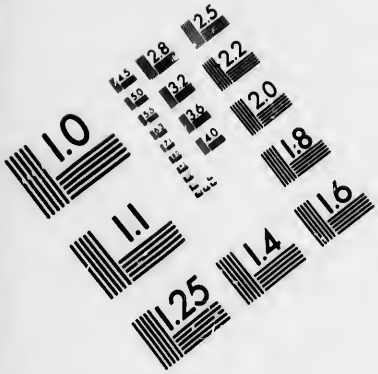

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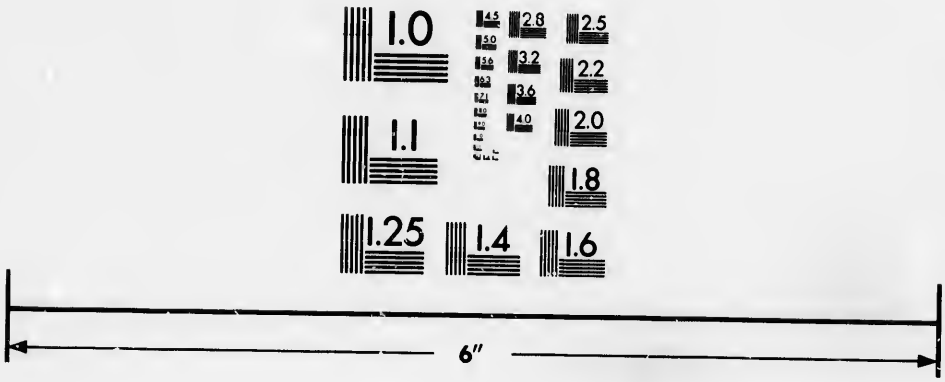

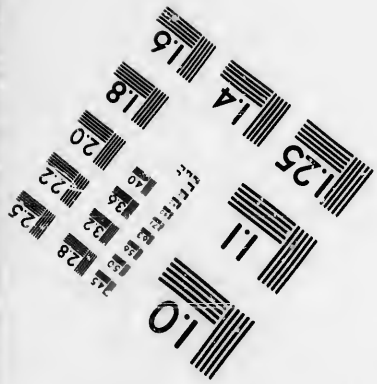

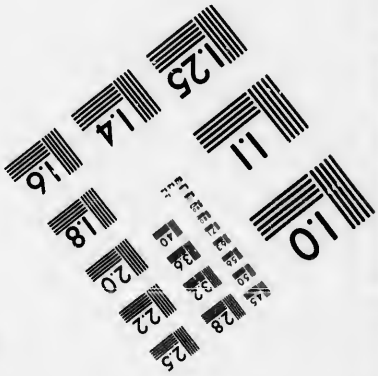

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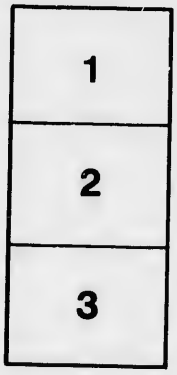

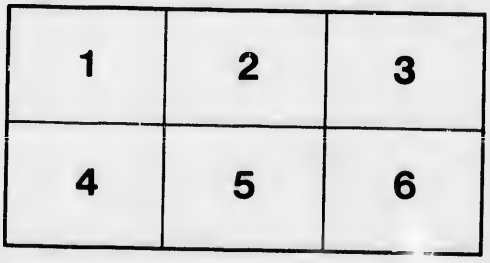

AN EXAMINATION

OF

MR. STALEY'S TREATISE

ENTITLED

A MANUAL OF THE CATHOLIC RELIGION

BY

REV. JOHN DE SOYRES, M.A.

Of Caius College, Cambridge;

Rector of St. John's Church, St. John, N.B.; formerly Select Preacher and Hulsean Divinity Lecturer in the University of Cambridge.

TORONTO: THE BRYANT PRESS

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"Dominus noster Christus veritatem se non consuetudinem cognominavit. Quodcunque adversus veritatem sapit, hoc erit haeresis, etiam vetus consuetudo."

