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A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bib-sacra\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php)

## ARTICLE VI.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH.BY THE RIGHT REV. GEORGE BURGESS, D.D., BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF  
MAINE.*This Church Historically, not Doctrinally Distinguished.*

THE position of the Protestant Episcopal Church is not the result of any peculiarity of doctrine. It is simply historical. That church in the United States, as in the British provinces, is the continuance and expansion of the Church of England. The Church of England is, in its complete doctrine and symbols, the same body which it became at the Reformation under Edward the Sixth and Elizabeth. In its ritual, some small changes have since been introduced; but nothing, either in the British or in the American revisions, has at all varied the substance of its instructions or of its forms of worship.

*Its Two Distinctive Features.*

The position of the Episcopal Church is not even that of a body which, after careful deliberation, has seen fit to adopt the episcopal regimen or order, and the use of a prescribed liturgy. Many of its members in our country have become such through an act of choice, resting on simple conviction that these features of its system are both strictly primitive and eminently expedient. But the church itself has not *adopted* these features, but only *retained* them from its earliest ages. The old Saxon Church and the older British Church were both Episcopal; the former, from its beginning with Austin, the latter from its first clear appearance in the third century. No period is known in the history of ancient British Christianity when its worship was not liturgical. It was only by continuance, not by any action, that the

English Church at the Reformation was what it still is in these two great principles, by which it is now distinguished from so many other Protestant communions — the principles of an episcopal government, transmitted by the imposition of hands, in unbroken succession, and of a fixed form of common prayer.

*Its Doctrine that of the Reformation.*

At the Reformation, the ancient ritual was revised, reformed, greatly modified in all respects, and, so far as any portions of the previous liturgies were retained, they were, as a first step, translated into the English language. The doctrine of the Church of England became, from necessity, the same in substance with that of all the other churches which shared in the Reformation, and which appealed to the supreme authority of the holy scriptures with entire submission. From these scriptures, thus consulted, only one doctrinal system could proceed; that which was thence transcribed into all the Protestant confessions. Where they differed, pious and learned men, obedient students of the word of God, could differ.

The doctrine of the Church of England took the form of the Thirty-nine Articles, in addition to the three Creeds, — the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian. If the American Episcopal Church has dropped the last of the three, it is not because any of its definitions are rejected, but only because the harshness of its denunciations required constant explanation, which would not always satisfy. The Articles are unlike the other Reformed confessions, only in being more guarded and less decisive in those points which have been popularly designated from the name and authority of Calvin. When, in the latter part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, an attempt was made to introduce a strict system of Calvinistic doctrine on these points, through the "Lambeth Articles," it had the highest prelatial sanction, but it fell to the ground. A similar attempt in the Church of Ireland, under the guidance of Usher, ha

result. When the Arminian controversy arose, early in the seventeenth century, delegates from the Church of England, sent by royal authority, were present at the Council of Dort, and concurred in its predestinarian decisions; but it was quite in vain. The original largeness of the English confession and liturgy refused all new limitations; the literal and grammatical sense to which the clergy were bound by injunction, permitted the more Arminian construction; and it became the predominating, but never the exclusive, type of episcopalian divinity. Both the Calvinism and the Arminianism of the Anglican Church, too, have always been necessarily modified by the influence and requisitions of a ritual and catechism which recognized the sacraments as pledges and means of spiritual grace, in language so decisive and so large; which are filled with the conception of "one Catholic and Apostolic Church;" and which assert, without qualification, the universality of the atonement.

*Breadth of its Doctrinal Basis.*

From this view of the Episcopal Church, it results that it could very well embrace, as it has done, a considerable diversity of sentiment, up to a certain line; while at that line it would be found strictly and uniformly rigorous. Recognizing itself as historically the church of the Anglican or British race, it must make room within its fold for all classes of men who hold the faith of Christ. It is not at liberty to bid any of them go and join some body of Christians whose principles may give them better satisfaction. It must have room for such diversities as are consistent with the maintenance of the faith of Christ in substantial purity.

