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AN ORDER OF CONFIRMATION.

IN the July number of *THE CHURCHMAN* last year an article by "Amicus" on "Morning Prayer as it might be" was printed. The suggestions contained in that article attracted considerable attention, and were commented upon in many quarters. The interest aroused was so marked that we print in this number a further article by the same writer, giving his suggestions as to a revised Order of Confirmation.

We regret that the author, who was the Rev. Canon Westley Bothamley, M.A., for twenty-five years Vicar of St. Nicholas, Durham, has died since the publication of the first article. He was prepared to answer any criticisms of his previous suggestions, and had arranged to do so. We print the present article in memory of a contributor whose help we greatly appreciated.—
THE EDITOR.

The following is a suggestion for an extended form of the Confirmation Office. It appears to be longer than the accepted form, but it contains so much said in brief which takes longer to say in extempore speech that it may be found no longer in practice, especially if the bishop minimises the time spent in the laying-on of hands, as is there suggested. Confirmation should be the most important event in the whole life of the candidate and nothing should be omitted from the service which can add to its dignity and lasting impression.

THE ORDER OF CONFIRMATION.

Bishop. Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us, etc. Our Father, etc.

O Lord, our heavenly Father, in whose name we are assembled here, mercifully vouchsafe so to direct and rule our hearts that we may worship thee in the power of the Spirit and glorify thee by what we are now to do : through, etc.

O Lord, who hast given grace to these thy servants by the confession of a true faith to glorify thee, mercifully grant that thy work in them may be established in their hearts, that they may continue thy faithful and devout children, and being saved through the merits of our Redeemer may at last attain thy heavenly kingdom : through, etc.

Merciful Lord, look down upon thy whole Church, that being continually built up by faithful members it may grow in the unity of the Spirit unto a perfect building : through, etc.

Prevent us, O Lord, etc.

(Then shall the Bishop say :)

Brethren, it is recorded in Holy Scripture how the apostles Peter and John went down to Samaria and laid their hands on the newly-baptized people with prayer for the Holy Ghost, which sign and prayer were abundantly answered by God ; and again how St. Paul likewise did the same at Ephesus ; and in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews we are taught that the laying-on of hands is a principle of Christianity, and therefore never to be intermitted or discontinued. Wherefore it seems good to the Church and to us that we should here receive these candidates for Confirmation by the same holy sign and by prayer, trusting that God who changeth not will grant to them that special gift of the Holy Spirit through which alone we become true members of the Church of Christ. And because it is requisite that they should truly repent and yield them-

selves to our Lord and Master, Christ, we have caused them to be instructed and examined, and do well believe that they are ready in their hearts to receive this solemn ordinance. Wherefore I shall briefly question them before you, first calling upon you to join in earnest prayer that the Holy Ghost may be manifestly vouchsafed to them, that they may be strong in the power of his might, and may show forth the fruit of holiness in their life and walk.

(Then shall some person appointed by the Bishop say :)

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, whose hand is full of gifts, and who after thy blessed Son had led captivity captive, didst pour out thy Spirit upon thy first disciples, send, we beseech thee, the Holy Ghost on these thy children. Endue them with purity and power from on high. Strengthen them to overcome the power of the enemy. Manifest thyself to them as thou dost not unto the world. Make them to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And grant that, being received into fellowship by us, they may so persevere in holiness and righteousness of life that they may finish their course with joy and at the last be received into thine eternal kingdom : Where with, etc.

(Then shall the Bishop direct the candidates to stand while he thus addresses them :)

Do ye here repent you of your former sins, earnestly desiring to lead a new life ?

Answer : I DO.

Do you believe the Christian Faith, trusting in the merits of Christ for eternal salvation ?

Answer : I DO.

Will you endeavour by God's grace to follow the example of Jesus Christ, and to be well-pleasing in his sight ?

Answer : I WILL.

The God of Israel, under whose wings thou hast come to trust, accept the desires of thy heart, and confirm thee in these holy dispositions, that thou mayest pass through this life victoriously, die peacefully, stand with humble but confident assurance in the dreadful Day of Judgement, and rise to a joyful resurrection ; Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us pray.

(Then, while the candidates remain standing and the people fall upon their knees, the Bishop shall say :)

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

(Etc. as in the Prayer-Book, down to " Spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever, Amen.")

Then all of them in order kneeling before the Bishop, he shall lay his hand upon the head of each one severally, saying :)

Defend, O Lord, this thy child . . . everlasting kingdom. Amen.

And if the candidates be many, it shall suffice if he lay his hand upon each of them for a little space while he says these words but once to those placed in order before him.)

(Then shall those newly-confirmed rise and stand while the Bishop thus addresses them :)

You have now of your own free will and choice been made full members of the Church of Christ, and are come unto Mount Zion and an innumerable company of just men made perfect and to the inheritance of the saints

in light : and you must consider how high a privilege has been bestowed upon you. For you are a member of the Body of the Lord, an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven ; you are enabled to live a new life by the power of the Holy Spirit ; you are promised his company and perpetual guidance ; your name is written in the Book of Life ; and if you steadily persevere in the path you have begun you will at last be received into Christ's heavenly kingdom, where with all the saints you will serve him in glory everlasting. But if you should turn aside and depart from Christ you will be taken away like a dead branch and gathered for burning ; you will bring a reproach upon Christ's name and crucify him afresh. Wherefore you must be mindful to use all those heavenly aids which are offered to you. You must diligently read your Bible, call upon God in prayer, attend his holy worship, and especially come regularly with a humble and penitent heart to his most blessed sacrament, to which you will now at all times be admitted. And if you should at any time perceive yourself to be in want of spiritual admonition and counsel you must ask instruction of God's servant who is appointed over you that he may give an account for your soul. And further you must consider that you are the soldier of Christ and are never to be ashamed of his name, but rather suffer shame and persecution, and must do your part to bring all others to his obedience : which doing you will finish your course with joy and obtain a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

(Then shall the newly-confirmed sit down, and the Bishop shall thus address the Church :)

And as for you who are already their elders in the Church, you must receive these your brethren with Christian love and support them with your prayers, admitting them into your fellowship as new-made brethren. In token whereof we will now rise and sing the 133rd psalm.

Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, etc.

(At the close of which all will rise and sing the Gloria.)

(Then shall the Bishop address the newly-confirmed.)

(Then may be sung one or more of these psalms : i, xv, xxiii, lxiv, cxxi, cxxvi.)

Bishop. Let us pray.

Our Father, etc.

Almighty and Everlasting God, etc.

O Almighty Lord and Everlasting God, etc.

The blessing of God Almighty, etc.

WHO IS SYLVIA? By A. Wellesley Orr. *Lutterworth Press.*
Pp. 63. 1s.

Sylvia—representative of post-war youth—finds a patient and understanding interpreter of the difficulties which perplex her mind in the Vicar. He listens to her, is sometimes at a loss, but sooner or later has an answer to the many questions which Sylvia asks. It may be that his explanations will not satisfy everyone, but those who read what he has recorded will agree that he has rendered useful service in resolving some of the doubts of the young in this difficult age. A few of the chapter headings will perhaps indicate the scope of the discussion : Contradictions, Tennyson, Job, Ecclesiastes, Lippman, Equality, Morality, Wages, Mugs-Vision.

H. D.