(TERTULLIAN *de virg vel:* c. I.)

AN EXAMINATION

Of Mr. Staley's Treatise

ENTITLED

"A MANUAL OF THE CATHOLIC RELIGION."

For a long time a review of this book has been a matter of necessity. It has been formally adopted as the recognized manual of advanced sacerdotal teaching, in place of Sadler's notorious "Church Doctrine," which was not only found to be too moderate in some of its conclusions, but too well exposed as to its methods of argument. Since Dr. Pusey's death, Canon Carter has been the chief of the extreme sacerdotalists, and a book which comes forth with his *imprimatur* is sure to be welcomed and studied by thousands of clergymen at the present time. It is a matter of certainty, also, that a very systematic and universal distribution of the book is being conducted throughout the Dominion. It was placed in the Diocesan book Depository of Quebec by the clerical secretary, but was afterwards removed, the book having been publicly censured by the Bishop of Quebec, the Dean, and the Cathedral Vestry. Dean Norman declared the Manual "decidedly objectionable, as it taught confession to priests. He was happy to know that the Bishop thought of it as he did."—(Quebec Cathedral Annual Report, p. 12.) The utterance of

a mere literate, unknown in theological circles, like the Rev. Vernon Staley, might seem undeserving of notice. But in this case the name of the sponsor is more important than that of his catechumen, and the extent of circulation gives importance to a work which, without party influence, might have been swallowed up unheard of in the limbo of obscure publications.

It is not often that a book's character is disclosed in its binding, but this is one of the distinctions of the Rev. Vernon Staley's "Catholic Religion." There are collectors of books on account of the binding who care nothing for the contents; who estimate their volumes for being by Grolier or Majoli, Le Gascon or Zaehnsdorf, whether the contents be a Homer, a Dante, or a Shakspeare, or the literary rubbish of which each century is prolific. It is not, however, the art of the bookbinder which confers distinction on this volume, but the ingenuity of the author, who sought, by placing the design of the "Church House" seal on the cover, to convey the notion of a quasi-official sanction. The "Church House," some of our readers may be informed, is a building erected in London for the purpose of providing an official and social centre for all Anglican organizations. It was an ingenious notion, the morality of which will not indeed bear very close examination, to reprint the design, with the obvious purpose of conveying this false impression. A protest, signed on behalf of members of the Church House Committee, appeared in the London *Guardian*, declaring that no such sanction had been given, and it was understood that new covers without the design would

appear on subsequent editions. Whether the authorities of the Church House finally relented, or whether they have been simply set at defiance, we cannot state. At any rate, the asserted authorization (see author's preface, p. xiii.) is either an untruth or a very misleading statement.* It is therefore with a somewhat disagreeable impression that the instructed reader opens the book. But that is no hindrance to a candid recognition of any merits, actual or relative, and these we propose first to point out. Firstly, the idea of a brief manual of instruction for the laity, similar to those primers which played so great a part in the Reformation, is an excellent one. Given the right spirit, a faithful diligence in presenting facts, an exact impartiality in stating both sides of vexed questions, and the rare power of writing in a language "understanded of the people," and within the compass of a small volume—a very great work could be done for our Church. A good specimen of the right spirit and manner, displayed on a much smaller area, may be found in Dean Carmichael's Tract upon the Church of England, which might become the germ of a larger growth in such well qualified hands. But of these potential qualities Mr. Staley possesses only the gifts of brevity and clear arrangement, excellent things were the other scale not burthened so heavily, as will be found, with defects of matter. A relative merit may be discovered, and should at once be recognized, in the matter of style and tone, when we compare this book with Sadler's manual, so often mentioned of late, and which it seems intended to

* *Vide infra*, p. 21.

