

LECTURE LXII.

THE SACRAMENTS.—Continued.

SYLLABUS.

7. Is the efficacy of the Sacraments dependent on the officiator's intention ?
Turretin, Loc. xix, Qu. 7. Dick, Lect. 86, 87. Conf. of Faith, ch. 27.
Ridgley, Qu 161. Council of Trent, Sess. 7, Cannon 11.
8. Is that efficiency produced *ex opere operato*; or does it depend on the recipient's exercise of the proper frames, inwrought by the Holy Ghost through the Word of God ?
See on Qu. 8, Cunningham's Hist. Theol. ch. 22, § 1, 2. Turretin, Qu. 8. Calv. Inst. bk. iv, ch. 14. Dick, Lect. 86. Ridgley, Qu. 161. Rom. Cat. pt. ii, Qu. 18. Council of Trent, Sess. 7, Canon, 4 to 8 inclusive.
9. Is participation in the Sacraments necessary to salvation ?
Turretin, Ques. 2 and 13. Council of Trent, as above.
10. By whom should the Sacraments be administered ?
Turretin, Qu. 14. Rice and Campbell, Debate, Prop. iv. Calv. Inst. bk. iv, ch. 15, § 20-end.
11. Do the rites of Baptism, Confirmation, and orders confer an indelible spiritual character ?
Turretin, Qu. 10. Dick, as above. Dr. Geo. Campbell, Lect. xi, on Eccles, Hist. (p. 183, &c.) Rom. Cat. pt. ii, Qu. 19. Council of Trent, Sess. vii, Canon 9.

THE Council of Trent asserts (Ses. 7 canon 11), that the intention of doing at least what the Church proposes to do, is necessary in the administrator, to make

7. Rome's Doctrine of Intention. the sacraments valid. Some popish divines

are so accommodating as to teach, that if this intention is habitual or virtual, though not present, because of inattention, in the mind of the administrator at the moment of pronouncing the words of institution, it is still valid; and some even say, that though the officiating person have heretical notions of the efficacy of the Sacrament, e. g., the Presbyterian notion, and honestly intends a Sacrament, as he understands it, it is valid. Now, there is obviously a sense, in which the validity of sacramental acts, depends on the intention of the parties. If, for instance, a frivolous or profane clergyman should, in a moment of levity, use the proper elements, and pronounce the proper words of institution, for purposes of mockery or sinful sport, it would certainly not be a sacrament. But this is a lack of intention, of a far different kind from the popish. There would be neither the proper place, time, nor circumstances of a divine rite. The profanity of purpose would be manifest and overt: and all parties would be guilty of it. The participation on both sides, would be a high act of profanity. But where the proper places, times and attendant circumstances exist, so far as the honest worshipper can judge; and all the divine institution essential to the validity of the right is regularly performed with an appearance of religious sincerity and solemnity, there we deny that the sincere participant can be

deprived of the sacramental benefit, by the clergyman's secret lack of intention. And this: because

- (a.) It is the opinion of all the Protestant divines, even including Calvin (Inst. Bk. iv: ch. 14), that the gracious efficacy of the sacraments is

Refutation. generally like that of the word. The sacraments are but an acted word, and a promise in symbol. They effect their gracious result through the Holy Ghost cultivating intelligent faith, etc. Now, the efficacy of the word is not dependent on the motives of him who conveys it. God sometimes saves a soul by a message delivered through a wicked man. Why may not it be thus with a sacrament?

(b.) If the clergyman lack the right intention, that is simply his personal sin. It is preposterous to represent God as suspending the fate of a soul, or its edification, absolutely upon the good conduct of another fellow-sinner, whose secret fault that soul can neither prevent, nor even detect till too late. This is not Scripture. Prov. ix: 12; Rom. xiv: 4. This objection to Rome's doctrine is peculiarly forcible against her, because she represents the valid enjoyment of sacraments, as essential to salvation: and because she herself teaches that the validity of the sacraments is not dependent on the personal character of the clergyman, not even though he be in mortal sin. Why should this one sin, which is precisely a personal sin of the officiator, no more, no less, be an exception?

(c.) The possible consequences of the doctrine, as pointed out by Turretin, Dick, etc., are such as amount to a *reductio ad absurdum*. If it were true, it would bring in question the validity of any sacrament, of every priest's baptism and ordination, the validity of the Apostolic Succession at every link, and of every mass: so that the worshipper would never know, while worshipping the wafer, whether he were guilty of idolatry or not, even on Popish principles. According to the Canon Law, all orders conferred on unbaptized persons are null. Hence, if there is any uncertainty that the priest baptizing the Pope had the intention, there is the same uncertainty whether every grade of ordination he received, from the diaconship up to the papal, is not void; and every clerical act he ever performed therefore invalid. Papists endeavour to evade this terrible consequence by saying that we have the moral evidence of human testimony, that the priests giving us the sacraments had the intention; and this is all the Protestant can have of his own baptism in infancy, because he was too young to know; and had to take the fact on the assertion of his parents or others. I reply: there are two vital differences: The Protestant does not believe water baptism essential to his redemption; an unconscious mistake in the fact would not be fatal. Water baptism is an overt act, cognizable by the senses, and a proper subject of authentic and complete testimony, by concurrent witnesses; but intention is

a secret act of soul, not cognizable by any other than the priest, and impossible to be verified by any concurrent testimony.

Last: This doctrine is totally devoid of Bible support.

But these tremendous difficulties have not prevented Rome from asserting the doctrine.

Her purpose is to hold the laity in the most absolute and terrible dependence on the priesthood. She tells them that without valid sacraments it is impossible to be saved; and that even where they have the canonical form of a sacrament, they may utterly fail of getting the sacrament itself, through the priest's secret will; and may never find it out till they wake in hell, and find themselves damned for the want of it. What power could be more portentous?

In the scholastic jargon of Rome, means of grace naturally divide themselves into two classes—those which do good *ex opere operato*, and those which only do good *ex opere operantis*.

