was addressing the apostles, not in their individual capacity, but as representatives of a continual ministry; otherwise he could not have said, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world"; the words of the promise would have had no meaning as addressed to men about to *leave the world* in a few years.

Q. But since we cannot offer a mathematical demonstration sufficient to convince all minds that the administration of the rite was commanded by the lips of the Lord Jesus himself, how can we be certain that we should practise it now?

ANS. If Christ did not give command as to Confirmation by his own lips, we are still in the same position; because the apostles were under the guidance of that Comforter he sent them, *both* to call to remembrance former instructions, and to guide them into all truth. Hence, on the authority of apostolic practice, handed down from their times, the Church administers the rite of Confirmation, knowing it to be a "foundation principle" of Christ's religion.

#### VIII. WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?

ANS. Confirmation is the act of professing before the Church, and before the world, that you are a Christian, holding the faith, and endeavouring to follow the practice; that you hope and intend, God helping you, to put Christian duty before all other things; that you think it a privilege to be a member of Christ's Church, and of that branch called the Church of England. It is signing, as it were, the *pledge of*



*Christianity* on your coming of age in the Church, as *ordained by Christ*, and promising to *remain in* and *support the Church in which you are confirmed according to conscience*. It is seeking God's Holy Spirit in His own appointed way, and dedicating ourselves to Him. Though a foundation stone of Christianity, it is a much neglected rite.

But an objection may here be urged. Our Church says nothing about remaining in her; and many people seem to think they may be Presbyterians to-day, and Roman Catholics to-morrow; perhaps Methodists next week, and so on, without sin. Our Church did not contemplate any such state of things; hence no remark thereon. But common sense teaches, common honesty teaches, that when in any institution you have taken solemn entrance-pledges, it is not competent to you to leave without dishonour. How much more so in the case of Christ's Church. The Church which *has conferred* on you the rite of baptism, and *promises* participation in the higher sacrament, to her a life-long gratitude should be always tendered. You cannot change your "Church" or your "denomination" for the sake of a few municipal votes, for political or other influence, without committing a great sin. If you are baptised, you *are* a member of the baptising body; and there is only one case in which you can rightly leave that body; namely, when, by a study of God's Word, you (1) believe her to be in error; and (2) are convinced the one you are about to join is a purer representative of Christ's Church on earth. We therefore said remaining, in her "according

to conscience." *If you have not been listening to her teaching*; if you have not been trying to follow her practice and system; if you have been neglecting the aids to faith your Lord has sent you, no wonder if you drift hither and thither; or even end in the darkness of the blackest atheism. There are vast differences between the teaching of some bodies of professing Christians and that of others. We want the gospel *whole and unadulterated*; beware of countenancing any falsification of it. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, *is partaker of his evil deeds.*" 2 John, 10-11. At all events, as churchmen you must give a life-long and loyal support to your Church.

IX. WHAT IS THE KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE CHURCH FROM THOSE PRESENTED FOR CONFIRMATION?

ANS. In the words of the Prayer Book, "Ye are to take care that this child be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him, so soon as he can *say* the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue, and be further *instructed* in the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose."

Q. Does, then, the Church suppose any benefit to come of saying a prayer or creed?

ANS. No; it is not to be supposed that she teaches that benefit would be derived from a creed lyingly stated or not believed; (and to be believed it must be in some degree understood;) nor that it is saying a prayer by

heart, but from the heart, that will benefit. But you cannot use that special prayer which our Lord has so graciously taught us to use, without knowing it by heart ; while the repetition of a creed may be an aid to faith. Otherwise an apostle could not have taught us to hold fast a creed or "form of sound words." But saying a creed won't save you, cries one ; just as another urges that belonging to a certain church won't save ; just as they might urge, though they never do, that hearing grand sermons won't save. But hearing sermons may rouse the unbelievers or the sluggish to take a practically Christian stand ; and may help us onward in our Christian course. So, too, the saying of a creed may be one means of holding us to our beliefs, of strengthening our faith, of preserving us from many errors. Paul did not actually say to Timothy that holding fast the form of sound words would save him, but he did, nevertheless, tell him to hold fast the creed that he had received ; and so we know it must be an advantage to have and to use a creed. Our Lord did not teach that being baptised into his Church would save a man without belief, *and its natural logical consequences ; yet baptism is said to save*. Charity, not faith, is the end and object of religious teaching ; but though some sort of faith may exist without charity, yet, humble-minded Christian charity cannot exist except on the foundation of faith. And so, Paul, knowing this, and understanding the value of having a creed and using it, writes to Timothy to hold fast the form of sound words. But lest we should fall into the error of supposing that the mere holding fast a form

of words, however sound, would be of any value in itself, he adds, "in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." Hold by your creed in faith and love. In that creed you have the answer to Pilate's question: "What is truth?" The great central truth of the universe is, that God has come to earth in the person of the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. There is the all-needful truth which alone can solve the many riddles round us; there lies the great truth to which all others are related, whose contradiction therefore is the greatest lie. Without this truth we really know nothing of God, nothing of ourselves, nothing of morality, nor have we any foundation for many of the things we hold most dear.