With such a statement it may seem at variance that the use of a prescribed form of prayer should be required from all ministers and all congregations. That form was thus settled for a national church, which must have some rules of some kind for its worship. The Church of England adopted these; for which it never claimed any other authority than that which every such church must possess and may ex-

ercise. It does undoubtedly assert the principle of forms as sanctioned by the highest authority — that of scripture and of the Son of God; but it does not denounce all other modes of worship; nor does it expect or seek for its own liturgy an universal acceptance or an unalterable uniformity. The common prayer can be changed as far as at any time the church may hold expedient; and the church, without any violation of its principles, could allow any congregations to adopt other forms, written or extemporaneous. Whether a different administration in this respect might, in the seventeenth century, have prevented any part of the great separation of the Nonconformists may be much doubted; but it would not have involved any relinquishment of any necessary part of the episcopal system.

The very confession of the necessity of diocesan episcopacy, or of a ministerial succession from the apostles, is no positive requisition, either from clergymen or from laymen. While the church preserves its own succession with care, and practically yields to its episcopate the ancient authority, it simply asserts that this order, like the two others, has been in the church of Christ from the days of the apostles, and declares that therefore none but an episcopally ordained ministry shall be premitted within its fold. It is no article of faith imposed upon the conscience, but only the statement of a historical fact and of a rule for self-preservation. Very various degrees and kinds of conviction may be united under the one acknowledgment that since the days when the Epistles to Timothy and Titus were written, there have been not only elders in the churches, but also those who were to ordain elders.

#### *Its Actual Comprehensiveness.*

Accordingly, the large roof of the Anglican Church has sheltered classes of thinkers and modes of ecclesiastical activity differing more widely than some sects differ from each other, who have never met in council or communion. It covered all the Puritan clergy up to a c

career of each; and the point at which they went out was not marked by any clear and sudden change of belief. The Methodists of both schools found no cause for withdrawal in the doctrines or the worship under which they had originated their movements; never in fact renouncing either, and never cut off by any act of direct exclusion. The Romanizers of our generation went out, one by one, at the limit at which their conscience and the general opinion pointed to the impossibility of honest union with a Protestant church; and not till then. The recent band of Neologists, who flaunted to the breeze the "Essays and Reviews" as the standard of their revolt, still contest the ground, though sure to yield to a like necessity, more than to the slow and stunted decisions of law.

Would it have been better that separation should have been more obvious, or more immediately compulsory? The Episcopal Church holds separation to be a greater evil than any variety of interpretation or doctrine which does not unsettle the foundations of the faith. If it be wrong in this, there is a grandeur in the error, and it saves from a multitude of disasters. But in such a communion there must be schools which are broadly distinct; and there must also be, in the nature of things, a scale which no one can graduate, along which all varieties and approximations and unconsistencies of thought and view possible between the utmost limits that are allowable, shall actually be found to exist together. The logical thinker strives to classify; but the diversities of minds, often governed by other causes than strict consistency of reasoning, refuse to be thus arranged. So far, too, as the difference may be one of degree, all classification, except the most vague, must be deceitful. Who shall divide an army into the tall and the short and the men of middle stature? The extremes are clear enough; but as you approach the centre, where shall the line be drawn? This difficulty is much to be pondered when we attempt to speak of different currents of opinion which have presided in the Episcopal Church of Britain and America.

everywhere, more or less, in inquiries of such a kind; but evidently the tendency to fall into clear and well-defined parties is much diminished where one strong bond of outward unity is acknowledged, along with the right to great freedom of judgment and action.

#### *Condition at the Reformation.*

The Reformation found the English Church devoted to the whole mass of mediæval religion. Full forty years, an entire generation, were interposed between the beginning and the consummation of the revolution in the mind of the people. The process was gradual and was interrupted, though thorough in the end. At every step some hearts could pause and linger; but the immense majority were borne on, while some remained from the beginning unmoved. Among a large body of clergy, participating in a change which was so much under the guidance of the civil government, and so much opposed to the impulse of the popular feeling, there must have been those who never very heartily abandoned all the errors which they had early been taught to receive. Very few of the clergy who had said mass under Mary retired under Elizabeth, if we except the bishops. But these clergy were generally men of little learning, and not of great elevation of character; and if they entered not warmly into the change, they were silent. No controversy was left within the church between Romanists and Protestants; the expulsion of Popery was complete.