The former do good by the simple performance of the proper ceremonial, without any act or movement of soul in the recipients, accommodating themselves intelligently to the grace signified. The latter only do good when the recipient exercises the appropriate acts of soul; and the good done is dependent on those exercises, as well as on the outward means. Of the latter kind of means is preaching, &c.; but Rome holds that the sacraments all belong to the former. Her meaning, then, is that the mere administration of the sacrament does the appointed good to the recipient, provided he is not in a state of mortal sin, whether he exercises suitable frames or not. So Council of Trent, Sess. 7, Canon, 6-8. But Romish Theologians are far from being of one mind, as to the nature of this immediate and absolute efficacy.

Their views may be grouped with tolerable accuracy under two classes. One class, embracing the Jesuit and more Popish Papists, regard the *opus operatum* efficacy as a proper and literal effect of the sacramental element and words of institution, by their own immediate causation. They do not, and cannot explain the nature of this causation, unless it be literally physical; and then it is absurd. The other class, including Jansenists, and the more spiritual, regard the sacramental efficacy as spiritual—i. e., as the almighty redeeming influence of Christ and the Holy Ghost, purchased for sinners by Christ; which spiritual influence they suppose God has been pleased in His mercy to tie by a constant purpose, and gracious promise, to the sacraments of the Church canonically administered, by a tie gracious and positive, yet absolute and unconditioned, so that the sacramental efficacy goes to every human being to whom the elements go with the proper word of institution, whether the recipient exercise faith or not. That is, God has been pleased, in His sove-

reign mercy to the Church, to make her sacraments the essential and unfailing channels of His spiritual grace. The opinion of the Prelatic Fathers seems to have been intermediate—that no one got saving grace except through the sacramental channel, (excepting the doubtful case of the uncovenanted mercies) but that in order to get grace through that channel, faith and repentance were also necessary. (See Augustine, in Calvin's *ubi supra*). And such is probably the real opinion of High Church Episcopalians, and of Campbellites, as to the grace of remission.

Now, Protestants believe that the sacraments, under proper circumstances, are not a hollow shell, devoid of gracious efficacy. Nor is their use that of a mere badge. But they are not the channels or vehicles for acquiring the saving grace first; inasmuch as the possession of those graces is a necessary prerequisite to proper participation in adults. The efficacy of the sacrament, therefore, is in no case more than to strengthen and nourish saving graces. And that efficacy they carry only as moral means of spiritual influences; so that the whole benefit depends on an intelligent, believing and penitent reception. And every believer has the graces of redemption in such degree as to save his soul, if a true believer, whether he has any sacraments or not. See Confession of Faith, ch. xxvii : § 3. In this sense we deny the *opus operat.*

(a) Because that doctrine is contradicted by the analogy of the mode in which the Word operates. Proved. By Analogous Operation of Word. As we have stated, Protestant divines admit no generic difference between the mode in which the Holy Ghost works in the Word, and in the sacraments. The form of a sacrament is the instituted significance of it. But that significance is only learned in the Scriptures, and the word of institution is to be found, as well as its explanation, in the same place. The sacrament, without the intelligent signification, is dumb: it is naught. Scripture alone gives it its significance. Sacraments are but the word symbolized; the covenant before expressed in promissory language, now expressed in sphragistic symbols. But now, what is more clear, than that the word depends for its efficacy, on the believing and active reception of the sinner's soul? See 2 Cor. iii : 6; Heb. iv : 2, *et passim*. The same thing is true of the sacraments.

(b) The sacraments are defined in the Scriptures as signs and seals, Rom. iv : 11; Gen. xvii : 10. Now to signify and to promise a thing is different from doing it. Where the effect is present, the sign and pledge thereof is superseded. When the money is paid, the bond that engaged for its payment is done with. To make the sacraments effect redemption *ex opere operato*, there-

fore destroys their sacramental nature. But more: They are seals of a covenant. That Covenant, as far as man is a party (and in the sacrament, the recipient is one party), was suspended on an instrumental condition, a penitent and obedient faith. How can the seal have a more immediate and absolute efficiency than the covenant of which it is a seal. That covenant gives it all its force. It is to evade this fatal argument, that Bellarmine labours, with his and our enemies, the Socinians, to prove that sacraments are not seals.

(c) The sacraments cannot confer redeeming grace *ex opere operato*, because, in every adult, proper participation presupposes saving grace in exercise. See Rom. iv : 11, last clause; Acts viii ; 35, 36, 37; ix : 11 with 18; x : 34 with 47; Mark xvi : 16; 1 Peter iii : 21; Heb. xi : 6; 1 Cor. xi : 28, 29; v : 7, 8. Hence:

(d) Several in Scripture were saved without any sacraments, as the thief on the cross. Cornelius, we have seen, and Abraham, were already in a state of redemption, before their participation in the sacraments. Now, inasmuch as we have proved that a true believer once in a state of grace can never fall totally away, we may say that Abraham and Cornelius were already redeemed. Jno. iii : 36; v : 24. And the overwhelming proof that the sacraments have no intrinsic efficacy, is in this glaring fact, that multitudes partake them, with what Rome calls canonical regularity, who never exhibit in their lives or death, one mark of Christian character. Nor will it avail for Rome to say, that they afterward lost the grace by committing mortal sin: for the Scriptures say that the redeemed soul cannot fall away into mortal sin: and multitudes exhibit their total depravity, not after a subsequent backsliding, but from the hour they leave the sacramental altar, by an unbroken life of sin.

(e) The claim of uniform and absolute efficiency, in its grosser form, is absolute absurdity. How can physical, material elements, with a word of institution pronounced over them (which of itself can go no farther into the hearer, than the tympanum of his ear), effect a moral and spiritual change? It is vile jugglery: degrading to Christianity, and reducing the holy sacraments to a pagan incantation. But the Jesuit pleads, that we see ten thousand cases, where the external physical world produces mental and moral effects, through sensation. We reply that this is not true in the sense necessary to support their doctrine. Sensation is not the efficient, but only the occasional cause of moral feeling, volition, &c. The efficient cause is in the mind's own dispositions and free agency. The confusion of thought in this plea is the same with that made by the sensualistic psychologist, when he mistakes inducement for motive.