supersede as a weapon of sacerdotalism. Compared with the insolent effrontery of Mr. Sadler, and his unblushing assertions that sophistries recently concocted are universal doctrines, Mr. Staley's tone is that of a Christian gentleman. His misstatements one willingly attributes to mere ignorance, not shameful in one whom the "Clergy List" describes as a literate of Chichester Theological College, though regrettable in a book so widely circulated. Mr. Sadler, on the other hand, though a writer of no theological reputation, and one who has never been deemed by his university worthy of even the moderate honours of the Select Preachership, extended to men of all schools of thought who have made any sort of mark, is yet clearly a person of no narrow reading and of considerable intelligence. When Mr. Staley declares that the great Anglicans of the seventeenth century recognized the seven sacraments, one can charitably assume that he is the victim of some less innocent instructor. When, however, Mr. Sadler boldly proclaims that the words of institution conveyed "unquestionably" a sacrificial meaning, the immediate and compulsory inference acquits his intelligence at the expense of his veracity.

We place, then, on the credit side of Mr. Staley's book these merits: A courteous tone, and a lucid arrangement of material. We must now examine the nature of that material itself.

(1) *His authorities.* These are mainly the representatives of the "Oxford" or sacerdotal school. The names of Messrs. Sowden, Swallow, and Cuthbert, mentioned in the preface, we must confess, are entirely unknown to us. We cannot

readily credit the statement that Canon Bright, a scholar of repute, and one who has recently shown his independence of party by his resistance to the effort to impose "Hymns Ancient and Modern" as an official hymnal, has revised any part of this volume, as the preface states, and some extracts, to be made later, will substantiate this doubt.

A list of books is given, significant alike in its inclusions and omissions. The names of Lightfoot and Westcott occur, but the student is not referred to the former's essay on the "Christian Ministry," where the garbled quotation on p. 338 might be recognized, nor to the present Bishop of Durham's "Historic Faith," which would have furnished too strong an antidote. So we are given merely Lightfoot's "Leaders in the Northern Church," and one of Westcott's essays in the Commentary on St. John's Epistles. On the Articles there is no mention of Harold Browne's classical treatise, recommended by all bishops, but in its place Forbes' "Explanation," which notoriously follows the lines of Tract 90. Liturgical teaching is referred to the "Priests' Prayer Book," a compilation which has been frequently and publicly condemned. The names of other literary partisans, Grueber, Ashwell, and Puller, speak for themselves, while Canon Gore is represented, not by "Lux Mundi," which contains some remarkable essays, but by other works which do not enhance his reputation. It is characteristic that no reference is made to any work of the late Bishop Wordsworth, showing the present chasm between the old Anglican High Churchmen and the modern Romanizing party.

The late Dr. Pusey is quoted frequently, with an apparent opinion that his *dictum* is decisive as to Anglican teaching and usage. One is loth to use harsh words concerning a personage in many ways so remarkable, and, indeed, attractive, in his life, but truth compels the statement that no writer was at times more misleading, and even disingenuous. This was the mature opinion, not of an Evangelical controversialist, but of one whose acumen and impartiality were a proverb in the Church of England, the great Bishop Thirlwall, of St. David's. Writing to the (present) Bishop of Worcester, he says: "Dr. Pusey is to me not, indeed, an object of horror, but a painful enigma. I cannot help thinking him less ingenuous than Newman. And when I consider the changes through which his views have passed, and his present dogmatical intolerance on the one side, and his leaning to Rome on the other, I recoil from the thought of the mental process—I fear a moral self-maiming—which alone I can conceive capable of leading to such a result." (Thirlwall, Literary Letters, p. 261.) It is this process of "moral self-maiming" which one sadly marks as a prevalent note of modern Ritualism, with all its inevitable results of unscrupulous methods of controversy, deliberate garbling of authorities, and (as Thirlwall observes in another place, of the same writer) a "resolute and passionate one-sidedness," which, in the case of Pusey, nullified all the value of a really extensive erudition. With such "authorities," then, a reader cannot but entertain sad forebodings as to the results which the author of this book will attain.