Q. But is it true, as we so often hear, that God calls on us to believe, and not to reason?

ANS. No; though this is a very common error among theologians, and one working extreme mischief. Can anything be more misleading? Was Thomas called to believe, and not to reason? Was he blamed for reasoning? No. He was blamed for most unreasoning incredulity. He had the evidence of several honest witnesses whom he knew well, and he rejected in the matter of the resurrection, evidence he would have received on any other point. And why; because he reasoned? No; but because he *had not reasoned*. Having known the Lord Jesus, he should, to have been reasonable, have expected remarkable occurrences, and, in his case, have received news of a miraculous nature on any really good evidence, such as he would have been ready to receive on other

matters. What did our Lord's word mean, "Believe me for the very work's sake," but, reason out my Messiahship from what takes place before your eyes? We walk by faith, and not by sight; yet not by an illogical faith. Suppose a man comes to you, and says he is the bearer of a message to you from Queen Victoria, what would be reasonable conduct on your part? You might require very strong evidence to convince you of the fact, but the fact once established, you would then receive communications from this person with regard to things on which you could not reason or get other evidence. So with the Bible and the Church. The intrinsic beauty of the teaching, and the historical testimony regarding the Church and her foundation having once convinced you that the one is God's word, and the other God's institution for man's salvation, you can accept revelations about God which are beyond reason and examination, so long as they are not contrary thereto. *So far from faith being contrary to reason, it is actually founded on it.*

#### X. WHAT IS THE DOCTRINE OF PRAYER?

(1) Matt. vi. 15. "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

(2) Matt. vii. 7. "Ask, and it shall be given *you*."

(3) John xv. 7. "If *ye abide in me, and my words abide in you*, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

(4) Matt. xviii. 19, 20. "Again I say unto you, that if two of *you* shall agree on earth as touching any

thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together *in my name*, there am I in the midst of them."

(5) Matt. xxi. 22. "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer *believing*, ye shall receive."

(6) James iv. 3. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

Q. What do we learn from the above passages ?

ANS. We have in the first place a general assurance that God hears prayer ; and then we have the limitations to this, teaching that if we *expect no answer* to our prayers we shall receive none ; nor if we ask that which we have no right to ask. But when we are taught by the Spirit to ask according to God's will, and to expect, we shall receive. These things are generally taught and borne in mind. We pray for strength to act ; and we receive it ; our prayers influence our actions. But what seems so generally forgotten is, that our actions influence our prayers. If we forgive not, for instance, our prayers for forgiveness fall idle ; and it is to the most faithful servant that prayer is most fully answered, for "the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to *their* cry. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." It is the Christian in the character of Christian, abiding in Christ, with Christ's words abiding in him, to whom all the promises about prayer are addressed. In him Christ dwells, and works, and prays. The expression, "in my name," in Matt. xxiii.,

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is a very large one ; for can we be said to be asking *in Christ's name*, if we have not even joined His Church (or intend to join) ; or if we are not lively members of it, workers in it ? Can we be said to be asking in His name, if we are breaking our entrance vows, or living in gross sin ? To hope for Christ's presence in our midst, when two unite in a petition, it must be in the character of true disciples, if not of advanced Christians ; and our petitions must be at least of such a class as our Lord, in His human capacity, might have offered up himself.

Prayers should precede action ; but action should follow on prayer. What shall we say of prayers that are *meant to end in prayers* ? Shall we say that they will not be answered ? We dare not say that ; but we cannot hope that they will be largely blessed. *If, therefore, your prayers are unanswered, you (1) ask for the wrong things, or (2) you ask not expecting, or (3) you are living in gross sin, are (4) unforgiving, or else are (5) not a member of Christ's Church at all.*

XII. SHOULD YOU PRAY DAILY FOR GOD'S BLESSING ON THE STEP YOU ARE ABOUT TO TAKE (CONFIRMATION) ON YOUR FELLOW-CANDIDATES, YOUR BISHOP, AND YOUR CLERGYMAN.