But the sophism points us to the cause of a great fact in Church History. That fact is, that somehow, the *opus operatum* doctrine of the sacraments tends to accompany Pelagian views of human nature and grace. One has only to recall the semi-Pelagian tendencies of the Greek Church, of the Latin Church, notwithstanding its strong Augustinian impulse in its earlier ages, of the English and American Ritualists, and last, of the community founded by Alex. Campbell. These facts are too uniform for chance: they betray a causation. From the point of view just gained, we can easily detect it. The sacraments are external ordinances in this: that they present truth (in symbol) objectively. Hence it is impossible for a rational man to persuade himself that means, which common sense can only apprehend as didactic, if not fetiches, can of themselves cause spiritual acts of soul, (graces) on any other view of the will, than that of the Pelagian. If volitions and emotions are decisively regulated by dispositions, then the *a priori* revolution of the disposition, by the Holy Spirit, must be in order to the wholesome influence of any objective. But that is the Protestant view of a sacrament. If the sacrament occasions spiritual states and acts *ex opere operato*, it can only be on condition of the will's self-determination. Thus, every consistent Ritualist becomes a Pelagian. What is regeneration by moral suasion, except an *opus operatum* effect of the Word?

But if the other view of the *opus operatum* be urged: that the efficiency is spiritual, and results, not from the direct causation of the rite itself, but from the power of God graciously and sovereignly connected therewith; we demand the revealed warrant. Where is the promise to the Church from God, that this connection shall be absolute? The Scriptures are silent, when properly interpreted. The burden of proof must rest on the assertors. They have no text which meets the demand. Indeed, in many places the Scriptures explicitly declare the contrary. See, for example, Deut. x: 16; Jer. iv: 4; Luke xiii: 26, 27; I Cor. xi: 29; Rom. ii: 25th to end. It may be urged that some of these places, and especially the last, speak of the sacraments of the old dispensation. It is in the vain hope of breaking the force of these unanswerable texts, that Rome asserts an essential difference between the sacraments of the old and the new dispensation, saying that the former only symbolize, while the latter work, saving graces. The student can now see the polemic interest Rome has in widening the differences between the Old Testament and the New, as much as possible, and in recognizing the least of gospel features in the Old. But I have proved that the same gospel is in both Testaments, and that there is no generic difference in the way the sacraments of the two exhibit grace. Here, in part, is the importance of that argument. Especially do I take my stand on I Cor. x: 1-10, and prove thence that the sacraments of the

New Testament were viewed by the Apostle, as no more effective, *ex opere operato*, than those of the Old. Thus, all the demonstrations of the inefficacy of circumcision without repentance and faith, apply against the Ritualist and Papist.

The whole strain of Scripture must strike every candid mind, as opposed to this theory of sacramental grace. God portrays his gospel as a spiritual religion, the contrast of a formalistic one. He everywhere heaps scorn on mere formalism. As the man thinketh in his heart, so is he. To teach that a man becomes a Christian by the force of any ceremony, is totally opposite to all this. The argument may be placed in an exceedingly definite light thus. Let them deny the sphragistic nature of the sacraments as they may, it cannot be concealed. Least of all, can the emblematic relation between gospel promises and sacraments be denied. Now the emblem always means just what it is appointed didactically to emblemize: no more. The seal binds only to what is written above in the bond to which it is appended. In every contest as to the intent of a seal, this solution is so obvious, that any other is ridiculous: "Look into the bond, and see what is written above." The Bible is the bond. When we read there, we universally find redemption promised to faith and repentance. The seal appended beneath cannot contradict the body of the instrument.

Alien as the doctrine we refute is, from the whole letter and spirit of Scripture; it has an element of popularity, which will always secure numerous votaries, until grace undeceives them. It chimes in with the superstition natural to a soul dead in sin. It is delightful to the soul which hates true repentance, and loves its spiritual laziness, and abhors thorough-going heart religion, and yet dreads hell, to be taught that it can be equipped for heaven, without these arduous means, by an easy piece of ecclesiastical legerdemain.

(f) But Papists and Prelatists quote a class of passages, which they claim to give an immediate efficiency to the rite itself. See Jno. iii: 5; Acts ii: 38; xxii: 16; Eph. v: 26; 1 Cor. x: 17; Rom. vi: 3; Luke xxii: 19, 20, &c. Protestants explain these passages in consistency with their views, by saying that they are all expressions based on the sacramental union, and to be explained in consistency with it: e. g., in Jno. iii: 5, the birth of the water means the birth by that which the water represents, the Holy Ghost. Nicodemus' great error was, that he had put too much dependence on water. He had relied too much on his "divers baptisms" and hand-washings. Christ says to him, that he must have a cleansing more efficacious than that by water, the cleansing of the Spirit. That He does not mean to assert for water baptism an equal effect and necessity with re-

generation, is plain from the fact that in all the subsequent verses, he omits the water wholly. The propriety of this interpretation of all the similar places is defended, first by the analogous case of the hypostatic union in Christ's person, where God is in one place spoken of as having blood, and the Prince of Life as dying. Papists agree with us, that in virtue of the union of the two natures in one person, the person, even when denominated by the one nature, is represented as doing what, in strictness of speech, the other alone could do. So, in the sacraments, there are suggested two things—the rite, and the grace signified by the rite. How natural, then, that a Hebrew should attribute to the rite, by figure, what the answering grace really effects? In the second place, this probability is greatly strengthened by noticing the way, natural to Hebrew mind, of speaking concerning all other symbols, as types, &c. The symbol is almost uniformly said to be the thing symbolized; when the meaning is, that it represents it. Third: our interpretation of these passages is adopted by Scripture itself, in one of the very strongest instances, thus authorizing our view of the exegesis of the whole class. See 1 Pet. iii; 21. Here, first baptism is said to save us, as the ark saved Noah. What expression could be stronger? But yet the Apostle explains himself by saying, it is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh which effects it, but the answer (*ἐπερώτημα*) of a good conscience towards God. These words ascribe the efficacy of the sacrament to the honesty of the participant's confession; and this whether with Turretin and Winer we translate "request to God," or with Neander and Robinson, "Sponsio." Fourth. If men will persist in making the above Scriptures teach the *opus operatum*, the only result will be that the Scripture will be made to contradict itself; for it is impossible to explain away all the proof-texts we have arrayed.

This difference between us and Rome is fundamental; because she teaches men to depend essentially on the wrong trust for salvation. The result must be ruin of souls.