#### *Influence of Puritanism.*

From the beginning, however, the elements of the Puritan discussion were in existence. It involved, on one side or the other, not only the degree in which ecclesiastical arrangements might be subordinated to the civil authority, the principle of exacting a special direction from the text of scripture for every usage, and the predisposition to simplicity in worship and austerity of manners, but also the deference due to the early church; the preservation of th

ments, not without power, in all ages of the church; the basis of the episcopate; and the sterner features of the doctrinal system of Augustine or Calvin. On all these topics there were two parties throughout the half century of the reign of Elizabeth; and the Puritan side, had it been at full liberty to declare itself, would very probably have rejected Episcopacy, or have reduced it nearly to Presbyterianism, and would gradually have left the Common Prayer behind. The more advanced Puritans were, in fact, no representatives of the Episcopal Church, with which they were only connected by the necessity of their birth and citizenship.

But they had a double influence on its doctrine. They prevented the slightest appearance of any backward tendency towards Rome, which they would have been so eager to denounce and to stifle. They called forth, however, a spirit of unavoidable opposition to their own encroachments, and compelled the advocates of the church as it was to lay well their foundations. Thus a race of divines arose, like Hooker, Andrews, Bilson, Field, and Jackson, who, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, brought all the support of patristic learning to the cause of the Anglican episcopacy, alike against the Pope and against the Genevan system of church organization. The labors of these men may be regarded as the commencement of what may be termed distinctively "Church of England Divinity," as separated from that which the Church of England has in common with the Lutherans, with the Reformed churches of the Continent or of Scotland, and with the Nonconformists.

#### *Development of Arminianism.*

A step onward brings us to the school of Laud. It was not distinguished by any peculiarity of doctrine, but only by a marked stress on the external solemnities of religion, and a determination to enforce all rules of ecclesiastical order. In the result of this effort, prosecuted as it was in connection with the unfortunate struggle of Charles the First against the Commons of England, the Puritan ele-

ment went forth ; but, like Samson, carrying with it the gates of the city. The civil war sealed the separation. Thenceforward, whatever discussions might arise within the church were all its own, and must be held to modify fairly its actual teaching and character.

As soon, therefore, as it was once more established, with its episcopacy and its liturgy, we begin to discover the germs of new controversies. The Arminian opinions had already found much acceptance. Although the Church of England had been represented at the Synod of Dort, its clergy acquiesced not at all in the determination of that assembly ; and the bishops who were there were among the last of their order who have written upon the side which was there triumphant. The Calvinism of the church grew fainter till it scarcely struggled. It was not so much overcome by direct assaults, as supplanted through the more ecclesiastical spirit which predominated at the restoration. For a century after, its voice was almost unheard, except along with the irregularities of Whitefield, and then it was much more than overbalanced by the Arminianism of Wesley. Within the last century it has been revived in the writings of many pious men, but can scarcely be viewed as having very largely affected the prevalent teaching of Episcopalians, either in Great Britain or in America.

#### *High and Low Church.*

The necessity for those differences which made the names of High and Low Church historical, lies partly in the essential diversities of human temperaments. There are high and low men on all questions. Some push all principles to their logical results ; others endeavor to combine truths which seem to move in opposite directions. In the hands of one, all doctrine becomes denunciatory ; in the hands of another, all becomes comprehensive and conciliatory. It is not that either tendency is purely good or evil ; strictness and gentleness are alike duties ; but in Christian men here below they will never be perfectly harmonized.

The stronger development of one or the other will under certain circumstances, constitute schools, and then even parties. Around these men will cluster, impelled not always by simple choice, nor always marked by the same character from which the diversity began; but ruled by education, prejudice, necessity, or any accident of position. Other questions become associated with those of the first separation; all having usually some bond of internal alliance, but not always that which is most readily supposed.

The stress, or want of stress, on the constitution of the church and its ministry; on the episcopate; on the episcopal succession; on the necessity of the sacraments; on their efficacy; on the authority of the primitive church and its councils; on catholic consent; on ritual observances; on the superior fitness of forms of prayer, on the importance of order in the minuter matters of worship; and on ecclesiastical obedience everywhere, is the distinctive character of High and Low Church worship. It is a thing of degree, rather than a contradiction. As over against most of the non-episcopal churches of our land, all Churchmen are High Churchmen. As over against the Papal system, all are Low Churchmen.

