

**stephen-morning-
evening**

A Guide to the Morning and Evening Service Of the Church of England.

By Thomas Stephen, 1835.

[Spelling selectively modernized. Bible citations converted to all Arabic numerals. Notes moved into or near their places of citation.]

Preface.

The subject of the following pages was originally published in the Episcopal Magazine in the form of Dialogues, purporting to be between an Episcopalian and a Presbyterian. They acquired a considerable degree of popularity among those into whose hands more elaborate treatises were not likely to fall. The Author has reason to think that, under the Divine blessing, the Dialogues were useful. Men whose opinions he respects and esteems approved of the design; and so popular had the Dialogues become, that the Author has received many letters from unknown correspondents expressing regret at their discontinuance, and a desire that they should be resumed. A new series has accordingly been commenced in the Episcopal Magazine, on such parts of the Liturgy as were untouched in the first. The success attending the first series has induced the Author to publish it in a separate volume. But many irrelevant things which were necessary in a conversational essay have been removed in the Guide. Superfluities have been omitted, and additions made to the text. The arrangements of the Guide are also somewhat different from those of the Dialogues.

After the Revolution, the English Liturgy was spontaneously adopted by the Episcopal Church in Scotland. Much prejudice still exists against it among Presbyterians, but which wears off on a closer acquaintance. By its means alone the Lord is daily adding to the Church; by its means alone the numbers of Episcopalians are constantly increasing. Its own intrinsic merits, – the sober dignity of its language, – its fire of devotion, – attracts their attention, and gradually engages their affections. The attachment of those who have been accustomed to it from infancy is stronger than that of Jonathan for David. Of all the forms of private devotion which a family can use, the Liturgy is incomparably the best. Its spirit as well as its language is more catholic than any private forms of devotion can be. Its sublime and Scriptural words are endeared to us from the associations of the more innocent period of our lives. In distant climates it recalls to our affections

the friends of our youth or more mature years, whom we have left behind. It reminds us of those spiritual fathers to whose instruction we are indebted for our knowledge of heavenly things. It is a bond of union in private families, as it is the cement of the great family of the Church of our fathers. It teaches us to adopt and to follow St. Paul's resolution; – *I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also*. It sets before us the infinite goodness and mercy of God, yet temperately displays the terrors of the Lord. It teaches us, if we would enter into life, to keep the commandments, – to ask forgiveness for our breaches of each individual precept, – for grace to keep each for the time to come, – and, finally, to beg that God would write all his laws in our hearts. It teaches us in effect to obey the command of Moses to the Israelites: “Thou shalt teach them (the commandments) diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.” It teaches us to submit ourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, – to honour all men, – to love the brotherhood, – to fear God, – and to honour the king. It contains the Holy Scriptures within it. It places them continually before our eyes, and begs grace for us to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them. It teaches us to ask for grace to assist us in working out our own salvation, and to acknowledge our inability to will or to do any good thing of ourselves. It prays that He would graft in our hearts the love of His name, increase in us true religion, – nourish us with all goodness, – of His great mercy keep us in the same, – cleanse our hearts by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, – and that He will direct, sanctify, and govern both our hearts and bodies in the ways of His laws, and in the works of His commandments.

The object of the Guide is to assist those of the household of faith to pray with the understanding. Many of them are but indifferently acquainted with, and separatists are altogether ignorant of, the doctrines contained in the Liturgy. The Guide is not intended to instruct the learned; – the Author is not so presumptuous. It is intended to assist those who are unacquainted with the doctrines of the Liturgy. How far he has been successful is left for the judgment of an impartial Public to determine. But this he may be allowed to say that the study of so many eminent authorities as are cited has

been of the greatest advantage to himself; and he sincerely hopes that this unpretending tract may convey some benefit to those who may have neither leisure nor opportunities of perusing more learned disquisitions. Although the Author has been chiefly indebted to the authorities cited at the conclusion of the chapters, yet he has also been much beholden to the oral instruction of the clergy. It is therefore with sentiments of the most profound respect that he makes this grateful acknowledgment for their catechetical and pulpit instructions. Some of his reverend instructors now sleep sweetly in the dust, – *requiescant in pace*; while others have been worthily raised to the highest dignity in the Church. The fruits of their right division of the Word of Truth are mingled with knowledge gained from the writings of those who being dead yet speak. He trusts that the Right Reverend and Reverend Fathers of the Church will not despise the humble attempt of a layman. His intentions are good, though his performance may be imperfect.

Between the articles and the prayers and offices the most complete harmony of doctrine prevails. In the Liturgy the laity have the best human security against false doctrine, heresy, and schism. Whatever the private opinions of the priest may be, he can only pray with and for his people in a well-digested form of sound words. These being familiar to the people beforehand, their devotions are not interrupted by strange or unusual expressions. No new doctrines or unexpected changes can disturb their confidence or distract their attention. It should be read, therefore, whether in the desk or in the closet, in an easy, natural, and moderately quick style. To read a form extremely slow which is so familiar to everyone, completely annihilates devotion. The audience is apt either to outstrip the reader, or else, in waiting for him, to become impatient and undevout; and wandering thoughts and imaginations are liable to arise in the mind. But by a moderately quick enunciation, the mind is kept alive and vigorous, devotion is increased, and formality is prevented.

The author hopes that he has been enabled to show the truth of Bishop Jewel's assertion that "the Liturgy is agreeable to primitive usage, and is a reasonable service"; consequently, that it is neither novel nor superstitious. "We know," says he in his Apology, "that St. Augustine grievously complained of the vast number of impertinent ceremonies in his time, and therefore we have cut off a great many of them, because we know they were afflictive and burdensome to the Church of God; yet we still retain, and

religiously use, not only all those which we know were delivered to the Church by the Apostles, but some others which we saw might be borne without inconvenience, because, as St. Paul commands, we desire all things in the religious assemblies should be *done decently and in order*. As to all those which were very superstitious, or base, or ridiculous, or contrary to the Scriptures, or did not seem to befit sober men, an infinite number of which are still to be found amongst Papists, we have rejected all these, without excepting any one of them, because we would not have the service of God any longer contaminated with such fooleries. We pray (as it is fit we should) in that tongue our people do all understand, that the people, as St. Paul admonisheth, may reap a common advantage by the common prayers.”
 Edinburgh, June 1835.

Contents.

1. Historical Account of the Compilation and different Reviews of the English Liturgy, and of the Scottish Liturgy
2. Arguments in favour of Set Forms of Prayer
3. The Prefatory Sentences – The Exhortation, Note
4. The Confession
5. The Absolution
6. The Lord’s Prayer – Doxology – Hallelujah
7. The Psalms – Scriptures – Te Deum – and the Anthems
8. Apostles’ and Athanasian Creeds
9. Versicles – Collects – Apostolic Blessing
10. The Litany – Occasional Prayers – Thanksgiving
11. The Communion service

Chapter 1.

Introduction – Committee appointed – Names of the Commissioners – First Book composed – Confirmed in Parliament – Difference between that and the present Liturgy – Communion service – Introits – Oblation – Water mixed with the Wine – Prayer for Christ’s Church – Conclusion different from the present – Consecration – Invitation – Benediction – Sentences before the Post Communion – Gardner’s Sentiments – Second Review – Oath of Supremacy – Alterations made – Communion service – Commandments added – Exhortations – To Lookers-on – Changes in the Prayer of Consecration – And in the Benediction – Oblation Bread – Ordination – Third Review – Alterations then made – Romanists communicate with the Church – Pope excommunicates the Queen – Puritans – Hampton Court Conference – Fourth Review – Additions – Liturgy proscribed – Presbyterians wait on Charles II. – His Answer – Conference at the Savoy – Final Review – Baxter’s Liturgy – Alterations

and Additions – In the offices of the Communion – Of Baptism – Catechism – Confirmation – Visitation of the Sick – Burial-service – Churching of Women – Blessing – Form of Prayers at Sea – Ordination – Bishop Taylor’s Character of the Liturgy – Liturgy used in Scotland – Knox’s – Extracts – Attempts to compile one – Charles I’s Liturgy – Proposed – Rejected – Riots – Not used after the Restoration – Now a characteristic Feature of the Episcopal Church in Scotland.