(2) *Methods of quotation.* Instances of deliberate misquotation and garbling in the case of the Homilies and Anglican writers of the 17th century were shown by a correspondent of the St. John *Sun* (June 6th, 1894), which will be found in an Appendix.*

Another extraordinary specimen of garbling is found in a supposed quotation from Bishop Lightfoot's famous essay on the Christian Ministry, a work which, indeed, required all the skill of Mr. Staley to render other than a standing antidote to sacerdotalism. This extraordinary *cento* of disjointed extracts will be found on page 338 of Mr. Staley's book. Any ignorant reader would readily conceive that Bishop Lightfoot was a pronounced sacerdotalist, and could only wonder that more frequent use had not been made of so convenient an ally.

We append the passage in full, showing by brackets the words omitted by Mr. Staley:

["If, therefore, the sacerdotal office be understood to imply the offering of sacrifices, then the Epistle of the Hebrews leaves no place for a Christian priesthood. If, on the other hand, the word be taken in a wider and looser acceptation, it cannot well be withheld from the ministry of the Church of Christ. Only in this case the meaning of the term should be clearly apprehended; and it might have been better if the later Christian vocabulary had conformed to the silence of the Apostolic writers, so that the possibility of confusion would have been avoided. According to this broader meaning] the priest may be defined as one who represents God to man and man to God." Of a

* *Vide infra*, p. 21.

long and elaborately argumentative sentence, Mr. Staley actually snips off one bit of a clause, with an object our readers will understand. He omits the important sentence which follows later, including the words: "But throughout his (the Christian minister's) office is representative and not vicarial. He does not interpose between God and man in such a way that direct communication with God is superseded on the one hand, or that his own mediation becomes indispensable on the other." Then comes a reiteration of the great axiom, equally suppressed by Mr. Staley, that the ["minister's function is representative without being vicarial]. He is a priest, as the mouthpiece, the delegate of a priestly race. His acts are not his own, but the acts of the congregation. [Hence, too, it will follow that, viewed on this side as on the other, his function cannot be absolute and indispensable. It may be a general rule, it may be under ordinary circumstances a practically universal law, that the highest acts of congregational worship shall be performed through the principal officers of the congregation. But an emergency may arise when the spirit and not the letter must decide. The Christian ideal will then interpose and interpret our duty. The higher ordinance of the universal priesthood will overrule all special limitations. The layman will assume functions which are otherwise restricted to the ordained minister."]

Every candid reader will feel disgust at this clearly deliberate distortion of a simple and direct statement, unless we are to suppose that the Literate of Chichester obediently received from

Canon Carter these extracts from a work which possibly had never been placed in his hands. *Palmam qui meruit ferat.* And it will not be thought excessive if a pupil of Bishop Lightfoot, one who has heard the great theologian's incisive words on this matter—words which he never recalled and never modified, and which sophists like the notorious Canon McColl, more impudent even than Mr. Staley, have tried in vain to adulterate, should feel and should express indignation at a method of poisoning the springs of theological literature from which the very Jesuits of old, the Escobars and Baunys, would have shrunk. If these are the methods of the new "Catholic faith," according to Canon Carter and Mr. Staley, there is ample ground for protest.

We now proceed to an examination of the book itself. As to the opening chapters on the "Church and Ministry" very few words are sufficient. We do not utter any blame here to Mr. Staley and his Mentor for putting forth the opinions which they hold, the theory of the sacerdotal church. These chapters are the simple expansion of the sacerdotal formula, well known from its classical and almost epigrammatic expression by the late Mr. Haddan: "Without bishops no authentic ministry, without ministry no valid sacraments, without sacraments no union with Christ," etc. Here antagonism is disarmed. While profoundly differing from this theory of the church, which inverts the whole structure, making a human organization (however advantageous) the foundation, and union with Jesus Christ a mere result and superstructure; yet our method of dealing with this erroneous