#### *Moderation of the Church Itself.*

The Protestant Episcopal Church, in its collective character has never assumed the highest ground on any of these questions. It has legislated for itself without denouncing or condemning those who claimed for themselves like liberty. It cannot be otherwise than episcopal; it cannot recognize within itself any other ordination; for this it received from the apostolic days. But it makes no new rule; it only maintains its own universal practice. It insists that the sacraments are not mere signs without effect, or mere acts of profession; but it declares this effect to be spiritual, and limited to those who receive them with faith, and worthily. It has never made the validity of the sacraments depend on the hands by which they were administered. It founds its

doctrine simply on the holy scriptures; receives the creeds because they accord with the scriptures; and, over and over again, binds its ministers to teach nothing as the necessary faith which may not be proved by the scriptures. It imposes its fixed forms of prayer for the sake of uniformity and solemnity and right teaching, in its public services; but denounces not the use of variable forms, or of extemporaneous devotions, elsewhere. Its ritualistic order, beyond the most general features, is matter of usage rather than of rule and prescription. Its government, in both countries, has exposed itself, ever since the days of Laud, at least, if not even then, much more to the imputation of forbearance carried to the verge of remissness than of anything like high-handed assumption, met by servile submission. Both in its laws and in its practice, the church has ever borne itself with a moderation which might bring reproach, but could not well be denied.

#### *The Latitudinarian Tendency.*

The Latitudinarian current of opinion in the Church of England, which is not to be confounded with the simply Low Church opinions, began with the reaction against the rigor, both of the school of Laud on one side, and on the other of the Puritans. It has embraced great names, Chillingworth, Tillotson, Clarke, Watson, Paley, Arnold, Milman, Whately; but they have always been exceptional, and, from the nature of the case, have but the authority of individual thinkers. In our day, this type of doctrine and sentiment, has been invested with the title of Broad Church, which in our English form still expresses its tendency to give, in all directions, a certain latitude to opinion, doctrinal, speculative, ecclesiastical, and practical. It has not been accustomed to advance specific tenets, but has, in one instance and another, approached too often towards the borders of perilous error, and then recoiled. It is not much known in America.

*The Evangelical School.*

The Evangelical movement had its beginning when Methodism undertook the revival of the doctrine and spirit of the Reformers. Those who shared the ardent wish for such a return to a warmer and more masculine religion, and at the same time could not abandon the order and sobriety of the church, were known only as persons claiming to preach with emphasis and zeal the distinctive truths of the gospel. Insisting thus on these, they called themselves, and were called, Evangelical. But they had no new or peculiar principle. They appealed back to the Articles, and to the writings of the great martyrs of their church, and identified their gospel with that of the Reformation.

*The Tractarian Movement.*

The Tractarian movement had nearly the same relation to the theology of the church in the early centuries after the apostles. Its standard was there; the interpretation and the practice, as well as the faith, of the ages of the great councils. It was a reaction, in part from the somewhat narrowed and unstudious spirit which increasing prosperity had nourished in the Evangelical school; and in part from the worldly temper which saw in the church a mere "establishment." It gathered up the relics of the most patristical divinity which had at any time been found in the Church of England. It formed a system not without attractiveness for minds of a deeper cast, as well as for such as delighted in a minute ritual and much symbolism. But it was only too clear that the arguments for such a system could not proceed beyond the attempt to display it as an intended development of the apostolic gospel, and not that original gospel itself. The transition from the writings of the apostles to those of this school was as if one stepped from the open sunlight, bathing the hills and fields, into a Gothic porch, with windows "richly dight," but shutting out the day.

*Unity amidst Diversity.*

All these movements and controversies, and many of a subordinate character, have been able to exist, and to exist together, in the English Episcopal Church, without rending it asunder; not because it is a strong establishment, but because its historical foundation, its identity with the apostolic church first planted in the land, is, for those who believe it, an almost inseparable bond. It is not merely the episcopate, nor merely the three orders of the ministry, which could constitute this. It is, that along with these the apostolic religion, the works, the sacraments, the fellowship of the saints, the creed, the great liturgical offices, the whole frame of Christianity, — personal, social, civil, ecclesiastical, — all have come down, and that the church is regarded by its members as an actual institution of the Saviour, which they have no right to dismember. In it they may differ for a time; but in it they must remain; and all healing and humanizing influences will have room and opportunity.