When the Church of England first began to reform from the corruptions and innovations of Popery, there was not the slightest objection made to the lawfulness and expediency of a prescribed form of prayer. Her doctrine, discipline, and worship, were then settled in the manner most agreeable to the general rules of Holy Scripture, and the faith and practice of the primitive Church. No one esteemed the injunction, by the authority of the governors of the Church, of a fixed Liturgy, as a Popish imposition, as exercising ecclesiastical tyranny over conscience, or as a stinting of the Spirit. It was evident, even to demonstration, that those miraculous gifts bestowed on the Church in the days of the Apostles were now entirely withdrawn. The assistance, which the Holy Spirit gives us in our prayers, is to inspire us with the graces of faith, hope, love, contrition, and all those devout affections and holy dispositions which render our petitions an acceptable sacrifice to God. There is no immediate suggestion of the matter or words of our devotions. The public worship of God is too important and sacred to be trusted with or left to the sudden impulse of every private pastor. As the nature of our prayers and praises is always the same, a prescribed form is it great help to a steady and regular devotion. Extemporary effusions are more likely to impose on the imagination than to affect the heart. They are more apt to inflame our sensitive passions than to inspire that holy fervour with which the heart of every pious Christian burns when addressing himself to God. Bishop Walker, in his Life of Archbishop Whitgift, says, “The Liturgy we can examine. We can learn its import, and prepare ourselves for its use, prepare ourselves so as to add the spirit of prayer to the *form* which we know. The united Church of England and Ireland claims to be a part of the Catholic Church, or Spouse of Christ, – the mold in which the heirs of immortality are begotten, nurtured, and prepared for their heavenly inheritance. It is a remarkable fact, well worthy of the most serious reflection, that the Church of England, reformed by the most sober-minded, learned, and judicious divines of that most remarkable age,

stands now as she stood then, the same in doctrine and discipline, – the acknowledged bulwark of pure, true, and undefiled religion, against Popery, fanaticism, and all the various degrees of infidelity; – while unity of faith and discipline cannot be predicated of any other Church of the Reformation which we know; while of most of them, the direct contrary must, with equal grief and indignation, be acknowledged.” The Church had then escaped from the tyranny of the See of Rome. It was inconsistent with the professed opposition of the Church of England to that tyranny, to invest every private minister with such an absolute authority over the consciences of his flock, as to make them entirely dependent on his arbitrary fancy in their public devotions. This species of tyranny the Papists themselves never imposed on us. Had our Reformers condemned the use of liturgies, they would have condemned the practice of the whole Catholic Church in all ages. They would have condemned the practice of the apostolic age itself, and run into the wildest extravagancies of enthusiasm and fanaticism.

King Edward VI appointed a committee of select divines to review the offices then in use, inspect the ancient liturgies, and compose one uniform and perfect order for the whole service of the Church. It was ordered to be published in the vulgar tongue, that all men might know the conditions of their communion with the Church. The commissioners for this necessary and excellent work were – Archbishop Cranmer; Nicolas Ridley, bishop of Rochester, afterwards of London; Thomas Goodrich, bishop of Ely; Henry Holbech, bishop of Lincoln; John Skip, bishop of Hereford; Thomas Thirlby, bishop of Westminster, afterwards of Ely; George Day, bishop of Chichester; John Taylor, dean, afterwards bishop of Lincoln; Richard Cox, chancellor of Oxford, and dean of Christ Church and Westminster, afterwards bishop of Ely; William May, dean of St. Paul’s; Thomas Robertson, archdeacon of Leicester, afterwards dean of Durham; Simon Heynes, dean of Exeter; and John Redmayne, master of Trinity College, Cambridge.

These learned bishops and divines met together in September 1548. They laid it down as a general rule that they would not alter anything for the sake of novelty, but endeavour to reduce everything to the primitive standard of the first and purest ages of Christianity. They commenced by a careful inspection of all the Missals, Breviaries, Rituals, Pontificals, Graduals, Psalters, Antiphonals, and all the other service books then in use. These they compared with the primitive liturgies. Whatever they found in

them consonant to the Holy Scriptures, the doctrine and worship of the primitive Church, they retained and improved. The corruptions and superstitious innovations of later ages, they discharged and rejected. When the book was finished, they all subscribed it, except Dr Day, bishop of Chichester. He had all along shown strong disaffection, and now refused to subscribe or approve of it. Edward received the Liturgy with great satisfaction, and recommended it to Parliament. An act was accordingly passed, commanding it to be used in all churches and chapels. Penalties were denounced against those who refused to officiate by it, obstructed others in the use of it, or spoke in derogation of anything contained in it. "Thus," says Mr. Wheatly, "was our excellent Liturgy compiled by martyrs and confessors, together with divers other learned bishops and divines; and, being revised and approved by the archbishops, bishops, and clergy of both the provinces of Canterbury and York, was then confirmed by the King and the Three Estates in Parliament, A.D. 1548, who gave it this just encomium, viz, which at this time, BY THE AID OF THE HOLY GHOST, with uniform agreement, is of them concluded, set forth," *etc.*

There was a little difference between the Liturgy then compiled and that now in use. At that time the morning and evening service began with the Lord's Prayer. After which followed the responses now in use, but in the singular number. At the end of them, from Easter to Trinity Sunday, Hallelujah was said or sung. The *Venite exultemus* and the Psalms followed in the same order as at present. The lessons were nearly the same as now, only there was no distinct arrangement for lessons on Sundays and holidays. After the first morning lesson, *Te Deum* was appointed to be sung or said, except during Lent. During the whole of which time, the Song of the Three Children was to be used instead of it. The *Benedictus* alone was sung after the second lesson. The *Magnificat* and the *Nunc Dimittis* were alone to be sung in the afternoon. Then followed the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, to be said by the minister; the people answering at the end of the Lord's Prayer, *But deliver us from evil. Amen.* The morning prayers ended with the Collect for grace, and the evening with that for aid against all perils. The Collect for the third Sunday in Advent was entirely different from the present: "Lord, we beseech thee, give ear to our prayers; and by thy gracious visitation, lighten the darkness of our hearts, by our Lord Jesus Christ." On Christmas Day there were two Collects, Epistles, and Gospels. Those for the second communion were the same as are now used. The

Epistle was Titus 2:11 to the end. The Gospel was Luke 2:1–15. The Collect for Christmas Day was, “GOD, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thine only Son, Jesus Christ, grant, that as we joyfully receive him for our Redeemer, so we may, with sure confidence, behold him when he shall come to be our judge, who liveth and reigneth,” *etc.* Several of the Collects for the holidays were different from those now in use. The Gospels were not altogether the same as those now prescribed. On the Sunday after Christmas, the whole of the first chapter of St. Matthew was read. The Gospel for the Sunday before Easter was the twenty-sixth and part of the twenty-seventh chapter of St. Matthew. On Tuesday before Easter, the fifteenth chapter of St. Mark was read throughout. On Thursday, the whole of the twenty-third chapter of St. Luke was read. The Gospel for Good Friday was the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of St. John. The Gospel for Whitsunday ended at the twenty-second verse, but now it is continued to the end of the fourteenth chapter of St. John. On the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, the Epistle was the same as on the Sunday preceding. Now, the third chapter of Malachi is read for the Epistle. It is very appropriate, being prophetic of our blessed Lord’s coming, and that the sons of Levi “may *offer* unto the Lord an *offering* in righteousness.” The Gospel for that day ended in the middle of the twenty-seventh verse, whereas it is now continued to the end of the thirty-ninth verse of the second chapter of St. Luke.

The communion service for every Sunday and holiday began with an *Introit* or psalm, said or sung whilst the priest was going up to the altar. On Christmas and Easter Days there were two *Introits*; the second of which was sung after the Gospel. The priest was directed to begin the communion office “standing humbly before the midst of the altar.” There are many differences between it and the present communion service, not only in the order but in the substance of the prayers. The angelic hymn, *Glory be to God on high, etc.* was placed near the beginning of the office, immediately before the Collect for the King. It is now in the Post Communion. The exhortation which is now used in the administration of the communion was then to be read, when the people were not exhorted in the sermon or homily to the worthy receiving of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ. In cathedral churches, where there was a daily communion, it was read once a month; but in parish churches it was lawful to omit it on weekdays. Our first exhortation was then used when people were negligent in coming to

the communion. The Offertory was to be sung or said. At the conclusion of which the communicants were to place themselves in some convenient order in or near the choir. The men were directed to sit on one side and the women on the other. Those who would not receive, were, as at present, to depart. The wine was ordered to be mixed *with a little pure and clean water*. When the priest had placed the elements on the altar, he said the Lauds and Anthem with the proper prefaces on the great festivals. After which the clerk and people sang the *Trisagium*, which concluded with *Hosanna in the Highest, and blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Glory to thee, O Lord, in the Highest*. Then followed the prayer for Christ's Church, in which was a thanksgiving for the graces and virtues of the saints. It concluded differently from that now in use. It was preserved, however, in the Liturgy compiled by the Scottish bishops in Charles I's time. As it is still used in some of the dioceses in Scotland, and its beauty incomparable, I shall transcribe it from Charles' Prayer book, now before me: "And we commend especially to thy merciful goodness the congregation which is here assembled in thy name to celebrate the commemoration of the most precious death and sacrifice of thy Son and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them which in this transitory life be in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless thy holy name for all those thy servants, who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labours. And we yield unto thee most high praise and hearty thanks for the wonderful grace and virtue declared in all thy saints, who have been the choice vessels of thy grace, and the lights of the world in their several generations: most humbly beseeching thee that we may have grace to follow the example of their steadfastness in faith, and obedience to thy holy commandments, that at the day of the general resurrection we, and all they which are of the mystical body of thy Son, may be set on his right hand, and hear that his most joyful voice: Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen."