belief, as we hold it, is not to denounce, but to endeavour to show a more excellent faith. Ours is no Protestant inquisition which would suppress all adverse teaching. Let all opinions be frankly stated, and be met by diligent proof and the "holding fast that which is good." When we find, for example, (p. 18) Mr. Staley quoting "an old saying '*ubi sacerdos ibi Christus*'," —"Where the priest is, there is Christ,"—we are willing to ascribe it only to his ignorance that he does not rather quote the famous words of Irenæus: "*Ubi spiritus illic ecclesia et omnis gratia*" (adv. Haer. iv. 31, 3)—"Where the Spirit is, there is the church and all grace." Similarly with the section upon the apostolic succession. Regarded as a historical fact, doubtless the Church of England possesses it as fully as any other Christian body; regarded as a symbol of beauty and antiquity, it may be rightly esteemed; but regarded as a vital doctrine involving the validity of ministry and sacraments and the inclusion or exclusion from Christ's church, it is a fiction at once unscriptural and unknown to our Reformed church, which declares herself freely in her twenty-third Article upon this point, where episcopal succession is not so much as mentioned. None would look to a writer of Mr. Staley's school for an accurate account of the Reformation, but (perhaps owing to Canon Bright's revision) the portions referring to the abuses of monasteries and papal exactions are, on the whole, correct, and since J. R. Green's vivid and popular description of the friars most people are aware of their earlier benefit to the people and subsequent decadence. But when, after this excellent introduction, we are

rightly told that "England was fully ripe for a great religious revolution," (p. 88) then how imperfect and inaccurate is the narrative that follows, representing the change as merely external, a mere transfer of authority from the Vatican to Windsor Castle, or the mere removal of a few shrines and convents. Well might the student exclaim: "*Parturiunt montes nascetur ridiculus mus*," if the Marian martyrs died, and Jewell uttered his great apology, all on behalf of a change so insignificant.

With all respect to the late Mr. Aubrey Moore, who is frequently quoted, he was much in error in regarding "the continuity of the English Church as the first principle of the English Reformation." Hurrell Froude was more clear-sighted in his virulent attacks upon the Reformers, and his hatred of the "Deformation." He saw most clearly that Cranmer and his great colleagues, when once the scales had fallen from their eyes, went back to primitive antiquity as the source and test, and cared nothing for "continuity" with ages of superstition.

Though the historical statements of the book are unsound, we are glad to admit that there are portions elsewhere that are less open to objection. The section on the creeds, with the constant references to Scripture proofs (pp. 125-145), is well done, and might, if extracted, constitute a really helpful tract. But the section upon the Virgin Mary (158-164) cannot be included in this praise, as it contains many doubtful expressions, while the reference to "prayers for the dead" simply repeats the stereotyped assertions, and omits as usual any

reference to the deliberate and final exclusion of such prayers from the Book of Common Prayer. Dealing with the sacrament of the Lord's Supper we find that the Sadlerian sophistry about the meaning of the words "this do in remembrance of Me" is implicitly repeated. We have already noted that there is an absence of the especially Sadlerian effrontery, but Canon Carter rather than his pupil or amanuensis must bear the responsibility of the indefensible statements that the word "do," when used in the Septuagint, very frequently means "offer," and that the Greek word for "remembrance" has likewise a distinctly sacrificial meaning (p. 247). After this one is not surprised to find that Newman's ancient quibble concerning Article xxxi, asserting that "the sacrifices of masses" there condemned had no reference to the "sacrifice of the mass," is eagerly defended, and that Mr. Staley is not afraid to declare that the latter has never been disowned by the Church of England. (P. 253.) Nor will the reader be astonished to meet next (p. 255, *et seq.*) with an ardent defence of Fasting Communion, for which indeed Canon Bright's authority is quoted. Throughout these remarks there is a significant absence of reference to the Prayer Book, but at this point Mr. Staley seems to feel that some mention is expected. This is how he speaks: "It is true that the Church of England does not (in the Book of Common Prayer) expressly enjoin Fasting Communion. But as the rule was in full force when the Prayer Book was first put forth in 1549, something surely would have been said if it had been meant that the practice should be discon-

tinued." Cannot Mr. Staley perceive—we are sure that every candid reader of the Prayer Book must recognize as he reads or listens to the exhortations, that in these solemn warnings every feature of preparation is anxiously enumerated and specifically described, which the church regards as binding on her members. If the Church of England enjoined this practice her voice would be raised to remind us when she calls her children to the sacred feast. But no; it is not those who have obeyed human judgments concerning meat and drink, but those who have truly and earnestly repented, are in love and charity with their neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, that she invites to draw near with faith and take this holy sacrament to their comfort.