*The Episcopate.*

The Episcopal Church holds fast its episcopate, and the regular succession by which it has been received from the first ages, and so from the apostles, as the natural, the providential, the ordained means of an orderly, external union and communion, extending throughout the church of all generations. It remembers that this was the tie in those days when the Catholic Church was most united, before the rise of the Papacy, before the division of the East and West, before Constantine or any general council. It sees no prospect of future union except as this tie is preserved. Its scholars, not the least distinguished in Christendom, have seen no cause to suspect that this thread of succession has ever been broken. The general preservation of such an episcopate, its primitive antiquity, its universality in the early days, its hold on the very lifetime of the apostles, are not to be questioned; and the objection

to any imparity among ministers runs equally against the office of the apostles, whom the Lord set over all the churches. Even while they were of such a spirit as to discuss with warmth which of them should be the greatest, he who knew what was in man still gave them their pre-eminence; nor did they, in their turn, leave the churches without men who should "have the rule over them." Elders and bishops are apostolic names; and if undistinguished from each other in the New Testament, yet received their distinctive allotment among those whose heads had bowed under the ordaining hands of the twelve and of the apostle Paul.

#### *The Liturgy.*

The Episcopal Church adheres to the ancient forms of prayer, and from time to time enlarges the store by essential and well-weighed accretions. That a preference should be given to forms of prayer, would seem to be sufficiently settled by the mode in which our Saviour, when he was desired by his disciples, "taught them to pray." The prayers of the church maintain, in the judgment of mankind, an almost undisputed supremacy, not only for their venerable antiquity in general, but also as models of doctrinal simplicity, majesty, and fervor. There is in them, confessedly, but the very smallest proportion of matter which any believer could hesitate to adopt; and the objections of the Puritan writers amaze the present generation. But these forms of worship are by no means essential to the existence of that unity which the episcopate perpetuates. It is perfectly conceivable that the usages of different communions, their extemporaneous devotions, prayer-meetings, classes, and whatsoever might have been held conducive to edification, should all be found in churches administered under one episcopal system.

#### *Summary of the Position of the Church.*

In the preparation of this Article, at the courteous request of the editors, it was impracticable or unprofitable to present a

summary of the *doctrines* of the Episcopal Church, because it has no distinctive scheme of doctrine dividing it from other communions of Protestants who adhere to the Nicene creed and to the baptism of infants. We could but end as we began : the position of the church is simply a history, rooted as deep as the first Christianity of Britain. If it ever seem inconsistent with that liberality of temper which merges denominational distinctions in its own all-reconciling desire for fellowship, let it be remembered that the church has forsaken none, has excluded none, that it is older than all, and that from it all are derived. Even where its numbers are small, its position is one which no reflecting man could wish to see abandoned or otherwise vacated ; and it is not arrogance if it still claims to be the ancient homestead and hearthstone of all Christians of English blood, and the only abode which is large enough, in its plan, to embrace them all.

#### *Actual Teaching of Ministers.*

But it may still be urged that in the actual teaching of the ministers of the church, and in the practical views of its members, there is material for more definite comment. It is desired to know what is indeed taught and thought concerning regeneration, concerning the qualifications for admission to the holy communion, concerning the state between death and the resurrection, and concerning the actual operations of the Holy Spirit in conversion and sanctification. These are the subjects on which the doctrine of the church is often, both by friends and objectors, placed over against that of many other Christians.

#### *Regeneration.*

“ Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” The Episcopal Church, with all antiquity, as well as with the whole current of modern interpretation, sees in these words a declaration of the necessity of a new inward life from

allusion to the rite of baptism. In the same manner, it is accustomed to read of the "washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." This divine connection between the sacrament which begins all ecclesiastical life and the doctrine of the spiritual birth, is not to be obliterated. Regeneration is simply the gift of God. It is the commencement of the new state, not through the act of him by whom it is received, but through the mere bestowal of life from above. Much may have preceded, and much may follow, in which the free action of the human being is indispensable; but the spiritual birth itself is no more to be attributed to his will than the natural. The comparison points only to the heavenly gift, and suggests nothing of the nature of repentance and conversion, in which he must be active.