The prayer of consecration followed. It was pronounced by the priest alone, "turning himself to the altar, without any elevation, or showing the sacrament to the people." In it the following petition was embodied: "Hear us, O merciful Father, and with thy Spirit and Word vouchsafe to bless and

sanctify these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy most dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ.” Immediately after the consecration was a “memorial or prayer of oblation,” the same as is now in the Scottish Liturgy. The Lord’s Prayer succeeded, with this preface: “As our Saviour, Christ, bath commanded and taught us, we are bold to say, Our Father,” *etc.* The priest then said, *The peace of the Lord be always with you*; the clerk and people replied, *And with thy spirit.* The priest continued, “Christ, our Pascal Lamb, is offered up for us, once for all, when he bare our sins on his body on the cross; for he is the very Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world; wherefore let us keep a joyful and holy feast with the Lord.”

This was followed by the Invitation, in which the people were exhorted to “make their humble confession to Almighty God, and to his holy Church there gathered together in his name.” The confession was to be made in the name of the whole congregation, “either by one of them, or else by one of the ministers, or by the priest himself.” It was succeeded by the Absolution, the comfortable sentences of Scripture, and the Collect, *We do not presume, etc.* Then the priest himself received the communion in both kinds, and next administered it to the rest of the clergy present. When he delivered the sacrament of the Body of Christ, he said, *The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.* When he delivered the sacrament of the Blood of Christ, he said, *The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.* These are the words of benediction used at present in the Scottish Liturgy. During the administration, the clerks were to sing, *O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, etc. grant us thy peace.*

A variety of sentences from Holy Scripture were appointed with which to begin the Post Communion. The Collects for rain and fair weather were placed here, which were to be said after the Offertory, when there was no communion, and when the state of the weather required it. They are now placed among the occasional prayers after the Litany.

The bread was appointed by the rubric, at the close of the office, to be the same throughout the whole realm. The pastors and curates were to provide the bread and wine at their own cost. At the Offertory, the people were to offer the just value for the use of the pastor or curate, besides their

other customary oblations. In cathedral and collegiate churches some were directed to be always ready to communicate with the priest. In the country one at least of that family in every parish, whose course it was to offer for the charges of the communion, was required to receive the communion with the priest. The people were enjoined to attend divine service constantly at their own parish churches with devotion, godly silence, and meditation; to pay their duties, and communicate once a year at least. Those who absented themselves without just cause, or behaved disorderly in the church, were to be punished with excommunication, or such other penalty as the ecclesiastical judge saw convenient. The Litany was placed next to the Communion office, and said on Wednesdays and Fridays. In it was a petition to be delivered *from the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities*. When there was no communion, the priest was to say at the altar, on the conclusion of the Litany, so much of the second service as precedes the Offertory, with one or more of the final Collects and the Blessing.

This was the state of the first English Liturgy. The Reformers, in the exercise of a sound discretion, chose rather to retain some things which might have been lawfully omitted, than by going too far at first to stagger men's minds. The first book was received with general satisfaction. After the strictest scrutiny, the most rigid adversaries could not charge it with being contrary to the word of God. Gardner himself confessed that he thought its use lawful, that he would not only use it himself, but would oblige all the clergy of his diocese to do so likewise. The Lady Mary alone, of bloody memory, rejected it, under pretense, that, as it was established in the king's minority, it was therefore invalid. In all other places it gained daily. Few thought the Reformers had gone too far; but many desired that, as soon as the times would bear it, it might be reviewed, and made more perfect and complete. In November 1549, six bishops, and six other learned men, were by act of Parliament appointed to draw up a form of making and consecrating bishops, priests, and deacons. Dr. Heylin thinks that the same persons who drew up the Liturgy, with the exception of Bishop Day, were again employed to compile the Ordinal. In this as in the former work, they were governed by the practice of the primitive Church. They struck out all the corrupt and superstitious rites with which the Papists had defaced the beauty of those holy offices; and they reduced them to their original beauty and simplicity. They found that prayer and the imposition of episcopal

hands were thought the essentials of ordination in the first ages of Christianity. The oath of supremacy in this service contained a solemn renunciation of the authority of the Bishop of Rome, a protestation never to consent to its reestablishment, a promise to resist it to the utmost, and inviolably to observe all the statutes for its removal.

Some objections having been made to King Edward's First Book, it was proposed, in 1551, to review it. The names of the reviewers are not mentioned; but Dr. Heylin is of opinion that the same illustrious men who had compiled, were also appointed to review it. Archbishop Cranmer asked the advice of Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr, two German divines, for whose use the Liturgy was translated into Latin by Alesse, a Scottish divine, who fled from the persecuting fury of Cardinal Beaton and Sir John Cheke. At the end of the preface was added a rubric, enjoining all priests and deacons to say the morning and evening service daily, privately or openly, unless they were hindered by preaching, study, or some other urgent cause. A bell was directed to be tolled, that those who were disposed might come to hear God's word, and pray with them. The declaration concerning ceremonies was placed next after the preface. The explanatory notes in the first Liturgy were omitted. The service was appointed to be said in that part of the church, chapel, or chancel, where the people could hear best. The use of albs, copes, and tunicles were prohibited. The priest or deacon was enjoined to wear a surplice, and a bishop his rochet. The sentences, confession, and absolution, were added to the daily morning and evening services. The responses at the end of the Lord's Prayer were turned into the plural number. The Hallelujah was omitted. The order for *singing* the Lessons, Epistles, and Gospels, and the Song of the Three Children, were removed. The hundredth psalm was inserted to be used after the second morning Lesson. The ninety-eighth and sixty-seventh psalms were inserted to be used after the first and second Lessons in the afternoon. The Athanasian Creed was appointed in the first book to be read on the great festivals; it was now ordered to be said on so many of the saints' days as to bring it in course once a month. The Litany was placed next to the morning service, and directed to be used on Sundays. The occasional Collects were placed at the end of it. The Introits were all omitted, as well as the double communion at Christmas and Easter. The Collects, Epistles, and Gospels for these days are the same as those now in use. The hymn for Easter Day was appointed instead of the ninety-fifth psalm, the Hallelujahs, Versicles, and

Collect at the end were omitted. The Feast of Saint Mary Magdalen was struck out of the calendar. The Collect for the Feast of St. Andrew was changed for that now in use.

The title of the communion service in the first book was “The Supper of the Lord, and the holy communion, commonly called the Mass.” The words *commonly called the Mass* were struck out. It was appointed to be said in the body of the church or chancel, when the morning and evening prayer were appointed to be said. The priest was directed to stand on the north side of the table. The office began as at present with the Lord’s Prayer and the prayer for purity. The reviewers added the Ten Commandments, with a brief but most pious petition for the forgiveness of our past breaches of each, and for grace to enable us to keep them more perfectly for the future. The words *militant here on earth* were added to the preface of the prayer for the whole state of Christ’s Church. That part cited in page 7 was omitted. A new exhortation was added, to be used when the people were negligent in coming to the holy communion; the substance of the former part of which is contained in the second exhortation now in use. The latter part was addressed to those who, according to the irreligious custom of Popish times, and which is still continued in Presbyterian places of worship, stayed out of curiosity during the administration of the Eucharist, but did not communicate. The minister was directed to rebuke for this great offence and scandal in the following words: “And whereas ye offend God’s Son, in refusing this holy banquet, I admonish, exhort, and beseech you, that unto this unkindness you will not add any more; which thing ye shall do, if ye stand by as gazers and lookers on them that do communicate, and be no partakers of the same yourselves: for what thing can this be accounted else, than a farther contempt and unkindness unto God? Truly it is a great unthankfulness to say nay when ye be called; but the fault is much greater, when men stand by, and yet will neither eat nor drink this holy communion with others. I pray you what can this be else, but even to have the mysteries of Christ in derision? It is said unto all, *Take ye and eat; take and drink ye all of this; do this in remembrance of me.* With what face, then, or with what countenance shall ye hear these words? What will this be else but a neglecting, a despising, a mocking of the Testament of Christ? Wherefore, rather than you should so do, depart you hence, and give place to them that be godly disposed. But when you depart, I beseech, ponder with yourselves, from whom you depart; ye depart from the Lord’s Table, ye depart from

your brethren, and from the banquet of most heavenly food. These things, if ye earnestly consider, ye shall, by God's grace, return to a better mind; for the obtaining whereof, we shall make our humble petitions while we shall receive the holy communion."