Space does not permit us to continue this examination exhaustively to the end of the book. The remaining sections are of various value; there are excellent remarks on prayer (p. 227), and on the Bible (p. 309-320), excepting the final cautions against its private study, with the characteristic quotation from Pusey concluding with the words: "It does not follow that everyone, unguided, is to draw for himself the truth out of that living well." Even the Church of Rome, to judge from the last encyclical letter of the Pope, is beginning to abandon that attitude of distrust towards the divine illumination. On penance, absolution and confession, the extreme sacerdotal views are put forth, practically undistinguishable from Roman teaching; the so-called sacrament of "extreme unction" is eagerly defended (p. 274); the "ecclesiastical colours" are minutely described without any re-

ference to the differences of "uses"(p. 333); "pious customs" including the sign of the cross in the Roman way are described and indirectly recommended; and Dr. Pusey's "Hints for a First Confession" are reprinted as the concluding and crowning feature of the book. In an appendix concerning the church calendar, a number of Roman Saints' Days, expunged from our own observance and even notice, are carefully recorded, while a concluding note, which must be quoted, would serve by itself as an adequate specimen of the accuracy and candour of this "manual of instruction." Mr. Staley informs his readers that "the commemoration of the faithful departed on All Souls' Day was removed from the calendar on account of abuses formerly (?) connected with its observance. Now that these abuses no longer exist (*sic*) it seems desirable to restore the observance of this day." (P. 373.)

We have now concluded our survey of this book. Our readers will see that we have judged it in a fair spirit, acknowledging good points where they could be found, never denouncing the frank statement of opinions which are not our own, reserving any warmth of indignation solely for dishonest garbling of authorities, suppression of the truth, and suggestion of falsehood. Our own final conclusion is that the book is, as a whole, not only valueless but pernicious. Mr. Staley, the ingenious though not ingenuous Literate, is probably only the secretary and mouthpiece of Canon Carter, a very experienced strategist in the councils of the English Church Union. We have shown that the authorities are defective and dishonestly quoted in many cases,

and that the aim of the whole volume is to teach a doctrine practically undistinguishable from that of Rome under the flag of the Anglican Church. Such tactics will not answer; for in spite of large clerical forces, elaborate organization, and utter unscrupulousness in procedure, there is on the other side that love of truth and fairness, and the strength of true Gospel teaching, that will finally resist every onslaught.

Indeed, there is much ground for satisfaction from one aspect of the present publication. The sacerdotal party commenced under the leadership of men famous for their talents and character. Newman lives as a master of English prose; Manning, as a great pulpit orator; but each found his own place, far outside the limits of a Protestant and Reformed Church. Then "what a fall was there" to Bennett and Denison, and from them to Littledale and Sadler. And now it is with the name of an unknown literate that they must conjure, for, seemingly, such men as Dean Paget, Canon Scott-Holland, Canon Mason, and Mr. Gore, though they may agree with many of Mr. Staley's and Canon Carter's views, will not lend their names to the present development. They are to be congratulated on an abstention as prudent as it is creditable from any sanction given to a book which falsifies alike the truth of history and the principles of the Church of England.

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APPENDIX

A.—The Church House Seal.

Exception was taken to this statement by some persons engaged in the distribution of Mr. Staley's Manual, and enquiry was made of the author himself. It is creditable to Mr. Staley that he at once admitted the absence of authority for placing the misleading figure on the covers of his book. It appears that a promise was made to remove it in all subsequent editions.

B.—Mr. Staley's Methods of Quotation.

(From St. John *Sun*, June 6, 1894.)

Mr. Staley wishes to prove that the Anglican Church holds just seven sacraments. And so, on pp. 239, 240, he "quotes" the Homilies, Bishop Jeremy Taylor and Archbishop Bramhall, as if these authorities gave just seven, suppressing the words in which they speak of many more than seven, and in which they condemn just seven sacraments as something "Roman."