In the fruits of the new life are found the evidences of the new birth. Without it that life could not have been realized. But those evidences will not determine the time of its commencement. Life may long exist, without attracting notice; and even in the case of natural birth, it is its full individuality, not its absolute origination, which is signified by the event of birth. Another human being is in the world; so much we see. Another Christian is in the church; of this also we take cognizance. If we must fix the point of time at which the man became man, it must be at his birth; and if we would fix in like manner the point of time at which the new man became alive there is no other but that which the Saviour instituted—the time of his baptism.

Regeneration is the bestowal of that grace through which the child of man becomes the child of God, by adoption into his spiritual family. When baptism is rightly received by one who repents and believes, this act of adoption is surely consummated and sealed; and without hesitation we say that it has taken place, and thank God for his grace. It is the only visible point with which the transition can be definitely connected; and the connection is one which is

authorized by more than human phraseology. The ordinance of baptism is, of course, not then viewed by itself, and as the mere "putting away of the filth of the flesh," but along with the inward change which has preceded it, and the new life by which it is to be followed, and as embracing "the answer of a good conscience." This is the normal, apostolic baptism of adult converts; and this would be termed regeneration with the consent of all intelligent Christians. It is the old, ecclesiastical use of terms from the beginning. Should it be the baptism of a hypocrite, or of any man destitute of real faith, the whole transaction would be but the outward part without the soul; and although it could never be repeated, it would be wholly unavailing to any new birth, except as afterwards the inward state of heart might be supplied, through which alone he could be prepared to receive any blessing from a sacrament.

Thus far no serious difference would betray itself in the views of Episcopalians on this subject; nor, if we except the preference for another use of the term regeneration, would the views of other Christians differ much from these. It is only when the subjects of the ordinance are infants that apprehensions begin to be felt, lest a vital truth should be sacrificed by the rash application of a sacred word. That children are welcomed by Christ, that all children who may be brought, are welcomed to his arms and blessing; that "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" that therefore they may rightly be baptized, whoever their parents may be, is the conviction of all churchmen. The baptism of a child must import, in substance, the same thing with the baptism of an adult, but certainly with a most important distinction. It is equally an admission into the sacramental fold of the church visible. It is equally the seal of all the promises of the new covenant. It is equally attended by the promise of the Holy Spirit; without this, it would be, not a sacrament, nor even a sacred ordinance, but a blank, unavailing ceremony. The difference is, and must be, that the unconscious child can only be understood as engaged to that as a

result which with the adult was a qualification; in other words, that the condition expressed or implied is in one case past, in the other future.

Can, then, the baptized infant be termed regenerate? The Episcopal Church thanks God that "he has been pleased to regenerate this infant with his Holy Spirit, to receive him for his own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into his holy church." It teaches the child, too, that in baptism he was "made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." This language is, of course, employed by all in a sacramental sense which imposes some qualification. But these qualifications are by different classes of divines more limited or extended, according to their sentiments on other questions in divinity.

By one class it is interpreted as the language of anticipation, of hypothesis, and of charity. In anticipation of the repentance and faith which in adult candidates for baptism are presupposed, and on the hypothesis that the child is indeed represented by the sponsors according to his future character and purposes, and in the charitable trust that he will be all which is promised in his behalf, he is pronounced already regenerate. As the promises, it is said, are necessarily hypothetical, so is the corresponding grace. To a second class this view of the transaction seems too dramatic and unreal, and they say, without hesitation, that every child received into the church of Christ through this ordinance is made partaker of some measure of divine grace, which is not only pledged, but given, and that this may justly and scripturally be termed regenerating grace, though not to the necessary exclusion of every other use of that term, and certainly not as if spiritual regeneration were a change not only begun but consummated then and there. This is probably, with some shades of variation, the prevailing sentiment. But a third class, the least numerous of the three, ascribe to the sacrament, as the ordinance of Christ, and through his grace, the conveyance of regenera-

ting grace, in its fullest extent, and without qualification ; so that the baptized child is indeed a new creature.