The rubric which required water to be mixed with the wine was struck out. The exhortation to "confess to God and his holy Church," was altered to "make your humble confession to Almighty God before this congregation here gathered together in his holy name." The proper prefaces were continued as at present; and the Trisagium was reduced to its present form. In the prayer of consecration, the petition for the sanctification of the elements by "God's Word and Spirit, that they might be to us the Body and Blood of Christ," was changed into a prayer, "that we, receiving the creatures of bread and wine, according to our Saviour's institution, might be made partakers of his most blessed body and blood." At the distribution of the bread, instead of the words "the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body unto everlasting life," the following words were substituted; "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thine heart by faith with thanksgiving." And at the delivery of the cup, instead of the benediction already given, these words were used: "Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful." The Prayer of Oblation was removed into the Post Communion, and abridged to its present form. Many good men are of opinion, however, that this last change was not an improvement; the proper time for making an oblation being at the offering of the sacrifice. The sentences before the Post Communion were removed, and the method and order of the whole service were altered to much the same state as that in which it now stands. In the first book, the bread was appointed to be unleavened and round, as it had been in Popish times; only somewhat larger and thicker than before, that it might be conveniently broken into two or more pieces at the discretion of the minister. At this review the bread was directed to be such as is usually eaten, but the best and purest that can possibly be procured. The rubric of the first book acknowledged that in the primitive times the people used to receive the sacrament of the Body of Christ in their hands. The people had frequently, however, secreted it, and abused it to superstition and wickedness; to prevent which, in the first book, the priest was directed to put the bread into each communicant's mouth; but by this rubric it was now ordered to be given into the hands of the

communicants. The bread and wine were to be provided by the curate and churchwardens at the charge of the parish. Every parishioner was required to communicate at least three times a year, of which Easter was to be one. At Easter he was also to reckon with the minister or his deputy, and pay all ecclesiastical duties then due. The offices of ordination, drawn up in 1549, were now added to the Liturgy as an established part of it. The vestments and the introits required in the first book were laid aside at this review. The shocking appeal to the saints, at the end of the oath of supremacy, was struck out. The words alluded to were: So help me God, all saints, and the holy Angels. The ceremonies of delivering the chalice with bread, at the ordination of a priest, were struck out. Laying the Bible on the neck, and putting the pastoral staff into the hand, at the consecration of a bishop, were also omitted. This book, thus revised and altered, was confirmed by Parliament in 1551. The act, however, declared that the alterations then made proceed more *from curiosity than any worthy cause*. Both this and the act confirming the former book, were repealed by Queen Mary; and the Mass, with the Latin offices, were restored. Queen Elizabeth repealed the act of reversal. Several learned divines were appointed to review the second book for the use of the Protestant Church of England. Secretary Cecil was desirous of establishing King Edward's First Book, or at least to some of its parts being again received, especially in the Eucharistic Service. Archbishop Parker and the other divines, some of whom had assisted in compiling the first book, determined on adopting the second Liturgy, with some alterations and corrections.

The alterations made at this review were as follows: – A table of proper Lessons for all the Sundays in the year was added. The table for the Lessons on holidays was completed. The genealogies in the first chapter of St. Matthew and the third of St. Luke, were ordered to be omitted in the reading. In leap years, the Psalms and Lessons for the twenty-third day of February, were ordered to be used again the day following. If it happened on a Sunday, the proper Lessons, appointed in the table, were to be used. The Habits, enjoined by the first book of King Edward, were restored. The morning and evening services were appointed to be said in the accustomed place of the church, chapel, or chancel. The chancels were to remain as in times past. That petition in the Litany, to be delivered from the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, was expunged, that no needless offence might be given to those of the Romish persuasion. In the prayer for

the queen, the words, *strengthen in the true worshipping of thee in righteousness and holiness of life*, were added. At the end of the Litany, a prayer for the queen, and another for the clergy, were inserted. The Collect which begins, *O God, whose nature and property*, etc., and the apostolical blessing, were likewise added. The second of the two Collects now appointed to be used in times of dearth and famine was omitted. At the delivery of the elements in the communion office, the form appointed in King Edward's First Book, and that which was substituted in its place in the second, were united, as it now stands. The declaration respecting the intention of the Church, which required the people to kneel, was expunged.

The Romanists continued to frequent the Established Church, and to communicate in the prayers and sacraments. They could not discover anything in the reformed Liturgy contrary to the word of God, or the uncorrupted doctrine of the purest ages of Christianity. Foreign ambassadors, members of the Church of Rome, resorted daily to the public worship. The Pope himself *offered to confirm the English Book of Common Prayer*, simply on condition of restoring his supremacy. But, to use the language of a prelate of profound learning and great practical piety, "*We deem the Papal SUPREMACY the real pivot of Papal error.*" When he found it impossible to gain this point, and the Church of England was determined to act independent of his authority, he changed his tone. In a furious fit of zeal, he excommunicated the Queen and all who paid her allegiance. Annually, ever since, the whole Protestants in Great Britain and Ireland are formally excommunicated and anathematized, on Maundy Thursday. For ten years the members of the Romish Church communicated with the reformed Church of England; but after Clement's bull was published, they broke out into an open schism. They separated from the Church of England, and have ever since continued in a state of separation and schism.

The Puritans next assaulted the Liturgy with equal violence and malice. They were countenanced by the Earl of Leicester, Sir Francis Knollys, and Walsingham, besides other leading men at court. Through their means the Puritans obtained considerable strength. On the accession of King James, they hoped to have overturned the Established Church, and triumphed in its ruin. With this view, they presented the *millenary* petition to him on his progress to London. In it they made the most grievous complaints against the Liturgy, the government, and discipline of the

Church. James was too sagacious to be so easily prevailed on to alter the established constitution and worship. Desirous, however, of satisfying the Puritans, he appointed a conference to be held at Hampton Court between the Puritan chiefs and some bishops and clergy. In this conference, the king defended the Church with great learning and judgment. After an impartial hearing, he declared that if this was all that the Puritans had to say, he would make them conform, or else “*herry* them out of the land.” Soon after this conference, the Liturgy was again reviewed. The words *or remission of sins* were added to the rubric before the absolution. A Collect for the royal family was appointed to be said in the morning and evening service, which ran thus: “Almighty God, which has promised to be a father of thine elect, and of their seed.” A petition for the royal family was likewise inserted in the Litany. The forms of thanksgiving for rain, fair weather, plenty, for peace and victory, and deliverance from the plague, were added to the end of the Litany. In the office for private baptism, the administration was confined to a *lawful minister*. The former rubric seemed to give some countenance to lay baptism. In the examination, “concerning this baptism, the questions about their calling on God for grace, and their being persuaded or not of the lawfulness of the child’s baptism, were omitted. Instead, the following words were inserted: “And because some things essential to this sacrament may happen to be omitted through fear or haste, in such cases of extremity, therefore, I demand farther of you,” *etc.* The title of the office for confirmation was enlarged as follows: “The order for confirmation, or laying on of hands upon children baptized, and able to render an account of their faith, according to the catechism following.” Those excellent questions and answers regarding the sacraments, drawn up by Dr. Overall, were added to the catechism.

The Liturgy remained in this state till the grand rebellion. Cromwell was determined to crush the Episcopalians, on account of their attachment to monarchy. He accordingly issued an ordinance against them, forbidding the use of the Liturgy, under the highest and most severe penalties. “It is useless,” says Dr. Harris, in his *Life of Cromwell*, “to spend words in exposing the cruelty of this declaration. Persecution is written on the very face of it, nor is it capable of a vindication.” Just before the Restoration, a deputation of Presbyterian divines waited on Charles II at Breda. They “congratulated the king on his attachment to the Covenant, and thanked God for his constancy to the Protestant religion; declared themselves no

enemies to moderate Episcopacy, only they desired that such things might not be pressed upon them in God's worship, which, in their judgment that used them, were indifferent, but by others were held to be unlawful." – "The king spoke kindly to them, and acknowledged their services, but referred all to the wisdom of Parliament." When the king landed at Dover, the Puritans demanded the total abolition of the Prayer book, whereupon, says Neal, [Neal, iv. 231, 232.] "The king replied with warmth, that while he gave them liberty, he would not have his own taken away; that he had always used that form of service, which he thought the best in the world." In order, if it were possible, to give them satisfaction, Charles appointed a conference between the dissenting teachers and some of the most eminent of the bishops and clergy. He authorized them to compare the Book of Common Prayer with the ancient liturgies of the primitive and purest ages. He directed them to make such alterations and corrections as should either be necessary or expedient to restore and preserve the unity of the Church. The commission, dated 25th March 1661, was directed to twelve bishops and twelve Presbyterian divines; to whom nine coadjutors on each side were added to supply the place of any of the principals that might be absent. They met in the Bishop of London's house in the Savoy. The conference came to nothing. It broke off without any good effect, through the perverseness, stiffness, and contentious humour of the Presbyterians. "They claimed everything, but would yield nothing." They not only revived all their old objections to the Liturgy, but they exerted their ingenuity to invent new cavils, and to multiply trifling and frivolous exceptions. Richard Baxter, in particular, had the assurance to draw up some offices of his own, which he called *The Reformed Liturgy*. This he proposed to have established instead of the Book of Common Prayer. His brethren on the same side highly applauding the proposal. He alleged that it was impossible to improve the old Liturgy, it was so bad, therefore he proposed his own, completely new and different, to be substituted. This was in direct violation of the king's commission. It only allowed them "to compare the Prayer book with the most ancient liturgies that had been used in the Church, in the most primitive and purest times"; requiring them "to avoid, as much as possible, all unnecessary alterations of the forms and Liturgy, wherewith the people were altogether acquainted, and had so long received in the Church of England." Such unreasonable and captious conduct disgusted the Episcopal clergy, and the conference broke up without anything being done.