1. (*a*) From the "Homily on the Common Prayer and Sacraments":

"As for the number of them (the sacraments), if they should be considered according to the exact signification of a sacrament, namely, for visible signs, expressly commanded in the New Testament, whereunto is annexed the promise of free forgiveness of sins, and of our holiness and joining in Christ, there be but two; namely, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord. For although Absolution hath the promise of forgiveness of sins, yet

by the express word of the New Testament it hath not this promise annexed and tied to the visible sign, which is imposition of hands; for this visible sign is not expressly commanded in the New Testament, to be used in absolution, as the visible signs in Baptism and the Lord's Supper are; and, therefore, Absolution is no such sacrament as Baptism and the Lord's Supper are; and though the ordering of ministers hath this visible sign and promise, yet it lacks the promise of remission of sins, as all other sacraments besides the above named do. Therefore neither it nor any other sacrament else be such sacraments as baptism and the communion are.

"[But, in a general acceptation, the name of a sacrament may be attributed to anything whereby an holy thing is signified. In which understanding of the word the ancient writers have given name, not only to the other five, commonly, of late years, taken and used for supplying the number of the seven sacraments, but also to diverse and sundry other ceremonies, as to oil, washing of feet, and such like; not meaning thereby to repute them as sacraments, in the same signification that the two forenamed sacraments are.]"

Mr. Staley leaves out the part in brackets.

(*b*) From Jeremy Taylor: "Of Traditions," Vol. X., p. 438:

Again, the part in brackets Mr. Staley leaves out. He is "quoting" in support of the other exactly five sacraments, and implying that Bishop Taylor speaks of them: "It is none of the doctrine of the Church of England that there are two sacraments only; but that [of those rituals commanded in Scripture, which the ecclesiastical use calls sacraments (by a word of art)] 'two only are generally necessary to salvation.' [And although we are able to prove this by a tradition much more universal than by which the Roman doctors can

prove seven, yet we rely upon Scripture for our doctrine; and though, it may be, I shall not dispute it with this gentleman that sends his cartel, unless he hath given better proof of his learning and his temper, yet I suppose if he reads this book over he shall find something first or last to instruct him, or, at least, to entertain him, in that particular also. But for the present, lest such an unconcerning trifle be forgotten, I desire him to consider that he hath little reason to consider himself in the just number of seven sacraments, for that there are brought in amongst them some new devices, I cannot call them sacraments, but something like what they have already forged, which, being but external rites, yet outdo most of their sacraments.]"

(*c*) From Archbishop Bramhall, Vol. I., pp. 55, 56,; and Vol. II., p. 35:

Again the same "quoting" without the part in brackets.

"[Your next article of the septenary number of the sacraments is not much older; never so much as mentioned in any Scripture, or Council, or Creed, or Father, or ancient author; first devised by Peter Lombard; first decreed by Eugenius the Fourth; first confirmed in the provincial Council of Sons, and after in the Council of Trent. Either the word sacrament is taken largely; and then the washing of the disciples' feet is called a sacrament; then the only sprinkling of ashes on a Christian's head is called a sacrament; then there are God knows how many more than seven; or else it is taken strictly for a visible sign, instituted by Christ, to convey or confirm grace to all such partakers thereof as do not set a bar against themselves, according to the analogy between the sign and the thing signified; and in this sense] the proper and certain sacraments of the Christian Church, common to all, or [in the words of our church] 'generally necessary

to salvation,' are but two, Baptism, and the Supper of our Lord. [More than these St. Ambrose writes not of in his book, 'De Sacramentis,' because he did not know them. These we admit for genuine and general sacraments. Their sacramental virtue we acknowledge.] The rest we retain [more purely than yourselves], though not under the notion of such proper and general sacraments."

And Bramhall continues:

"Wherein, then, have we forsaken the communion of the Roman Church in sacraments? Not in their ancient communion of genuine sacraments, but in their septenary number, and supposititious sacraments; which yet we retain for the most part as useful and religious rites, but not under the notion of sacraments."

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