ANS. We may answer in the words of Luke xi. 13 : "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?" We cannot be "asking amiss," when we ask for God's Holy Spirit ; and the whole doctrine

of prayer would point to Confirmation as a special season when your prayer would be heard and largely answered. But to cultivate love to the brethren; and particularly to those who prophesy or teach among you, you should add prayers for them and others; our prayers should not be narrow or self-loving only, and we can hardly conceive anything more calculated to enable you to go to Confirmation in a proper frame of mind, or more rightly to receive it, and large blessings with it, than the daily prayer for those about to be associated with you in the holy and apostolic rite.

## XII. WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPAL DUTIES FOR CHRISTIANS, NOT MENTIONED IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, GIVEN THROUGH MOSES TO THE ISRAELITES?

(1) To believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God; to be careful not to deny Him, careful to confess.

(2) To be baptised into Christ's Church and then to abide in (*a*) the doctrine, (*b*) the Church, (*c*) the breaking of bread, (*d*) prayer.

(3) To do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, and to the glory of God.

(4) To follow after charity, including humility.

(5) To visit the Christian in prison, to clothe him and feed him when he requires.

(6) To do good unto all men, but especially unto them that are of the household of faith.



(7) Love your enemies : he that hateth his brother is a *murderer*.

(8) Visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keep *unspotted from the world*.

(9) To be sober.

(10) To be truthful.

(11) To be industrious.

(12) To bridle the tongue.

(13) To watch and pray, and not indulge in thought or imaginings of sins.

Q. But with regard to the commandments, do not people break the 4th, by not keeping the seventh day holy ?

ANS. Yes, the keeping *a* seventh day is not the meaning of the 4th commandment, but *the* seventh day ; always so understood by the Hebrews, or those who understood the Jewish language. The Christian breaks the Jewish Sabbath with impunity ; but he sets aside the Lord's day for the *breaking of bread* and public worship in the assembly, according to early practice in the Church. The Sabbath was instituted to commemorate the deliverance from Egypt. See Deuteronomy v. 15. The Lord's day is kept in commemoration of our Lord's victory over death and the grave, and is a far grander and more important day. The phraseology used on this matter by divines is often unscriptural, often illogical. For a full discussion of the subject, see Paley's Moral Philosophy, chapters vi. and vii.

XIII. IN PROFESSING RELIGION MUST YOU GIVE UP  
WHAT ARE CALLED WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS.

See I Cor. x. 27. "If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you eat, asking no question for conscience sake."

If we have only this one passage as our guide with regard to so-called worldly amusements, one single such passage is all-sufficient to answer the various questions on this head. Suppose that you have just been confirmed, and you are about to accept an invitation to join in some so-called worldly amusements; some narrow-minded but well-intentioned friend comes in and says, (1) but will you not be wasting your time by going, of which as a Christian you must not be guilty? (2) will you not be running into the way of temptation; (3) going into bad company; (4) setting a bad example? (5) you cannot ask God's blessing before you go; nor (6) his blessing while there; (7) you will not hear any religious conversation; (8) no grace will be pronounced before meat? Can you then as a Christian go? You have *put on Christ*; and you have come forward in confirmation, and professed Christ, *professed to be his follower*, how can you go into the ordinary assemblies of society? Well it would seem that just such questions had arisen in the early Church, and just such discussions. But, however that may be, we have in the foregoing apostolic instructions an answer, and a sufficient answer to all such questions. And would to God that a simple passage of Scripture

could be taken in its simplicity, and that pharisaical people would not imagine one a heathen, because he believes his Bible to be wiser than man's fanciful teachings. Beware how you parody Christ's religion by preaching false views of the nature of sin and the nature of holiness, and mixing up with the teachings of Scripture mere fancies and superstitions of men.

Paul was anxious that his converts not only should know well the extent of Christian duty, but also the extent of Christian liberty, and the limitations of Christian responsibility. And we find, I think, a marked vein of teetotalism running throughout all Christian doctrine, a tremendous vein of wholesale earnestness of purpose. "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me. He that *loveth his life shall lose it*. He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He having put his hand to the plough, and *looking back*, is not fit for the kingdom of Heaven. If thine hand or thy foot offend thee, *cut them off*." Am I not right in calling this a *tremendous vein of teetotalism running throughout Christ's teaching*? Not if by teetotalism we mean total abstinence in one direction. Here we have the doctrine of total abstinence as to *any and every* thing that causes us to stumble. The Christian pays no tythes to God; he gives no special days only; *all* his money; *all* his time; *all* his talents, are his Master's; and he offers and dedicates *himself* in soul and body to his Lord. Paul knew this. And yet he could say to his beloved converts, that they might attend a heathen feast; setting no bad example; without any

waste of time ; asking God's blessing before they went and His protection while they stayed ; though they should hear no religious conversation, and no blessing should be asked at meat ; they would not be running into temptation ; not be thus frequenters of bad company. Had it been otherwise the earnest, the enthusiastic Paul could never have advised their going.