The bishops proposed some few alterations, which were next year submitted to the convocation, and agreed to.

The principal alterations were as follows: The sentences, exhortation, confession, and absolution, were prefixed to the evening service. They had been added, at the former review, to the morning prayers. In both offices, the response, *The Lord's name be praised*, was added to the priest's exhortation, *Praise ye the Lord*. The Psalms were ordered to be ended on the twenty-eighth or twenty-ninth days of February. Formerly that month had borrowed a day from the preceding and following months. Lessons were appointed for the twenty-ninth of February, which was to be accounted the intercalary day in leap years. The *Gloria Patri* was ordered to be used after every division of the hundred and nineteenth psalm. The beginning of the prayers for the royal family was changed to *Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness*. The words *rebellion and schism* were added to the last deprecation in the Litany. In the petition for the clergy, the words *bishops, pastors, and ministers*, were changed to *bishop, priests, and deacons*. The occasional prayers were separated from the Litany. The Collect to be used in times of dearth and famine, which was struck out in Queen Elizabeth's review, was restored. The Collects for "Ember Weeks," "The Parliament," "All sorts and conditions of men," and the "General Thanksgiving," were now first inserted. There was a proper Collect appointed for Easter Eve. A Collect, Epistle, and Gospel were inserted for the sixth Sunday after the Epiphany. A portion of the prophecy of Malachi was very appropriately added to the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin. At the beginning of the hymn to be used on Easter Day, the first portion, *Christ our passover*, and also the *Gloria Patri*, were added. The Collects for the third Sunday in Advent and Innocents' Day, were entirely new at this time; and considerable improvements were made in others. The Epistles and Gospels were all taken out of the new translation. The rubric before the prayer for Christ's Church, requiring the priest then to place the bread and wine on the holy table, was now added. The word *oblations*, in the parenthesis towards the beginning of that prayer, and the clause at the end, in which we bless God's name for all his servants departed this life in his faith and fear, were also added. The exhortations were corrected and improved. That part relative to lookers-on whilst others communicated, without receiving themselves, was expunged. The directions to the priest in the margin of the consecration prayer, to take the bread and break it; to take

and lay his hand on the chalice, were now inserted. Likewise the rubric concerning the manner of consecrating more bread and wine, when the first is spent before all have communicated. Those at the conclusion, giving directions for the disposal of the remaining consecrated elements, and the money given at the Offertory, were now also inserted. The declaration concerning the intention of the Church in requiring the communion to be received kneeling, first inserted in King Edward's Second Liturgy, but omitted in Queen Elizabeth's review, was now restored. It was hoped that this precaution would put a stop to the unreasonable and malicious clamours of the Dissenters. "It is hereby declared, that (by kneeling at the communion) *no adoration is intended or ought to be done*, either unto the sacramental bread and wine there bodily received, or unto any corporal presence of Christ's natural flesh and blood. For the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances, and, therefore, *may not be adored* (for that were *idolatry*, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians); and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here; it being against the truth of Christ's natural body to be at one time in more places than one."

The following interrogatory was added to the office of public baptism: – "Wilt thou obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?" In the Collect immediately preceding the baptism of the child, this clause was inserted: – "Sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin." The direction for dipping the child, at the ministration of private baptism, was omitted, as no child that could bear immersion ought to be baptized at home. On account of the great growth of antipaedo baptism during the preceding rebellion, an office was compiled for those of riper years. In the catechism, two inaccurate expressions in the answers concerning the doctrine of the sacraments were corrected. The first was respecting the outward visible sign in baptism. The original answer was, "Water, wherein the person baptized is dipped or sprinkled with it." The answer was altered to "Water, wherein the person is baptized." The other was in the answer to the question, why infants were baptized, when, by reason of their tender age, they could not perform the conditions required of them. The reply to which then was: "Yes, they do perform them by their sureties, who promise and vow them both in their names," *etc.* This answer was considered harshly and obscurely expressed; it was therefore altered to, "because they promise them both by their

sureties," *etc.* The preface to the office for confirmation was abridged and appointed to be read before its administration. The solemn stipulation for taking the baptismal vow upon themselves, with the mutual salutation, the Lord's Prayer, and the final Collect from the communion service, were now inserted. Liberty was now also granted for persons ready and desirous to be confirmed to be admitted to the holy communion. A particular form was inserted for the publication of the banns of matrimony; and some expressions in the Collects, at the end of that office, were corrected. In the visitation of the sick, directions were added for the priest to inquire concerning the sick man's repentance; and to administer absolution only when it is humbly and heartily desired. The second Collect was enlarged and improved. In the Gospel, the clause respecting miraculous cures was omitted; as it was considered improper to be drawn into an ordinary precedent. The five last verses of the seventy-first psalm were now omitted. They are more properly to be used as a thanksgiving for recovery from sickness. The prayer for a sick child was now added; also that which is to be used when there appears to be small hopes of recovery, the commendatory prayer, and that for persons troubled in mind or conscience. The reviewers now first directed that the funeral service should not be used for the unbaptized, excommunicate, or suicides. The proper psalms for that office were now first inserted. In the first Collect, the words, "We, with this our brother, and all others departed in the true faith of God's holy name," were changed into "We, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name." In the Purification or Churching of Women, the Collect began, "O Almighty God, who has delivered this woman"; it was now altered to, "O Almighty God, we give thee humble thanks for that thou hast vouchsafed to deliver this woman," *etc.* The psalm also was altered from the hundred and twenty-first to the hundred and sixteenth, and the hundred and twenty-seventh. The Doxology was added to the end of the Lord's Prayer, as it had been also in the morning and evening service, and in the communion. office. The blessing at the end of the communion service was now first inserted. The forms to be used at sea were compiled and placed at the end of the Psalms.

The offices of Ordination were much improved. Deacons were required to be twenty-three years of age, and a Gospel was appointed for that office. The form of words formerly used at the imposition of hands, both at the ordination of priests and the consecration of bishops, were too

general. The Papists and Dissenters both perverted them to serve their own purposes. The office and work, therefore, to which the person was to be admitted, were now particularly specified in these forms. To the whole Liturgy an excellent preface was prefixed. It was drawn up by Bishop Saunderson, and justified the alterations made in this review.

The foregoing is a brief historical account of the compilation of the Book of Common Prayer, and of the several reviews. It will be at once seen to have been entirely the work of the Church herself. The civil power had no hand in it whatever. The bishops and clergy, in their convocations, compiled and made the alterations. The King and Parliament only established, by their *civil* sanction and authority, what the *ecclesiastical authority* had previously sanctioned and agreed upon. “It was, indeed, confirmed by the authority of Parliament, and there was good reason to desire that, to give it the force of a law; but the authority of the book and those changes is wholly to be derived from the Convocation, who alone consulted about them and made them. And the Parliament did take that care in enacting them, that might show they did only add the force of law to them; for in passing them it was ordered that the Book of Common and Ordination should only be read over (and even that was carried upon some debate, for many, as I have been told, moved that the book should be added to the act, as it was sent to the Parliament from the Convocation without ever reading it; but that seemed indecent and too implicit to others), and there was no change made in a tittle by Parliament. So that they only enacted by a law what the Convocation had done.” [Bishop of Sarum’s Vindication, *etc.* cited by Wheatly.]