The celebrated case of Mr. Gorham, in England, seems to have owed its origin to the doctrines of personal election and of perseverance, as held by Mr. Gorham. He could not admit that any who would not finally be saved had ever been partakers, in any real way, of the gift of the Holy Ghost. The legal question, of course, was not at all whether his view was true or false, but only whether it was allowed to be held in the Church of England without molestation. Of the many who rejoiced at the decision in his favor, there were probably few who acquiesced entirely in his opinion. He did not deny regeneration in baptism, but limited it to the elect. With all except the strictest Calvinists it was quite as easy to believe that it took place always where the will opposed no obstacle, and therefore in all infants, as that it took place in any one instance. If one infant could receive the blessing, so might all, unless the way were barred by some secret decree.

#### *Preparation for the Sacraments.*

Whatever differences may exist in the interpretation, either of the doctrine of baptismal grace or of the language of the baptismal services, all teachers in the Episcopal Church teach, with one voice, that the nature of man since the fall is corrupt, and must be regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit. It is a truth so conspicuous throughout the Book of Common Prayer, that it enters into the inward life of all whose devotion is guided by the pages of that book, not as a mere proposition in divinity, but as the vital breath of all religion.

Repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ are distinctly impressed on the mind of every child trained up in the Episcopal Church, as required of every candidate for baptism in mature years, or for confirmation. A special and thankful remembrance of the death of our Saviour, and a charity without exception

named besides, when access to the holy communion is the subject of instruction. It has often been said, in the use of a phrase more popular and expressive than strictly scriptural, that the ministers of the church, with whom it rests to receive any to these ordinances, demand no evidence of a "change of heart." They certainly demand none of any other change than that which is included in the existence of repentance, faith, and love. For the evidence of this they have no specific standard. The uncontradicted profession of the candidate, his desire to assume the baptismal engagements, after due instruction and conference, is sufficient to throw a heavy responsibility on any by whom he might be repelled. A considerable difference may doubtless be observed in the tone of the instruction which defines the qualifications implied or expressed in the reception of the sacraments; and in England, the custom of seeking confirmation early in life is far more general than in the American Episcopal Church, and is by no means so uniformly attended by the conception of a spiritual consecration and a distinct personal profession of intelligent and cordial faith. There, it is very often followed by only a single communion, or else by an approach to the holy table at long intervals only; while here very few are confirmed who do not at once appear at the sacrament, and constantly afterwards at its monthly celebration. Rejection is the penalty of immorality and scandal. A more quiet method of private counsel is usually sufficient where the unfitness is evident, but where there is no palpable offence.

#### *Efficacy of the Sacraments.*

The sacraments are unquestionably regarded in the Episcopal Church with a firmer reliance on their obligation and effect than is altogether general in the Protestant bodies throughout our country. No ministers of that church represent them, and few Episcopalians regard them, as chiefly acts of profession. They are held to be not only signs of grace, but pledges and means, and means of a most peculiar

character and consecration. In them alone has a material element been set apart for a sacred and significant use, by the express command and example of our Saviour. The words which he employed, when he spake of each, and of that which each was to signify, were so emphatic, and the sign and the thing signified are so associated in his language, and can there with such difficulty be held altogether distinct, that it is not strange if many pious men, in their reverence, adopt very *realistic* views of the sacraments. By no school in the Episcopal Church could anything like the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation be taught in the face of the Articles by which it is directly condemned. There is a school, however, who love to press the reality of the presence of Christ in the sacrament to the very utmost point which can be reconciled with the denial of transubstantiation. They insist on a presence which is to be worshipped. They mount as far as to the old Lutheran belief, though still preferring not to define, but only to bow in silent reverence, as before an ineffable mystery. These, however, are few; and the only prominent theologians who have written in this spirit are such as were the avowed followers or friends of Pusey and of Newman. In the Church of England authors have also been found, whose sacramental doctrine was quite as low as that of Zuingli; such authors as the school of Hoadly. But the general current has ever been modest, reverential, unexplaining, but not exaggerating; nor has the belief of Calvin, as to the eucharist, been often exceeded by Episcopalian divines.