Q. But can a Christian ever wish to frequent such an assembly ?

ANS. We are told by many he will not ; but mark, they are those who venture to go where the apostles dared not tread. Because a man is converted, his natural tastes have undergone no change ; only there is now a principle within to direct and to curb them. A Christian, Paul well knew, might be disposed to attend a heathen feast. He did not address his converts like the great religious teacher, who, in speaking to a lady disposed to attend a dance, told her she must give up dancing, or else must give up Christ. You have just been confirmed, and you are asked to play a game at whist, or billiards, or drink a glass of wine, or beer, or to go to a dance, or to attend a theatre. These are practical every day questions. What are you to do ? Do "as you are disposed." But why ? Because Christianity does not consist in these things at all, *nor in abstaining from them except in certain circumstances* to be considered by and by. You cannot help doing things which some will *over-do* ; you cannot avoid *all institutions which are abused*. You are not to avoid study because a Fitzroy or a Hugh Miller over-did the thing, became insane, and died by their own hands ;

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you are not to avoid books, because some people read bad books, or some spend too much time or money over good ones. Never read an immoral book ; never look at an immoral play, nor witness an immodest ballet ; never give more time or money to these things than you can afford ; but, also, let no man lord it over your conscience in these things, or deprive you of your Christian liberties. It is of the very first importance that you should understand the nature of sin, and of holiness, and either abstain from the so-called pleasures of the world, or enter on them with a conscience free from all offence ; not go with a sort of half feeling that you are doing wrong, losing your Christian standing before God, or weakening your spiritual life. That thing which is your snare, that thing avoid, and cast it from you ; *in all things you must be the Christian looking to your soul's health* ; be thorough, hearty Christians, remembering that "every creature of God is good ;" good, mark you, all of them, and to be received with thanksgiving. And is not the power to act and to appreciate the acting the power thus to give pleasure and to receive it ; are they not the creation of Almighty wisdom ? Is this histrionic talent, the only one the Creator has bestowed, to be left idle, wrapped in the napkin, and dug under ? I trow not. And if you can eat to God's glory, and drink to His glory ; if such mean acts can be used in worship of the Deity, is any man going to tell us, that the exhibition of those higher gifts, sometimes so largely shown in acting, cannot be to God's glory ; is any man going to tell us, I say, that we are incapable of exercising

such gifts to God's praise, when by our very eating and our drinking it is possible to praise Him?

Q. Shall we read novels?

ANS. Novels are like plays, most dangerous and full of poison for the soul, some of them; while others contain most glorious teaching; often in its most glorious garb. But there are romances, refined in style, low and vicious in their tone, which are read unblushingly by many a girl whose mother would have burnt them after the first page. The lives of godless men and women, unless written as a purposed warning and example, cannot do much good. The secret perusal of unsound literature does, perhaps, as much harm as the open acting of the licentious drama. What are the fashionable, immoral novels read for? Is it to learn the doings of fashionable people? If your progress in such knowledge is more to you than your profit as a Christian, where is the reality of your religion? Or, are they read for yet more debasing pleasures? To the pure all things are pure, you say. All things are pure, as all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient; and it is a shame even to mention those things that are done of some in secret. All things may be pure to you as it arises unsought for; it is not that which entereth in that defileth. But there is a well of impurity within each human breast which is better without stirring. If men and women read novels of the class we are speaking of, it is not for us to say they are no Christians; all we can say is, that *we ourselves cannot understand* how they can read such things, and be careful of their soul's health, and growth in grace.

All Christians are not equally advanced either on the whole, or on special points; and so Paul tells us the same regimen will not do for all; but, if total abstinence as regards amusements be the highest stand, the nearest approach to it possible on earth is the monastery or the nunnery; there, according to such principles, we best avoid temptation; and there we incur the least responsibility. We do not believe in monasteries and nunneries; nor in any general principles of total abstinence in ordinary circumstances.