The question of the necessity of the sacraments in order to salvation, is nearly connected with the previous one. This is indicated by the fact that the same persons usually hold their essential necessity, and their efficacy *ex opere operato*. And this consistently; for if the sacraments have that marvellous virtue, it can hardly be supposed that man can safely lack them.

Now, there is a sense in which the neglect of the sacraments would destroy the soul. To observe them is God's command. He who willingly disobeys this command, and perseveres, will thereby destroy his soul, just for the same reason that any wilful disobedience will. But then, it is not the lack of the sacraments, but the impenitent state of the soul, which is the true cause of ruin. Turretin; "*Eorum non privatio, sed con-*

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temptus damnat." The command to observe them is not of perpetual and original, but only of positive institution; and owes its force over our consciences to the mere precept of God. Hence they should be regarded from the same general point of view with other positive rites. We sustain this:

(a) By reference to the free and spiritual character of the gospel plan as indicated throughout Scripture. God has not tied His grace to forms, places, or sacerdotal orders. All men alike have access to His redeeming mercy, provided their hearts desire it, and under all outward circumstances. Jno. iv : 21, 23 ; Luke xviii : 14, &c.

(b). We infer the same thing from the numerous and exceedingly explicit passages which promise the immediate bestowal of redeeming grace, and mention no other term than believing. Some of them do it in terms which hardly admit of evasion. E. g., Jno. v : 24 ; vi : 29. Does not this seem to say that believing alone puts the soul in possession of redemption? True the Papist may say that one passage of Scripture should be completed by another; and that in other places (e. g., Jno. iii : 5 ; Mark xvi : 16) the observance of the sacrament is coupled with the believing grace, as a term of salvation. But when those passages are well understood, it is seen that the importance of the outward sacrament depends wholly on the sacramental union. We repeat, that the places in which faith alone is mentioned as the instrumental condition, are so numerous, so explicit, and some of them professed answers to questions so distinct as (Acts xvi : 31), that it is simply incredible the Holy Ghost would have so omitted the mention of the sacraments if they were essential.

(c). But their nature shows they are not. They are sensible signs of an inward grace. The reception of them therefore implies the possession of grace; a sufficient proof it does not originate it.

(d). This leads us to add, that many have actually been saved without any sacraments. Abraham and Cornelius were both in a state of grace before they partook of any sacrament. The penitent thief went to paradise without ever partaking. Circumcision could not be administered till the eighth day of the Hebrew infant's life: and doubtless many died uncircumcised in the first week of their life. Were these all lost? This Popish doctrine gives a frightful view of the condition of the infants of Pagans: that forsooth, because they are debarred from the sacrament of baptism, among the millions who die without actual transgression, there is not one elect infant! Are all these lost?

Last, the Scriptures everywhere hold out the truth, that the Word is the great means of redemption; and it is plainly indicated that it is the only essential means. See Rom. x : 14 : 2 Tim. iii : 15.

The traditions and usages of the Church as to lay administration of sacraments have been in the main very uniform. It has always been condemned. The inordinate importance attached to baptism did indeed lead the Romish Church, (and after her, the English), to decide that the baptism of a layman, and even of a woman, was valid, though irregular, if the child was *in extremis*, and no priest at hand. Even this, most Presbyterians would condemn as utterly invalid. The German antiquaries (e. g., Mosheim) sometimes assert that in the primitive Church any person who made a convert felt authorized to baptize him. This appears to me very doubtful. Ignatius, for instance, who is, if genuine, one of the earliest Apostolic Fathers, says that the Eucharist which the Bishop celebrates should alone be considered a valid one; and that no one should presume to baptize, except the Bishop, or one commissioned by him. This is certainly the language of uniform antiquity, expressed in Councils and Fathers. Nor is it merely the result of clerical ambition and exclusiveness. Since the sacraments are a solemn and formal representation of Gospel truth by symbols, a sort of pantomimic Word, it seems most reasonable that the exhibition of them should be reserved to the same class to whom is committed the authoritative preaching of the Word. And it may be urged, with yet more force, that since the presbyters, and especially the pastor of the Church, are the guardians of the sealing ordinances, responsible for their defence against abuse and profanation, it is reasonable, yea, necessary, that they should have the control of their administration. This consideration seems to me to have the force of a just and necessary inference. Again the great commission (Matt. xxviii; 19; Mark xvi: 15) seems evidently to give the duties of preaching and baptizing to the same persons. The persons primarily addressed were the apostles; but the apostles as representative of the whole Church. To deny this would be to deny to all but apostles authority to preach, and a share in the gracious promise of Christ's presence which accompanies the commission; and this again would compel us to admit that the right to preach, and the promise of Christ's blessing, have been lost to the whole Church for nearly 1800 years, or else to accept the Episcopal conclusion that the apostolic office still continues. Hence, the argument from the commission gives only probable proof. This, however, is strengthened by the fact that there is no instance in Scripture of any sacraments administered by any except men who were ministers of the gospel, either by charism, or by ordination. Perhaps the most practical argument against lay administration of sacraments is, from the intolerable disorders and divisions, which have always arisen, and must ever arise, from such a usage. The sacraments have this use among others, to be badges and pledges of Church membership. The

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control of them cannot therefore be given to others than the appointed rulers of the Church: to do so is utter disorganization.

The Council of Trent teaches that the three sacraments of baptism, confirmation and orders, can never be repeated, because they imprint on the recipient an indelible character. They have not, indeed, been able to decide what this character is, nor on what part of man it is imprinted. It cannot be the graces of redemption; because Rome teaches that they may all be lost by the true believer, through backsliding, while this character can never be lost, to whatever apostasy the man may sink: and because she teaches that the recipient in a state of mortal sin receives no graces through the sacrament, yet he would receive the "character." And again, all the sacraments confer grace, whereas only these three confer "character" indelibly. Nor can it be any other sort of qualification for office (in ordination, for instance), for men lose all qualification through infirmity, dotage, or heresy; yet they never lose the "character." Nor can they decide on what it is imprinted, whether on the body, mind, conscience, or affections. This uncertainty, together with the utter silence of the Scriptures, is the sufficient refutation of the absurdity. If you seek for the motive of Rome in endorsing such a doctrine, you will find it in her lust of power. By every baptism she acquires a subject of her ghostly empire, and every ordination, while it confers on the clergyman a ghostly eminence, also binds him in the tenfold bonds of the iron despotism of the canon law. Now, it suits the grasping and despotic temper of Rome to teach that these bonds of allegiance are inexorable: that when they are once incurred, no apostasy, no act of the subject's choice or will, can ever make him less a subject, or enable him to evade the tyrannical hand of his mistress.