We conclude, therefore, with the following just character of the Liturgy, from Bishop Jeremy Taylor: –

“The Liturgy of the Church of England hath advantages so many, and so considerable, as not only to raise itself above the devotions of other Churches, but to endear the affections of good people to be in love with liturgies in general. To the Churches of the Roman communion, we can say that ours is reformed; to the reformed Churches, we can say that it is orderly and decent. For we were freed from the impositions and lasting errors of a tyrannical spirit, and yet from the extravagances of a popular spirit too. Our reformation was done without tumult, and yet we saw it necessary to reform; we were zealous to cast away the old errors, but our zeal was balanced with consideration and the results of authority. We were not like

women or children, when they are affrighted with fire in their clothes; we shook off the coal, indeed, but not our garments, lest we should have exposed our Church to that nakedness which the excellent men of our sister Churches complained to be among themselves. And, indeed, it is no small advantage to our Liturgy that it was the offspring of all that authority which was to prescribe in matters of religion. The king and the priest, which are the *antistites religionis*, and the preservers of both the tables, joined in this work; and the people, as represented in Parliament, were advised withal, in authorizing the form, after much deliberation: so that it was not only reasonable and sacred, but free from the indiscretion, and, which is very considerable, from the scandals of popularity. That only in which the Church of Rome had prevaricated against the word of God, or innovated against apostolic tradition, was pared away; great part of it consisted of the very words of Scripture, as the Psalms, Lessons, Hymns, Epistles, and Gospels; and the rest was in every particular made agreeable to it, and drawn from the liturgies of the ancient Church. The rubrics of it were wrote in the blood of some of the compilers, men famous in their generations, whose reputation and glory of martyrdom, have made it immodest for the best of men now to compare themselves with them. And its composure is so admirable, that the most industrious wits of its enemies can scarce find out an objection of value enough to make a doubt, or scarce a scruple, in a serious spirit. There is no part of religion but is in the offices of the Church of England; for if the soul desires to be humbled, she hath provided forms of confession to God before his Church; if she will rejoice and give God thanks for particular blessings, there are forms of thanksgiving for all the solemn occasions which could be foreseen, and for which provision could by public order be made. If she will commend to God the public and private necessities of the Church and single persons, the whole body of Collects and devotions supplies that abundantly; and if her devotion be high and pregnant, and prepared to fervency and importunity of congress with God, the Litany is an admirable pattern of devotion, full of circumstances proportionable to a quick and earnest spirit. There are, also, in the offices, forms of solemn absolution and benediction; and if they be not highly considerable, there is nothing sacred in the evangelical ministry, but the altars themselves are made of unhallowed turf. When the revolution of the anniversary calls on us to perform our duty of special meditation on, and thankfulness to, God for the glorious benefits of Christ's incarnation,

nativity, passion, resurrection, ascension, etc., then we have the offices of Christmas, the Annunciation, Good Friday, Easter, and Ascension, etc., and the offices are so ordered, that, if they be summed up, they will be an excellent Creed, and the very design of the day teaches the meaning of an article of faith. The life and death of the saints, which are very precious in the eyes of God, are so remembered, that by giving thanks and praise God may be honoured, the Church instructed by the proposition of their examples, and we give testimony of the honour and love we pay to religion, by our pious veneration and esteem of those holy and beatified persons. To which, if we add the advantages of the whole Psalter, which is an entire body of devotion by itself, and hath its forms to exercise all graces, by way of internal act and spiritual intention, there is not any ghostly advantage which the most religious can either need or fancy, but what the ENGLISH LITURGY in its entire constitution will furnish us withal.”

The reformation of religion in Scotland was conducted by very different men than it had been in England. Whatever their views of church government might have been, it is undeniable that John Knox and the Church of his planting used a Liturgy. Buchanan, in his history, positively asserts that the *Scots subscribed to the religious worship and rites of the Church of England*. In 1557, the Lords of the Congregation ordained by a public act, that “it is thought expedient, advised and ordained, that in all parishes of this realm, the *common prayer be read weekly*, on Sundays and other Festival days, publicly in the parish churches, with the lessons of the Old and New Testament, *conformable to the Book of Common Prayer*.” The First Book of Discipline contains an order to the same effect; “In great towns we think it expedient that every day there be either sermon *or common prayer*, with some exercise of reading the Scriptures.” Knox himself always used the Liturgy. He entertained some objections to Edward VI’s First Book, which had been always used in Scotland; he therefore had influence to procure the Geneva Book to be substituted in its place. It is better known by the name of *Knox’s Liturgy*, or the *Old Scottish Liturgy*. When Andrew Melville took the lead in the Scottish Church, he introduced the extemporary method of conducting public devotions. The Liturgy continued, however, to be used in many places. In the year 1601, it was moved in the Assembly, which met that year at Burntisland, “that there were sundry prayers in it which were not convenient for these times.” The Assembly rejected this motion, and, in opposition, enacted, that it was

“thought good that the prayers already contained in the book (of Common Prayer) should neither be altered nor deleted; but, if any preacher would have any other prayers added, as more proper for the times, they should first present them to be tried and allowed by the General Assembly.” Robert Bruce, a Presbyterian minister, who had been banished in 1605, for sedition, to Inverness, and where he remained in exile for four years, “taught every Sunday before noon, and every Wednesday, and exercised at the *reading of the prayers* every other night.” John Scrimgeour, another Presbyterian teacher, was cited before the High Commission Court in 1620, and accused of refusing to conform to the Perth Articles, but especially for his mode of administering the Eucharist. In his defense, he alleged that, “there is no warrantable form directed or approved by the Kirk, besides that which is extant in print before the Psalm book (that is Knox’s Liturgy), according to which I have always done, so now I minister that Sacrament.” Bishop Sage says, that in his time (1690), many old people then alive remembered to have seen Knox’s Liturgy used by Episcopalians and Presbyterians indifferently, in various parts of the country, up to the time of Charles I.

The above-mentioned learned author has collected some of the prayers out of Knox’s Liturgy. The following are some words of a few of them; – The prayer “for the whole state of Christ’s Church,” appointed to be said after sermon, concluded with, “In whose name we make our humble petitions unto thee, even as he has taught us, saying, *Our Father,*” *etc.* The prayer to be used when “God threatens his judgments,” concludes with “Praying unto thee with all humility and submission of mind, as we are taught and commanded to pray, saying, *Our Father,*” *etc.* The prayer to be used “in times of affliction,” ends, “Our only Saviour and Mediator, in whose name we pray unto thee, as we are taught, *Our Father,*” *etc.* The prayer at the ordination, or, as it was called, admission of a superintendent or other minister, was, “Of whom the perpetual increase of thy grace we crave, as by thee, our Lord and only Bishop, we are taught to pray, *Our Father,*” *etc.* The prayer “for the obstinate,” in the order for excommunication, has these words: – “These thy graces, O heavenly Father, and farther, as thou knowest to be expedient for us, and for thy Church universal, we call for unto thee, even as we are taught by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, saying, *Our Father,*” *etc.* The last prayer, before excommunication: – “This we ask of thee, O heavenly Father, in the

boldness of our Head and Mediator, Jesus Christ, praying, as he has taught us, saying, *Our Father,*” etc. In the confession of sins in times of public fasting, they said, “We flee to the obedience and fearful justice of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator, praying as he has taught us, saying, *Our Father,*” etc. The prayer of “consecration” in baptism: “May be brought, as a lively member of his body, unto the full fruition of thy joys in the heavens, where thy Son, our Saviour Christ, reigneth, world without end, in whose name we pray, as he has taught us, saying, *Our Father,*” etc. In Knox’s Liturgy, the *Veni Creator, Magnificat*, or Song of the Blessed Virgin, the *Nunc Dimittis*, or Song of Old Simeon in the Temple, were sung. The *Gloria Patri* was repeated at the end of the Psalms. The Lord’s Prayer and the Ten Commandments were read every Sunday in the public worship. There was a set form for the administration of the Lord’s Supper. The First Book of Discipline enacted that the Sacrament should be administered “four times in the year.” The rubric in Knox’s Liturgy seems to intimate that it was more frequently administered. It says, “Upon the day that the Lord’s Supper is ministered, which is *commonly used once a month.*” The only terms of communion in Knox’s Confession of Faith were, – “That they could say the Lord’s Prayer, the Articles of the Belief, and the Ten Commandments, and understand the use and virtue of this holy sacrament.” In Knox’s Prayer book there was a set form for the administration of both the sacraments and all the holy offices. There were three distinct offices for the ordination of superintendents, presbyters, and readers. Superintendent was the title which he substituted for bishops, and readers for deacons. In 1580 an act of Assembly declared the offices of bishops and readers to be antichristian. At the same time, the assembly abolished the public use of the Liturgy. Hitherto the Doxology had always been sung after the Psalms. This laudable custom was, along with the Liturgy, ordered to be laid aside. It is reported that a congregation in Angus-shire, who were unacquainted with the new order, began singing the *gloria* as usual. The minister started up, and exclaimed to the astonished people, “No more glory to the Father, the Assembly has forbidden it.”