XIV. IN WHAT SENSE MUST THE CHRISTIAN BE  
"NOT OF THIS WORLD?"

ANS. The Christian makes *Christian duty his first consideration*, the Master's cause and glory. Now doing this he certainly will not be of the world; he leads a life of faith; of hope; a life of charity. If in any true measure he does this, he is not of this world, not following its maxims, not judging by its standards, not swayed principally by its ambitions. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. There is a sense, of course, in which a man may have many masters. The private soldier may have a master in a non-commissioned officer, a lieutenant, captain, major, colonel, and others; he *can have but one who is supreme* for the time or *real master*. So the Christian may be fond of literature, or art, or commerce, or amusement, or may have worldly ambitions, but none of them will be the master principle of his mind. Few make such a bold and energetic avowal of their standing that they can be easily recognized as followers of Christ;

yet it was by their boldness the early followers were recognized ; there are very few who attack sin, within or without, with that boldness, that self-sacrificing boldness, that should make us easily recognized as followers of our professed Lord. Well, if we have not much of the reality, we like to put on imitation. If you have not diamonds, you must at least wear paste, or you will not have an imposing appearance to the generality, not an appearance that will satisfy yourself. We have plenty of boldness when it will pay to be bold, and plenty of good deeds when they will be known all round and bring us praise. Why, if a new church is to be built, what are the arguments we often hear from Christian lips? We are sometimes told that if we put up a good church it will improve the neighbourhood, and help to draw respectable people to it. And that is to be our motive is it, or among our motives? If you are going to put up a substantial church in order to improve the place, and get respectable people to come, what then will happen? Why you will probably succeed. And then what? Then, of course, you have your reward ; you have it now, in this world. But those are not the rewards the Christian is to seek ; do not listen to such teaching, whether it comes from some Christian minister, or from our own false heart. All that, is different from the religion of Christ ; the Christian does not seek in his religious acts for the applause of men, nor in his charity and hospitalities that they should be returned. We are not told that the Christian is the man who by patient continuing in well-doing seeks for



reward here; but he looks for immortality, glory, happiness in a future life. Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. Good deeds, like prayer, are to be done much in secret, not talked of to our nearest neighbour. That is not a very fashionable religion, not a very popular one. That is not the complexion of the flourishing religions of the day; but that is Christ's religion.

XV. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE PLEDGE TAKEN IN THE SACRAMENTS TOUCHING THE QUESTION OF TEMPERANCE? ARE THOSE PLEDGES SUFFICIENT, OR IS THE CHRISTIAN BOUND TO TAKE SOME FURTHER PLEDGE?

ANS. Much is left in Scripture to the dictates of the individual conscience; liberty is favourable to the growth of Christians. Still, according to the views of a very large portion of society, it is absolutely incumbent on the Christian to take a total abstinence pledge. Ah! but you say, I am not professing to go according to worldly, fashionable, or popular notions; I want to walk as closely as I can to Christ, and his Scriptures. Well then, look at this question in the light of that text which the teachers of teetotalism put forward most, and on which the advocates of apostolic temperance ground their views also.

“Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”

I suppose that it will be allowed that the same principle will hold with wine as meat, and that the

self-denying Paul was as ready to make the sacrifice with regard to the intoxicant as flesh. So that to inquire what was Paul's practice and teaching with regard to wine, if discoverable, will quite settle the matter for us. The vile and shameless licentiousness of some of the cities where the apostle had founded churches was well known ; the Greeks were always worshippers of Bacchus ; and if ever there was a time when a prohibitory law would have been wise or allowable, we might have expected its promulgation under Paul. How stands the case? The Bishop Timothy was feeble ; did Paul write "O man of God bear thine infirmities, but touch no wine ; you will be suffering in the glorious cause of temperance ?" Not so ; but lest the young disciple should have scruples of conscience, or superstitious advisers round him, the apostle counsels him to "take a little wine," either as a cure or a preventive ; the latter is as wise a plan. Did Paul then interpret his own words in the prohibitory sense? No ; wine-drinking in moderation did not cause a brother to offend ; or Paul could not have said that deacons should not be ' given to *much* wine.' The apostolic clergy then were moderate drinkers, and, while closely following them, we can afford to be scoffed and jeered at by the crowd, or unchristianized by thoughtless or uncharitable men. *Christ and his apostles did not forget one of the principal features of the religion that they taught* ; and whatever may be the views of Father Mathew and his followers, apostolic teaching should be enough for Christians. Much is left to individual judgment. You have a right, perhaps,

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to take the *so-called temperance pledge, the real temperance pledge* you take of course in baptism, at confirmation, and communion, but you have no right to lay down prohibitory laws for others.

“Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth. Rom. xiv. 3.

Will not the above apply to wine as well as to food?

“Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which things are a shadow, Col. ii. 16. Which things indeed have a *show of wisdom* in neglecting of the body.—v. 23.

Q. But is it not true that the wine of the New Testament was not intoxicating?

ANS. The Greek word “oin,” which is as near in sound to the old fashioned pronunciation of the English word wine as possible, means the same. It was because it was an intoxicant that Paul needed to advise Timothy at all, or to permit its use in the case of deacons and of bishops. In Greek lexicons we find it to mean “wine, beer, cider, *fermented drink*”; and any one who knows anything of the origin of the Greek drama, or of the language or history of the Greek nation, knows what “oinos” means.

Q. What, then, is the nature of the Christian's sacramental pledges, as regards temperance?

ANS. To be temperate in all things; to “renounce the flesh so as not to follow or be led by it;” to believe in our Saviour, and to trust his teachings and those of his Apostles beyond any modern discoveries of wisdom whatsoever.

Q. What, then, was Paul's remedy for drunkenness ?

ANS. The cure for drunkenness and vice was, to set up Christ's kingdom or Church on earth, where his laws should be followed, and his discipline carried out. In that Church there is no order to do away with wine. The use of wine in moderation is a matter for individual judgment. Society has no jurisdiction here ; though it may at times and in places attempt to exceed its jurisdiction.

“ But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a *drunkard*, or an extortioner ; with such a one no not to eat.”—(I Cor. v. 11).

Let Christian society avoid the vicious professor, and if he be not reclaimed, at least the young will have the warning, and we the satisfaction of following instructions. But a mock charity makes us fearful to follow such instructions ; we have reversed them ; and when a man pays liberally to his church, and is a prominent worker in it, we condone that which we have a right to overlook only in the non-professor. It is the great Protestant boast that we have our Bibles. Let us stand by them. Let us take *the highest stand* in this great question ; and that is the apostolic stand. Paul did not call Timothy from a high stand upon this question to a lower. Our Lord and his apostles were moderate drinkers ; the great bulk of the bishops and clergy of the Church of England from the Reformation, and the bulk of all Protestant communities till lately have been moderate drinkers ; and, therefore, in being so,

we cannot become responsible for souls. We are baptised members of Christ's Great Temperance Society, and in that society there may be new developments. there can be none to contradict the apostolic teaching that we have. There will be circumstances under which you must abstain in this, as in other matters, *totally, at times* ; but, according to apostolic injunction, resist encroachment ; let no man presume to lord it over your conscience, or to dictate to you as to food and drink, matters in which the Creator has set *you* to be your own judge, and the Saviour has ratified the same wise law of liberty.

If any man object here that such teaching *countenances "drinking" in the sense of immoderation*, we say no. It throws back your responsibility rather to a time before you took the pledge than to the time of your baptismal vows ; or, if you were baptized in infancy, to the time when you began to understand those vows, your pledge to the Good Templars can never add to the solemnity of your pledges to Christ's Church ; nor can be taken under higher sanctions. We lay this responsibility upon the shoulders of *all professing Christians* ; and it calls upon them all to battle against this vice by those means which the Saviour has pointed out by the pen of an apostle. Such means will always prove the most successful.

XVI. WHAT IS THE TEACHING OF SCRIPTURE WITH REGARD TO THE SIGNS OF SALVATION ; AND HOW DOES THE TEACHING OF THOUSANDS OF DENOMINATIONAL PULPITS OBSCURE THIS TEACHING ?

We may be asked, perhaps, why we think so much of confirmation? And we answer, because the apostles made so much of it ; because so many professing Christians make so light of it ; while many, who neglect it, think camp meetings and revivalistic meetings of the greatest value. Not understanding the glorious rite, not seeing the high privilege connected with it, not knowing the blessing to be had when you come forward in Christ's way to profess yourself a living witness for him, men have made it a neglected rite. You are not invited to any private confessional ; you are not asked to any penitent bench ; because these things have no foundation in Scripture, and are in practice baneful. But *you are urged* to attend to all the forms and ordinances instituted by the Great Physician of Souls. The Church invites you to make your pew a penitent bench where, before the congregation, and with the congregation, as with one mouth you confess your sins to God. She calls you to that special penitent bench, the holy communion rails, where you receive the bread and wine. She calls you to that penitent bench where you can appear but once in your whole lifetime, the rails where you seek an outpouring of the Spirit in the apostolic rite of Confirmation. Think of the solemnity of these occasions,

and you will require no more exciting, more attractive meetings ; you can have no higher services.