As to confirmation and orders, we do not feel bound to solve any questions concerning their sacramental character, because we do not believe them to be sacraments. As to baptism, we assign this reason why it is never to be repeated to the same subject like the Lord's supper: It is the initiating sacrament, like circumcision. The man who is in the house needs no repeated introduction into the house. It "signifies our ingrafting into Christ." He who is grafted in once is virtually united, and requires no new union to be constituted.

11. Indelible Character Refuted.

APPENDIX.

The scriptural doctrine of the sacraments is so vital, so widely corrupted, and so involved in the claims of Prelacy and Apostolic Succession, that it is important for the student to gain a firm grasp of the relation. Hence I desire, before proceeding to the specific discussion of the two sacraments, to clear up that connection.

Two theories of redemption prevail in Christendom, which are, in fact, essentially opposite. If one is the gospel of God, the other cannot be; and it must be condemned as "another gospel," whose teachers ought to be "Anathema, Maranatha." The one of these plans of salvation may be decried as the high-prelatic; it is held by the Roman and Greek Churches, and the Episcopalian Ritualists. It is often called the theory of "sacramental grace;" not because true Protestants deny all grace through sacraments, but because that theory endeavors to make sacraments essential to grace. The dogma of tactual succession through prelates from the Apostles, is a corner-stone; for it teaches that the Apostles transmitted their peculiar office, by ordination, to prelates, and with it, a peculiar χάρισμα of the Holy Ghost, making every "priest" through this laying on of hands, a depository of the spiritual energy, and every "bishop," or Apostle, a "proxy" of the Saviour Himself, endued with the redemptive gifts in the same sense in which He was endued with them by His Father. Thus, for instance, prelacy interprets Jno. xx : 21. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." The theory, then, amounts to this: that Christ's provision for applying redemption to man consisted simply in His instituting on earth a successive, prelatic hierarchy, as His "proxies," empowered to work, through His sacraments, the salvation of submissive participants, by a supernatural power precisely analogous to that by which He enabled Peter to speak in an unknown tongue, and by which Peter and John enabled the lame man to walk. Let the student grasp distinctly what prelacy means here. It is, that the "Bishop" (who is literally Apostle,) in ordaining a "priest," does the identical thing which Paul did, Acts xix : 6, to the first Ephesian converts: "when he laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied;" and that when this priest baptizes an infant, for instance, he supernaturally removes the disease of original sin by the water and the chrism, as the man whom an Apostle had endued with the χάρισμα of miracle-working healed epilepsy by his touch. It follows of course, that the agency of these men, divinely endued with the χάρισμα of spiritual healing, and of the sacraments they use, are essential to the reception of redemptive grace. So, the priestly efficiency, through the sacrament is "*ex opere operato*," and does its work on all souls to which it is applied, indepen-

dent of their subjective exercises of receptive knowledge, faith and penitence; provided the obstacle of "mortal sin" be not interposed.

Now, if our, rival theory is true, it is perfectly obvious this scheme of "sacramental grace" is a profane dream, and is related to the Gospel precisely as a fetich, or a Pagan incantation. It is an attempt to cleanse the soul by an act of ecclesiastical jugglery. This enormous profanity is not charged upon every misguided votary of prelacy. As in so many other cases, so here, grace may render men's inward faith better than their dogma; the Holy Spirit may mercifully turn the soul's eye aside from the soul-destroying falsehood of the scheme, to the didactic truths so beautifully taught in the scriptural sacraments and the Word. But the godliness of such semi-prelatists is in spite of, and not because of, the scheme, which is essentially Pagan and not Christian. What a bait this dogma offers to the ambition of one like Simon Magus, greedy of the power of priestcraft, need not be explained. It is not charged that every prelatist adopts the delusion from this damnable motive; many doubtless lean to it from the unconscious prompting of self-importance. It is a fine thing, when a poor mortal can persuade himself that he is the essential channel of eternal life to his fellow, the "proxy" of the Son of God and king of heaven. The major part of the nominal Christian world has gone astray after this baptized paganism, from motives which are natural to sinful beings. They are instinctive superstition—one of the regular consequences of man's fall and apostasy—his unbelieving, sensuous nature, craving, like all other forms of idolatry, the palpable and material as the object of its exercises, and the intense longing of the sinful soul, remorseful and still enamoured of its sin, for some palpable mode of reconciliation without hearty, inward repentance and mortification of sin. As long as men are wicked, superstitious, conscious of guilt and in love with sin, the prelatist scheme will continue to have abundance of followers.

The rival doctrine of the application of redemption is summed up in the words of our Saviour, "Sanctify them through thy truth: Thy word is truth." Or, of the Apostle: "It pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. i: 20). "So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. x: 4-17). Or, of the Evangelist, (Jno. i: 12) "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power (*ἐξουσία*) to become the sons of God; even to them which believed on His name." Or, of Eph. iii: 17. "Christ dwells in your hearts by faith." Or, of 1 Jno. v: 11, 12. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath (*ἔχει* holds to) the Son, hath the life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." We learn by the previous chapters, that the "holding" of the

Son is simply faith. To exhaust the Bible-proofs of this view would be to repeat a large part of both Testaments. Ps. xix : 7-10 ; cxix : 9, 93, 98, 104, 130 ; Prov. iv : 13 ; Isaiah xxxiii : 6 ; liii : 11 ; Jer. iii : 15 ; Hos. iv : 6 ; Hab. ii : 14 ; 1 Jno. v : 1 ; 1 Pet. i : 23 ; Luke viii : 11 ; 1 Cor. iv : 15 ; Jno. viii : 32 ; v : 24 ; xv : 3 ; Jas. i : 18 ; Acts xiii : 26 ; xx : 32. The prelatial view of sacramental grace conflicts with the whole tenour of Scripture. This constantly teaches, that the purchased redemption is applied by the Holy Ghost, through Gospel truth intelligently believed and embraced, without other conditions or *media* : that hence, all preachers, even inspired Apostles, are only "ministers by whom we believed:" that Christ is the only priest in the universe : that the sacraments are only "means of grace" doing good generally like sound preaching : and that Christ reserves the administering of them to the ministers, not on any hierarchical or sacerdotal ground, but simply on grounds of *εὐραξία* and didactic propriety.