The extempore mode of public worship continued till the year 1616. In that year James VI convoked an assembly at Aberdeen, the Earl of Montrose being the commissioner. This assembly passed an act authorizing the compilation of a public Liturgy for the Church of Scotland. William Cowper, bishop of Galloway, and some of the most learned and pious of the

clergy, were appointed to draw it up. “Which,” says the author of the Life of Archbishop Spottiswoode, “I the more willingly mention, that the deceived party might know that the design of a Liturgy, which was afterwards looked upon as the dangerous Trojan horse sent in by their suspected neighbours, might have proved more properly such a *palladium* to them as might have preserved them to this day, had they not only scornfully, but seditiously rejected it, and have therefore found the same fate as they of Troy did, of whom it was observed, *peritura Troja perdidit primum Deos.*” This pious design did not at that time succeed. The prejudices of many, and the heats and animosities of the Presbyterian party, occasioned the design to be laid aside for that time. When James visited his native kingdom that same year, he urged the necessity of a Liturgy on the governors of the Church, and an exact conformity with their Mother Church of England. He directed his own household to receive the holy communion kneeling. He introduced an organ into the Chapel Royal; and the English Liturgy was thenceforward daily read in it up to the time of the riots in Charles I’s time. The Chapel Royal was then and for many years afterwards the parish church of the Canongate, the inhabitants of which used the Liturgy daily. James convoked an assembly at Perth, where the famous five articles were concluded and agreed on; they are as follows:— I. That the holy sacrament be received meekly and reverently by the people on their knees.

II. That if any good Christian, known to the pastor by long visitation of sickness, unable to resort to the Church, and shall earnestly desire to receive the communion in his own house, the minister shall not deny him so great a comfort, but shall administer it to him according to the form prescribed in the Church.

III. That in cases of great need and danger, the minister shall not refuse to baptize an infant in a private house, after the form used in the congregation; and shall, on the next Lord’s Day after, declare such private baptism to the people.

IV. That for stopping the increase of Popery, and settling true religion in the hearts of the people, it is thought good that the minister of every parish catechize the younger children of eight years of age, in the Belief, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord’s Prayer, and that children so instructed shall be presented to the bishop, who shall bless them with prayer for the

increase of their knowledge, and continuance of God's heavenly graces with them.

V. That considering how the inestimable benefits of our Lord's Birth, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, and the sending down of the Holy Spirit, were commendably and godly remembered at certain particular days and times by the whole Church of the world, and may be so now; therefore, it is thought meet that every minister shall on these days make commemoration of the said inestimable benefits from pertinent texts of Scripture, framing his doctrine and exhortation thereto, and rebuking all superstitious observations and licentious profanation thereof.

The above articles brought the Church of Scotland nearer to the custom of the Church Catholic than it had hitherto been. The articles were passed by a majority of the assembly, and were afterwards ratified by Parliament. The clergy were instructed to read them from their pulpits, and explain them to their people. In 1621, James ordered his privy council, by proclamation, to conform to the orders of the Church. He assured them that if they did not, they should be removed from their preferments. He instructed the privy council "to take order that none should bear office in any burgh, nor be chosen sheriff-deputy or clerk, but such as conformed in all points to the said orders." The nation were well disposed to conform to the Perth articles. It was the remnant of the Presbyterians which excited resistance. These drew off the ignorant and discontented to separate meetings. They used the Perth articles as a watchword to keep up agitation, and to poison the minds of the credulous with false alarms of Popery. This party particularly objected to kneel at receiving the communion. It was then and still is the Presbyterian custom to sit at each side of long tables when receiving the communion. A lay elder walks round with a basket, and delivers a slice of bread to one, without benediction, who breaks and divides it with his immediate neighbours. To evince their opposition to the Perth article which requires kneeling, the communicants now stood, and some even walked about and helped themselves to the sacred elements. Bishop Forbes, in his first charge to his clergy of the diocese of Edinburgh, besought them, as the most powerful means of healing the distractions of the Church, to give ready and willing obedience to the Perth articles. He peremptorily required them to administer the communion to their respective flocks on the ensuing Easter. He desired them to take it themselves on their knees, as an example, and to minister the elements out of their own hands to

the people. The greater part of the clergy complied, but several flatly refused.

Charles was desirous of settling the peace of the Church. He saw and lamented the want of a Liturgy when he visited Scotland. Dr Laud preached in the Chapel Royal, Holyrood, on the “benefit of conformity and the reverend ceremonies of the Church, with all the marks of approbation and applause imaginable.” – “When he was consulted on the subject, his decided advice, strongly and repeatedly enforced, was to take the English Liturgy without any variation from it, that so the service book might pass through all his majesty’s dominions.” To this the Scottish bishops replied, “That in King James’ time there had been a motion made for it, but that the presenting of it was deferred on account of the partial opposition to the articles of Perth. They thought it neither safe nor fitting at that time to make any farther change. Even yet they were not without apprehensions for the consequences.” Maxwell, bishop of Ross, said, “That the Scottish bishops would be better pleased to have a Liturgy made by themselves, and in some things different from the English service, as what would best please their countrymen, whom they found very jealous of the least dependence on the Church of England.” Charles was himself as jealous of the liberties and independence of his native Church as any of the bishops or people could be; and these arguments induced him the more readily to acquiesce in the views of the bishops. It was therefore decided to compile a new one. The older and more experienced bishops urged, “That the kingdom of Scotland generally had long been jealous that by the king’s continued absence from them, they should be by degrees reduced to be but as a province of England, and subject to their laws and government, to which they would never submit; nor would any man of honour, who loved the king best, and respected England most, ever consent to bring that dishonour on his country. But if his majesty would give orders for preparing a Liturgy, with a few alterations, it could easily be done, and in the mean time they would so dispose the minds of the people for its reception, that they should even desire it.” Bishop Laud was exceedingly averse to the compilation of a new Liturgy, or of making any alterations on the English Book of Common Prayer. Especially as the Aberdeen assembly, in the late King James’ time, had moved for the adoption of the English Liturgy without any variation. The king’s national prejudices coinciding with the advice of the bishops, a new compilation was decided on. A commission was issued to a select

number of the bishops, who were both able and willing for the undertaking. They were instructed to submit the result of their labours from time to time to Dr Laud, and Dr Wren, bishop of Norwich. The latter was particularly well skilled in the old liturgies of the Greek and Latin Churches. “The compilation of the Scottish Liturgy,” says Bishop Walker, “forms one of the gravest accusations against Laud, who, it is maintained, at length endeavoured to *impose* a Liturgy of his own formation on the Church of Scotland, carried much nearer to the Popish model, as it is pretended, even than the English. This calumny, with all its connecting circumstances, Laud has himself triumphantly confuted in the history of his ‘Troubles and Trials’; yet it is continued with unabated pertinacity both in England and Scotland. Whatever be the merits of the work, the proof is incontestable that it was not the work of Laud, – that the compilation was Scottish, – and that the bishops, by whom and under whose authority it was made, under the model generally of the English Liturgy, were in fact jealous of English interference, and actually resisted that subservience of which they were accused.”

The Presbyterians and the great men in power were averse to the Liturgy. The commissioners began their work by collecting the canons. These authorized and sanctioned a Liturgy which had not yet been compiled. Maxwell, bishop of Ross, carried the Book of Canons up to London for the king’s approbation. Charles was anxious to see the good work established, and, unfortunately, issued a proclamation for the due observation of the canons in his kingdom of Scotland forthwith. This he did without consulting either the privy council or the General Assembly, which gave the enemies of the Liturgy a popular argument against it. Archbishop Laud cautioned the Scottish bishops “not to propose any business connected with the Church to the king which was contrary to the laws of the country, which he could not be supposed to understand; and not to put anything in execution without the consent and approbation of the privy council. “The publication of the Book of Canons excited much clamour among the Presbyterian party. The bishops became alarmed at the threatening aspect of affairs. They wrote to Dr Laud, requesting him to advise the king to postpone the Liturgy for some time. The Earl of Traquair, designing their ruin and that of the Church, procured the signatures of some of the last-promoted and least-experienced bishops, recommending the king to proceed with the Liturgy. Traquair went to London and represented the older

bishops as timorous, temporizing men, – that no danger or opposition might be apprehended, – and promised, if authorized, *on his life* to have it read. Traquair's deceit and hypocrisy succeeded.