Some, however, *seem to wait for some recognised moving of the Spirit before they venture* ; in reality they are waiting till they *fancy* they have a call. The apostles laid their hands, we are told, on *them* ; that is on all ; none drew back as not being good enough. Listen to Paul, " For we being many, are one body." How so ? "*For* we are *all* partakers of that one bread." If you are not good enough, are you going to make yourself any better by remaining outside the pale of Christ's Church ; by excommunicating yourself, and *not* being of His body ? The Holy Spirit *has called you*. He has caused it to be written, " Do this," and it is yours to obey the call. The Church calls you, and he who shall " neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Let me quote a well known divine : " We cannot *usually* distinguish between the influence of the Spirit and the operations of our own faculties ; nor is it necessary that we should. We cannot tell where man ends, and God begins ; nor ought we to trouble or perplex ourselves about the matter," (but obey.) " Instead of waiting for any sensible known ascertained movement of the Spirit, either before we begin to attend to religion at all, or before we engage in any particular exercise of it, we should *at once* engage all our powers in it ; and engage them in a spirit of dependence upon God. In fact, pay attention, determine, think, plan, decide, just as we do in our worldly affairs." What are the Scriptural signs of being led by the Spirit ?

"He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." "He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him." John wrote these things, that we who believe on the name of the Son of God may "know that we have eternal life." How are we to know it? We must evidently know whether we are abiding in His doctrine, or keeping His commandments. Go, then, and abide in the doctrine. Christ's doctrine has two branches; it refers to being of His body the Church, as well as to, and as a consequence of, belief in His name.

Q. But do not the great majority of preachers in the present day teach otherwise?

ANS. Undoubtedly they do; almost every book on religion; almost every sermon one hears or reads, coming from a certain school of interpretation bears the impress of a false view of justification by faith. There is a false doctrine of justification by faith, which is a falsification of Christ's gospel, as well as a true doctrine of justification by faith, which is its glory and its very essence. But there is a great inclination to suppose that there can be no danger in taking as a guide a preacher who is highly popular and largely known. It is sometimes, however, the falseness of the teaching which attracts as much as the truth. Let us weigh well words addressed to us on such vital matters, concerning ourselves and our soul's well-being for eternity. You may be saved this night, cries the preacher, this very hour, only accept salvation, and come to Christ. Doubtless the man who is



not in a state of salvation may place himself in that position ; yes, and on the instant. But do not let him suppose that his momentary feelings of enthusiasm are any proof whatever that he is in Christ. Some hear the word with joy, yet fall away. I will quote the exact words of one of the greatest of living preachers, as he is supposed to be, but one belonging to what I am representing as a school of error :—

“ Beloved, whenever there is a question between me and the devil as to whether I am a child of God, *I have given over seeking evidence in my own favour*, or turning to my experience to prove that I am in a state of grace ; for that cunning old lawyer knows more about my infirmities than I do, and can very soon bring two to one against me. My constant way is to tell the accuser, ‘ Well, if I am not a saint, I am a sinner, and Jesus came into the world to save sinners, therefore I will go to Christ and look to him again., The devil himself cannot answer that. You that are oldest in the divine life I am sure that you find times in which no mark, evidence, or experience is worth a sixpence to you by way of comfort, and you are led to adopt the simple plan which I have recommended to all the tempted ones. It will be wise to live upon Jesus always. Begin again at the foot of the cross, where you began at first with the old cry—

“ Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to thy cross I cling.

“ That is the way to conquer sin, as well as to overcome despair ; for when faith in Jesus comes back to

your soul, you will be strong to fight with your corruptions."

We have in the above passage something very plausible, something in parts very grand, something the mind is often glad to catch at, something of truth, rays of divine light, if you will ; but we have teaching here so persistently put forward on a subject so momentous, so essential, so weighty and vital, that it is worth examining to see what it really means, and whether on the whole it will not mislead us, whether it will not make us take that to be Christ's gospel which is not his. The man who wrote the passage is, I believe, a witness for Christ, a mistaken witness, but a witness ; one having, for aught I know, faults, failings, shortcomings, perhaps sins, but one whose life as a whole is a witness for the Lord Jesus. In that capacity he has a right to feel assured of his salvation. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men." But you see he does not put it on those grounds. He grounds his salvation on the fact that Christ died for sinners, instead of founding it on the fact that in some humble way he is his follower and witness. Christ in the last day will acknowledge his followers, all of them, the humblest ; and proud shall we then be of the recognition. He will not, I say, deny the humblest and meanest of his disciples. Yet he hath said : "He that denieth me, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Christ there grounds my salvation—on what ? On my being a witness for him ; not alone on his having died to save. Yet how different a thing does the gospel become according as it is