Now our refutation takes this form : First, that the whole prelatial structure rests on the assumption that whatever is said about the laying on of the Apostles' hands to confer the Holy Ghost, relates to ordination to clerical office. Second: that this reference is a mere blunder, an utter perversion of the Scriptures.

1. As a matter of fact, this unwarranted confusion does present the sole scriptural basis to which prelacy pretends. This we prove by the Romish standards. Rom. Cat. pt. 2, ch. vii, qu. 25, asserting that the administration of the "sacrament of orders" belongs to the bishop, cites Acts vi : 5, 6 ; xiv : 22. 2 Tim. i : 6. An examination of these texts (in the proper place) will show that the very blunder charged is made—Council of Trent, Sess. 23d, *De Ordine*. "The Sacred Scriptures show—that the power of consecrating, sacrificing and distributing His body and blood, and also of remitting sins, has been delivered to the apostles and their successors in the priesthood." § iii. "Grace is conferred in holy orders." Canon iv. "If anybody says that the Holy Ghost is not given by holy orders, and that accordingly the bishops have no ground to say (to the recipient) "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" or that the character is not impressed through this sacrament, etc. let him be accursed." That the grace supposed to be received in orders is not that of sanctification and redemption, is clear from Rome's assertion, that the Canonical priest may, like Judas, wholly lack this. The grace in orders must then be the other; the miracle working *χάρισμα*.

The Anglican Church bases its claim, so far as it is sacramentarian, on the same confusion, abusing the same texts. In the form for ordination, the prelate, in laying on hands, says; "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a bishop in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the

imposition of our hands," &c. So, the Scripture here alluded to, John xx :21, is the one directed to be read before the consecration; and the words which follow are precisely those of 2 Tim. i :6. The Anglican Church has learned her lessons from Rome well. The prelatist expositors disclose the same foundation for the sacramentarian doctrine. Theophylect, on 2 Tim. i :6, gives, as the equivalent of the words, *διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν μου*, this gloss: *Τοῦτ' ἔστι ὅτε σε ἐχειροτόνουσιν ἐπίσκοπον*—thus confounding the appointment to clerical office, with an apostle's bestowal of spiritual gifts. Chrysostom, on Acts vi :8, says: "This man (Stephen) derived a larger grace. But before his ordination he wrought no signs, but only after he was manifested. This was designed to teach them, that grace alone was not sufficient; but that ordination is requisite, in order that the access of the spirit may take place." Dr. Hammond (*Parainesis, Quere. 5th*) "*χειροθεσία* is answerable to that imposition of hands in ordination, so often mentioned in the New Testament—as generally, when by that laying on of hands, it is said they received the Holy Ghost: where the Holy Ghost contains all the *χαρίσματα* required for the pastoral function, and also signifies power from on high," &c. Hear him again: "Of this ceremony thus used" (meaning ordination to the clerical office), several mentions there are. First, Acts viii : 17, where, after Philip the deacon had preached and baptized in Samaria, Peter and John the Apostles came from Jerusalem to perfect the work, and laid hands on them [not on all that were baptized, but on some special person whom they thought meet] and they received the Holy Ghost." Dr. Hammond was high authority with prelatists.

Another evidence of the fatal confusion, which is the basis of their whole scheme, involving the whole body of prelatists, is their own invention of the word, "Simony," to describe the procurement of "orders" by money. This term is confessedly taken from Simon Magus, of Acts viii : and of course it is meant to describe the sin which he proposed to commit, verses 18, 19. Note that the thing Simon craved was not the ability to speak with tongues, or work some such miraculous sign. Possibly he had already received this: as a reprobate Judas had. He desired the ability to confer this power on others. And this criminal proposal, so perfectly defined by Simon's own words, is precisely the thing selected by Rome and the Anglican Church, to denominate the sin of procuring clerical orders by money. The disclosure is complete. Prelacy deems that the thing Peter and John had been doing in Samaria, and the thing Simon wished to do, was transmitting the Apostolic succession by ordination.

It is thus proved, that the sole basis of Scripture which prelacy has to offer is the mistaken notion, that the "laying on of hands," by which "the Holy Ghost was given," was prelatist

ordination. The theory is, that the bishop (Apostle) thus confers a supernatural charism on the priest; by virtue of which the latter works the real presence in the eucharist and the "sacrifice of the altar," remits sin, and cleanses the infant's soul with baptismal water, precisely in the same generic mode in which the primitive disciple, endued with a *χάρισμα*, wrought a miracle.

II. But we complete the utter destruction of the scheme by proving that their conception of this *χειροθεσία* is a blunder, and a baseless folly. To effect this, we first describe the true understanding, and then establish it. We assert that this laying on of hands to confer the Holy Ghost was not ordination at all, and did not introduce its recipients into a clerical order, or make them less laymen than before. It was the bestowal of an extraordinary power, for a purely temporal purpose; to demonstrate to unbelievers the divine claim of the new dispensation. See I Cor. xiv : 22, with 14, 19; Mark xvi : 15-18; Acts iv : 29, 30; v : 12; Heb. ii : 4, and such like texts. The fact of Christ's resurrection is the corner-stone of the Gospel-evidence. This fact was to be established by the witness of twelve men. An unbelieving world was invited to commit its spiritual destiny to the "say-so" of twelve men, strangers and obscure. It was absolutely essential that God should sustain their witness by some supernatural attestations. See again, Mark xvi : 18; Acts ii : 32, 33. But twelve men could not preach everywhere; whence it was at first equally important that others should be armed with these divine "signs." Through what channel might these other evangelists best receive the power to emit them? The answer displays clearly the consistency of our exposition: It was most suitable that the power in others should come through the twelve witnesses; because thus the "signs" exhibited, reflected back an immediate attestation on their truth. Thus, let us represent to ourselves a child of Cornelius the Centurion, exercising gifts unquestionably supernatural before pagans in Cæsarea. This proves that God has here intervened. But for what end? That boy can be no eye-witness to Christ's resurrection; and he does not claim to be: for he did not see it, and he was not acquainted with Jesus' person and features. But he can say, that he derived his power from the witness, Peter; and, Peter assured him, direct from a risen Christ. Just so far, then, as spectators verify the supernatural character of that boy's performances, they are a divine attestation to Peter's word concerning the resurrection. So Timothy's *χαρίσματα* were related to the witnessing of Paul, who conferred them. In brief: it was proper that others' ability to exhibit "signs" should proceed visibly from the Apostles, because the use of the signs was to sustain the testimony of the twelve. Hence the rule in the Apostolic day, which the acute Simon so clearly perceived; that it was "through laying on of

the Apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given." And I assert that there is not a case in the New Testament, where any other than an Apostle's hand was employed to confer the Holy Ghost, if any human agency was employed. Search and see. Hence it follows, that since the death of the original twelve, there has never been a human being in the Church who was able to give this gift.

For, the necessity was temporary. After the death of the Apostles, the civilized world was dotted over with churches. The Canon of Scripture was complete. The unbelieving world was furnished with another adequate line of evidence (which has been deepening to our day) in souls sanctified and pagan society purified. The charismatic signs ceased because they were no longer essential. See Luke xvi : 31. The world is now in such relation to the Scripture testimony, as was the Jew of Christ's day.

Now, we claim a powerful and a sufficient proof of the correctness of this theory, in its satisfying consistency. It reconciles everything in the Scripture teachings and history. We claim that it tallies exactly with Paul's prediction of the cessation of the charismatic powers, in 1 Cor. xiii : 8. It explains exactly the date and mode of the cessation of genuine miracles out of the Church. Church historians know how anxiously miracles were claimed by the Fathers down to the 4th (and indeed the present) century, and the obscurity in which the facts in the 2nd and 3rd centuries are involved. Well : on our view, real miracles might have continued just one generation after the Twelve. John, the aged, might have conferred the power on some young evangelist, the year of the former's death. The Church would be naturally reluctant to surrender the splendid endowment. The discrimination between surprising, and truly supernatural events, was crude. The age of "pious frauds" was at hand. Thus, as the genuine miracles faded out, the spurious had their day.

Again : that this laying on of hands was not ordination and did not confer orders at all, and had nothing to do with an apostolic succession, is proved beyond all question, by these points. Paul ordains that a "neophyte" must not be permitted to receive orders. But this endowment was bestowed immediately after baptism ; as in Acts viii : 15, 16 ; x : 44, 45 ; xix : 6. Soundness in the faith was an absolute requisite to ordination. 1 Tim. ch. iii. These charisms were exercised by unbelievers. 1 Cor. ch. xiii. Again, apostles forbade women to receive orders : these powers were enjoyed by women, and by children. Acts. xxi : 9 : x : 44

Once more : that these endowments were not wrought by ordination is proved by the scriptural rule of election of all deacons and ministers, by the brotherhood, in order to their ordination. This usage proves that the ceremony of orders

did not confer qualification, but only recognized its possession by the candidates; because its prior possession by them furnished to the brotherhood the sole criterion by which they were to judge the candidates suitable persons to vote for. It is on this principle, that the instructions of Acts vi:2-6; 1 Tim. iii., and Titus i:5-9, are given. Let this point be pondered.

But when we proceed to the examination of the places claimed by the Prelatists, and the bestowal of the Holy Ghost by putting on of apostles' hands, it can be proved exegetically that each place falls under our theory. We have seen that the main place, perverted by Rome and the Anglican Church, is Jno. xx:21, 22. To the Protestant, these words are plain enough. Christ is God-man, Redeemer, High Priest, Sacrifice, Advocate and King to believers. These offices He devolves on nobody, but holds them always. He condescends, however, to be "sent" of His Father, in the humble office of preacher in the Church. This office He now devolves on the Twelve. They, as His ministers, are to teach men the terms of pardon: for "who can forgive sin but God only?" But as they were to be inspired, their teachings of the terms would be authoritative and binding. This needed inspiration had been already promised. Jno. xvi:13; and so had the miraculous attestations which would be requisite. Acts i:4, 5. But the time was now so near at hand, that Christ renews the promise in the significant act of Jno. xx:22. This gift of the Holy Ghost was no other than that realized at Pentecost. Acts ii:4. The proofs are, 1. That Christ already recognized the Eleven as endued with that form of the Holy Ghost's power which works faith, repentance, and salvation. See and compare Matt. xxvi:75; Luke xxii:31, 32; Jno. xxi:15. Hence, the form promised in that place must have been the only other known in Scripture; that namely, which wrought "signs." 2. Our Lord's words Acts i:4, 5, prove it. "Wait," saith He, "for the promise of the Father which ye have heard of me." Heard of Him, where? Evidently in John xx:21, 22. The fulfilment was to be "not many days hence." This fixes it as the spiritual effusion of Pentecost. But now the anti-prelatic demonstration is perfect; for notoriously, the thing the Holy Ghost enabled the apostles to do at Pentecost was not "the consecration of priests," or the transmitting of an apostolic succession; but the exhibition of miracles to attest the resurrection.

Peter's own explanation of the Pentecostal endowment gives us another demonstration against the prelatic theory. He tells the multitude (Acts ii:14-36. See especially his main proposition in verse 36th). This is the New Dispensation of the Messiah. (Proposition) Proved by two signs; (a.) The spiritual effusions promised in Joel and such like places. (b.) The resurrection of the sacrificed Messiah. Now the structure of this inspired argument is ruinous to the Prelatist in (at least) two

points. I. v. 33. The spiritual results were to be palpable to the senses "this which ye now see and hear." But no Prelatist pretends that the "grace in holy orders" is visible and audible. The bestowal was one of visible, sensible "signs," the very one, and the only one relevant to the demonstration. 2. Verses 17, 18. The spiritual endowment was one which would fall on children and females. But neither of these, according to scripture, can receive ordination. So that the prelatist theory is again absolutely excluded.