#### *State of the Dead.*

The idea that any difference of doctrine exists between the Episcopal Church and any orthodox communion of Protestants, concerning the state of the dead, can only have proceeded from unguarded expressions on either side. Certainly, the church itself teaches nothing on this subject more express than that the soul of our Lord "descended into hades," "went into the place of departed

his death and his resurrection; and that "the spirits of those who depart hence in the Lord do live with God in joy and felicity, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh." It looks and prays for the great consummation when the Lord shall come to judge the quick and dead, and "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." But in all this, the Episcopal Church receives and teaches nothing that is peculiar to itself. The doctrine of "an intermediate state" between death and the resurrection is that of all intelligent and scriptural teachers of religious truth, because it is the necessary result from the belief, on the one side, in the continuous life of the soul, and on the other, in the resurrection of the body. That common phraseology which makes no distinction between the state before and after the resurrection, cannot be intended to bear all the stress of which it is capable: it is but imaginative or inconsiderate. On the other hand, the anxious care of some Episcopalians never to speak of just men made perfect as now "in heaven," but only in paradise, is neither sustained by the language of the Bible, nor by that of their own great theologians. In speaking dogmatically, divines of every school must recognize the vast increase which the resurrection of the body and the results of the final judgment must add to the joys of the righteous and the woes of the lost. But in ordinary speech, or in the language of the pulpit or of prayers, the bosom of Abraham, the apocalyptic vision of the saints, and the torments of Dives, suggest as much as the human imagination can well sustain; and no scriptural image of the world beyond the resurrection supplies much more. By some interpreters in the Episcopal Church, our Lord is supposed to have "gone and preached to the spirits in prison," between the time of his own death and that of his resurrection. But so have multitudes of others supposed; so Calvin, and so Bengel. It is not in the Episcopal Church the prevailing interpretation, and can hardly be called frequent. The practice of remembering the pious dead in prayer has found, now and then, a theoretical ad-

it was rooted in the earliest antiquity of the church, or because it satisfied a tender and imaginative sentiment. It has never been, in practice, more than the secret solace, possibly of a few individuals, and has no sanction from the liturgy, from which every appearance of such a custom, ancient as it was, has been faithfully weeded away. Prayer for the *ungodly* dead was not known to the early church, and even among the Romanists comes only from the ultimate results, rather than the original form, of their dream of purgatory.

#### *Operations of the Holy Ghost.*

In preaching and teaching on the natural operations of the Holy Spirit, the clergy of the Episcopal Church have ever been accustomed to dwell much on the readiness of the Most High to answer prayer, and to meet every effort with increase of grace, and on the diligent and faithful use of all the appointed means of grace, as channels through which all may confidently look for spiritual blessing. They have never discussed with special interest the limits of the freedom of the will, or the august mysteries of the divine sovereignty over all destinies. They are not generally anxious to analyze the mental process of conversion. Without venturing to question the blessing of God on extraordinary means and occasions, they look with greater certainty of confidence to the more regular administrations of his word and ordinance, to the settled order of his church, and to the services of his commissioned ministry. The idea of revivals, as seasons when the work of the Spirit may be manifested in unusual power, as so often in apostolic days, is one which nothing in the services or the belief or the prevailing sentiment of the Episcopal Church would exclude. The idea of revivals as seasons which are to constitute the normal state of the Church, and between which the Spirit is withdrawn, and the word and sacraments are powerless, and piety must stagnate and languish, and the world be left to itself, is one which all the customs and the tone of the ]

tend to hold aloof from its own courts and ministrations. The fervor of real zeal, the glow of healthful excitement, the animation of sacred sympathies, the eagerness of earnest inquiry, the irrepressible tears of freshly awakened penitence, the cordial amens of actual prayer, it seeks not to repress, but welcomes and cherishes with all respect and tenderness. But it has no place for a system of machinery which plays with all the most sacred emotions and their demonstrations as institutions for achieving results which are beforehand known and expected to be largely earthly, transient, deceitful, and therefore pernicious.

*Relative Position of the Episcopal Church in America.*

The position of the Episcopal Church, at least in many parts of our country, may seem, if its numerical strength alone be regarded, to be somewhat in contrast with what an antagonist might term its "assumptions." If the contrast should be a little alleviated by the consideration of social or literary culture among the members of its communion, it still remains true that its attitude is more marked by the dignity of firmness than by the consciousness of such strength of broad foundations in the heart of a great people as that which marks the old and ever expanding Church of England. But, after all, no thoughtful man can confound this position with that of any sect, however numerous, which began with the separation of individuals, on the ground of opinions or of modes of worship or of plans for doing good.