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represented in the one way or the other ; if the one way of putting it be sound, the other is an awful falsification. We *must* seek in our walk in life "evidence in our own favour," our own heart and judgment as we probe our actions must not condemn us. It must proclaim aloud. Yes, an unprofitable, a miserable witness ; yet a witness for my Lord. It is, *if we walk in the light*, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin ; and we must be able to say with Paul, at least, in some feeble way, "And *the life which I now live* in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.

I have not touched the question whether it is possible for a Church to unchurch itself by false doctrine or by unsound practice ; and whether the Anglican branch of Christ's Church so unchurched herself in pre-reformation times or in the days of Wesley ; and yet such unchurching seems the only proper reason, the only reasonable excuse that can be offered why the denominations left her. Few, we suppose, would venture the assertion ; but it requires a more careful answer than could be given in a little tract. I have not touched on the sacramental side of the sacraments if I may be allowed the expression : the catechism does that. There is a notion in the minds of many that that catechism is unneeded and that the Bible, pure and simple, should be used in Sunday Schools. The Church Catechism is somewhat dry to the very young ; and if, at too early an age, they are forced to learn it off by heart, mischief may of course ensue. But what light that Catechism throws on Scripture ! How long must our Bible be read without it, before

we should attain such a knowledge of God's will as in that short Catechism is contained ?

We quote from the preface to "Peep of Day" :—

"Suppose, then, a father compelled to leave his wife and child and to sojourn in a distant land. In parting he commits the unconscious infant to the care of the mother, and thus expresses the feelings of a father's heart: 'I know not when I shall return; the time may be near or far distant. This is my earnest request, that whenever I do, I may find my child acquainted with my love for it, and is prepared to love me. Inspire it, if possible, with a desire to please me, and mould its character in conformity to my views. To the ingenuity of your affection I confide the task.'

"How would the mother betake herself in pursuance of this request? Would she take the letters of the father, *written to herself*, and *read them to the child* while yet its faculties were hardly unfolded? Would she not fear by this method producing weariness and disgust? Much less would she attempt by a series of written questions and answers, to be learnt by heart, as a task, to interest the child in its father. Nor would she content herself by giving a general description of his goodness."

"Would not a mother, thus circumstanced, often talk to the child of its father in language *suitcd to its capacity*, relate anecdotes of his virtue, such as the child could comprehend, repeat the gracious sayings he had uttered, yet translating them into language intelligible to the child? How carefully would she guard against producing confusion by entering into complicated

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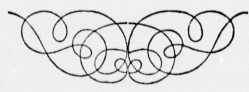
details. While she would love to dwell upon the most minute incidents that would arrest infantine attention. She would fear the consequences of giving set lectures, but would intersperse narrative with conversation, carefully watching favourable opportunities for dropping a reflection. Verses in the father's praise would be familiar to the baby's lips, yet even these would be taught with discretion, and not forcibly imposed. It would be the mother's aim to infuse a principle of love, and thus to prepare the child for the performance of filial duties."

"And has not Christ left his infant family with us? Has he not given us a charge concerning them in the well-known words: 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven?' Touching and comprehensive words! charges too imperfectly fulfilled! How often have efforts been made to bring these children to their father's bosom that have, in fact, driven them further from it."

The Bible, *as a whole*, is not addressed to, not intended for, *nor fit for*, very young persons; nor would it be wise to leave the young to the *individual guidance of a chance teacher*. Hence the Church has wisely given a bulwark of the faith in her Catechism; a commentary of essentials. I have on my table two tracts taking opposite sides of the great doctrine of Assurance; yet it is found very difficult by most to answer the plausible arguments of the unsound one, even with an open Bible before them; which shows how individual teachers may wrest the meaning of Scripture to the danger of their scholars.

I have been told, and sometimes in the same breath, that such teaching as is contained in the present tract is *apostolic but dangerous*, a contradiction that needs no answer ; be careful to be apostolic, and we cannot be dangerous ; or, to quote the words of Dr. Fuller, present Bishop of Niagara, " If anything deserves to be called folly and madness, it is the preferring human inventions to the wisdom which comes from above." (Sermon : Religious Excitement tried by Scripture.)

And my prayer is, that those who read this may be helped thereby to exclaim, (if feebly,) " And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."



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