Let us now proceed to Acts vi: 3-8, because this is one of the places, on which Prelacy builds chiefly. It has been proved that Stephen's and Philip's possession of the *χάρισμα* of Miracles was the prerequisite, not the consequence, of their election and ordination to diaconal office. But in I Tim. iii: 8, to end, where this office is expressly defined, we hear of no such qualification or function. It is not a part of the regular, permanent diaconal endowment. But the Pentecostal Church in Jerusalem was adorned with many instances doubtless among its laymen, women and children (Acts ii: 17, 18), of this gift of "signs," as well as among its ministers. The juncture demanding the separate development of the diaconal office, was critical. The spirit of faction was already awake between the Christians of Hebrew and of Hellenistic blood. The duty was going to be a nice and delicate one. Hence the Apostles' advise that the men first chosen for it be not only commended to the whole brotherhood by their moral character, but by the seal of this splendid gift. We repeat: this endowment was the prerequisite to their appointment, not the consequence of it. It was, expressly an appointment to "serve tables." And it cannot be argued that still Stephen and Philip had received this *χάρισμα* of the Spirit, if at some previous time, yet by some ordaining act to a lower clerical grade; because the diaconal was then the lowest grade known to the Church. Thus their argument is fatally hedged out at every point.

In Acts viii: 15, etc., "Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles' hands, the Holy Ghost was given." The endowment was, then, a visible one. But according to Prelatists, the grace in "holy orders" is invisible (so invisible indeed, to the sober senses of Protestants, as to be wholly imaginary!) Hence, this case was not one of ordination at all, or of apostolic succession. So, when the Holy Ghost was poured out on the Gentiles, in Cornelius' house (Acts x: 46), they of the circumcision "heard them speak with tongues." So, when Paul laid hands on the Ephesian converts, Acts xix: 6, "the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied." Here again the result was palpable. And that this was not a case of ordination at all, is proved also by the fact, that the endowment was given to all the little company, which was so small that it included but twelve males. (Verse 7.)

In 1 Cor. Chaps. xii. to xiv., the discussion of this *χάρισμα* is so explicit and full, as to leave nothing to be desired. The Apostle speaks of it, not as a clerical endowment, but a popular. He expressly says that its object is to be a sign to unbelievers. He expressly foretells its utter vanishing out of the Church after a time, which our experience has long verified. But ordination and the ministry are permanent.

Let us proceed, now, to the case of Timothy, 1 Tim. iv: 14; and 2 Tim. i: 6; because Prelatists suppose that here we have the clearest instance of an ordination conferring the Holy Spirit. But let us see: If these references are only to Timothy's ordination, then it was a presbyterial ordination ("by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery"), and thus the prelatist scheme is ruined. But if the two tests do not describe one and the same transaction, then the proof is gone that ordination by prelate imparted the Holy Ghost to Timothy; because, if two transactions are alluded to, the Holy Ghost may have been imparted by the other. And 2. This was doubtless the case. The "presbytery" ordained Timothy to the ministry, the Holy Spirit having moved some prophetic person to advise it, as in the case of Barnabas and Saul. Acts xiii: 2. But the Apostle ("who was also a presbyter." See 1 Pet. v: 1,) acting by his apostolic power, added some *χάρισμα* of "signs," to assist his "beloved son in the ministry" in convincing unbelievers. This is our solution: it is evinced by its perfect correspondence with the history in Acts xvi. On this solution, Timothy's *χάρισμα* was derived, not from his ordination, but from a distinct action. Let the Prelatist reject this, and he inevitably falls back into the doctrine of presbyterial ordination abhorred by him. 3. Timothy's qualification for the ministry was not conferred by the ordaining act, but recognized in it as pre-existing in him. For Paul himself ascribes much of this qualification to the instructions of his mother and grandmother, 2 Tim. i: 5; iii: 14-17; and the whole of it, instrumentally, to the inspired Scriptures. He here declares that by the instructions of the Scriptures, the minister of the gospel is "qualified and thoroughly equipped," (*ἀρτιος ἐξερτισμένος*) for his work. This leaves nothing for the prelate's hands to do! From this fatal answer the Prelatist has no escape, except to attempt to render the term "man of God," believer, instead of minister. But this is absurd, being totally against the old Testament usage, against Paul's usage, who has always his own distinctive terms, *πιστός*, *ἄγιος*, *ἀδελφός*, for believers; and against his express precedent in the First Epistle, to Tim. vi: 11; where "man of God" unquestionably means minister.

We have thus dealt with the cases on which the Prelatist chiefly builds, and have wrested them from him. The student can examine for himself all the other cases of *χειροθεσία* in the New Testament, in the same way. It is thus evinced that

the whole basis of this scheme, of Apostolic Succession and sacramental grace, is a blunder and a confusion.

Other heads of argument against this figment might be expanded; but they would lead us aside from the doctrine of the sacrament, which is our present object. There can be no apostolic succession, because there could not be an Apostle in the earth, since the death of John. It is impossible that any one but a cotemporary of Jesus, personally acquainted with His features, and personally cognizant of His resurrection, should be an Apostle. There cannot be any apostolic succession, again, because there is nothing to succeed to. Every Prelatist who understands himself says, the thing succeeded to is priesthood. But there has not been any priesthood on earth, and could not be any, for eighteen hundred years. The figment has been refuted again, by showing that Prelacy has no continuous succession of any kind in its ministry. It has been broken fatally a hundred times, by heresy, or atheism, or impiety, or simony, or anarchy. Last: the whole scheme is refuted by the substantial identity which Scripture asserts between the redemption of the new dispensation, and the old. Under the old, redemption was certainly not applied by sacramental grace. Rom. ii: 26-29; iv: 11, 12. But the argument of 1 Cor. ch. x., teaches that it is no more so under the New Testament. (The student may find these views expanded, in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, January 1876 p. i.)

The high prelatist scheme of sacramental efficiency is essentially involved in that of the apostolic succession and the "grace of orders." Hence, the doctrine of the sacraments cannot be effectually cleared up here, without an understanding of the latter. Its discussion verges towards another department of sacred science, that of Church government. But the introduction of this argument will be excused on account of the insoluble connection.