The Liturgy was at last completed and published. It varied in a very trifling degree from the English book, and that chiefly in the communion service. It restored the oblation to its former place after the consecration prayer. It was the identical Liturgy which was used in the beginning of the Reformation. It was the same as Buchanan says the Scottish Reformers adopted when they “subscribed to the religious worship and rites of the Church of England.” The Liturgy was revised by the two English bishops before named, and sanctioned by the king and privy council. It was ordered, by royal proclamation at the market crosses of all the royal burghs in the kingdom, to be used forthwith in all parish churches. Archbishop Spottiswoode instructed the bishops to make their clergy intimate to their congregations, that the Liturgy would be read the following Sunday. Charles intended that the Liturgy should be read for the first time on Easter Day. Baillie, in his letters, assures us that it was postponed because “Hope, the king's advocate, knew that the party of the Presbyterians were not yet ripe for action.” Sunday, 23d July 1637, was at last appointed for the first reading in the cathedral church of St. Giles. Archbishop Spottiswoode, who was at same time Chancellor of the Kingdom, the Archbishop of Glasgow, and several other bishops, the Privy Council, the Lords of Session, and the Magistrates of Edinburgh, were present. Dr Hannah, dean of Edinburgh, was appointed to read the prayers, and Bishop Lindsay intended to preach. No sooner did the service commence, than the rabble crested such noise and clamour, that not a word could be heard. Immediately a shower of brickbats, stones, bludgeons, and joint stools were aimed at the dean's heed. At this critical juncture, Bishop Lindsay entered the pulpit. He attempted to appease the madness of the people, by reminding them of the sacredness of the place, of their duty to God, and obedience to the king. Instead of allaying the tumult, the bishop's exhortation increased their ferocity and rage. They added blasphemy to sacrilege. The famous Janet Geddes pitched a joint stool at the bishop's head, to the imminent danger of his life. [Janet is said to have made a bonfire of this identical stool, for joy at the restoration of Charles II.!] At this stage of the riot, the Lord Chancellor, from his pew in the gallery, commanded the Lord Provost and Magistrates to suppress it. The Provost then, with such assistance as he could procure, with great difficulty thrust

out the rioters. When internal quiet was restored, the dean proceeded with the service. It was rendered inaudible by the clamour and noise without. The doors were battered and the windows broken. The mob next assaulted the bishops and clergy on their return from the church. They accused them with the intention of ensnaring the people, and thrusting superstition and Popery upon them. They attacked them with stones and all manner of indescribable filth. Lindsay, bishop of Edinburgh, was especially the object of their savage barbarity. They tore his Episcopal robe, assaulted his person, threw him down, and trampled him under foot on the street. He would have been killed on the spot, but for the prompt interference of the Earl of Wemyss, who dispatched an armed guard for his protection. So great was the popular fury against this prelate, that the magistrates with great difficulty prevented his being murdered at the altar of his own church. The same tumult, clamour, execrations, and murderous threats against the bishops, superstition, and Popery, attended the clergy in the other churches. Some did not attempt to read the Liturgy. In the interval the privy council met. The Lord Provost and Magistrates engaged to exert their utmost energy to maintain order and quietness. The Liturgy was in consequence again read in the afternoon. The mob, however, still kept possession of the streets. They shouted "A Pope! a Pope! Antichrist! the sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" They again attacked Bishop Lindsay on his return from church, and he was again preserved from being murdered on the streets by the Earl of Roxburgh, who received him into his coach. The mob pursued and pelted the coach with stones. Professor Baillie, a Presbyterian author, admits "that such a tumult was never heard of since the Reformation." The 23d July was therefore called "Stony Sunday". Although these tumults occurred in Edinburgh, yet in other parts of the country the Liturgy was well received. The Bishops of Ross, Dumblane, and Brechin, read the Liturgy at the previous Easter; to which no opposition whatever was made. At Glasgow the archbishop appointed Mr. Annan of Ayr to preach on the necessity and propriety of set forms of prayer. When he left the church, the mob attacked him with all sorts of missiles, and, but for the protection of the Magistrates, he would have been made a martyr for the Liturgy." "The tumult in Edinburgh," says Bishop Guthrie, was taken to have been but a rash emergent, without any pre-deliberation; whereas the truth is, it was the result of a consultation in Edinburgh in April, at which time Mr. Alexander Henderson came thither from his brethren in Fife, and Mr. David Dickson

from those in the west country. And these two having communicated to my Lord Balmerino and Sir Thomas Hope (Lord Advocate), the minds of those they came from, and gotten their approbation thereto, did afterward meet at the house of Nicholas Balfour, in the Cowgate, with Nicholas and Euphemia Henderson, Bethia and Elspa Craig, and several other matrons, and recommended to them that they and their adherents might give the first affront to the book; assuring them that men should afterwards take the business out of their hands. The matrons having undertaken so to do, Henderson and Dickson returned home." It is evident, therefore, that the nation did not object to the Liturgy. It was a faction only who did so, to advance their own designs. The distraction of the times, the treachery of men high in office, and the intrigues of the Presbyterian party, completely disappointed the benevolent intentions of the sovereign. Rebellion followed sedition and blasphemy; and the famous Glasgow Assembly completed the work of Messrs. Henderson and Dickson, and their allies in the Cowgate. In introducing a Liturgy into the Church in Scotland, Charles assumed no powers incompatible with law and justice. He complied with a petition of the General Assembly in his father's reign, requesting that a Liturgy might be composed for the National Church. He then only restored what had been practiced by Knox and others in the beginning of the Reformation. In the Preface to the Westminster Directory, it is acknowledged that, "in the beginning of the blessed Reformation, our wise and pious ancestors took care to set forth an order for redress of many things which they then by the Word discovered to be vain, erroneous, superstitious, and idolatrous in the public worship of God. This occasioned many godly and learned men to rejoice much in the Book of Common Prayer *at that time set forth.*" Some of the compilers of the rejected Liturgy were actively engaged in the cause of religion soon after the Reformation, and had the best opportunities of ascertaining the truth of the following allegation, which they have inserted in the Preface to the Liturgy; – "Our first Reformers were of the same mind with us, as appears from the ordinance they made, that in all the parishes of the realm the common prayer should be read weekly, on Sundays and other festival days, with the Lessons of the Old and New Testament, conform to the order of the Book of Common Prayer (meaning that of England; for it is known that divers years after we had no other order for common prayer). This is recorded to have been the first head concluded, in a frequent council of the lords and barons professing Christ Jesus. We keep the words of

history. Religion was not then placed in rites and gestures, nor men taken with the fancy of extemporary prayer. Sure, the worship of God in his Church being the most solemn action of us, his poor creatures here below, ought to be performed by a Liturgy advisedly set and framed, and not according to the sudden and various fancies of men. This shall suffice for the present to have said. The God of mercy confirm our hearts in his truth, and preserve us alike from profaneness and superstition. Amen.”

The famous Assembly of Glasgow, in 1638, consummated the partial opposition to the Liturgy. In their Session, on the 6th December of that year, they condemned the Service book, Book of Canons, Book of Ordination, and the Court of High Commission. The act of Assembly asserts that “the Book of Common Prayer, besides the Popish frame and forms of divine worship, contains many Popish errors and ceremonies, and the seeds of manifold and gross superstition and idolatry.” They rescinded all the acts of Assembly for the last forty years. They excommunicated the bishops, and condemned the office as antichristian. At the Restoration the Liturgy was not restored. There was no external difference between the Episcopalian and Presbyterian places of worship. There were not even black gowns or surplices, as now used in the Episcopal Church. After the Revolution, when the Episcopal Church was left to her own resources, and free to follow her own choice, the Liturgy of the Church of England was adopted. It has continued ever since to be the only form of worship in the Scottish Episcopal Church. Archbishop Sharpe and the other bishops were consecrated in 1661, by the English Book of Ordination. All their successors have ever since been consecrated, and the clergy ordained, by the same ordinal. The Scottish Episcopal clergy sign the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, which are now the standard of their Church. One of the canons enacts, that “no person shall hereafter be received into the ministry of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, until he has first subscribed, willingly and *ex animo*, to the Book of Articles of Religion, and has acknowledged all and every the articles therein contained, being in number thirty-nine, besides the ratification, to be agreeable to the Word of God. He shall also solemnly declare before the bishop that he does from his heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, that damnable doctrine and position that princes, excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, or any authority of the See of Rome, may be deposed and murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever.” Another canon also determines that, “as

in all the ordinary parts of divine service, it is necessary to fix by authority the precise form, from which no presbyter or deacon shall be at liberty to depart by his own alterations or insertions, lest such liberty should produce consequences destructive of decency and order, it is hereby enacted that in future, every presbyter and deacon in this Church shall adhere strictly to the words of the English Liturgy, in the morning and evening service, unless when, for obvious reasons, resulting from the difference between a legal establishment and a toleration, his bishop shall authorize any deviations.”

[Lives of the Compilers of the Liturgy, with an Historical Account of its several Reviews, by Samuel Downes, Presbyter of the Church of England. The Author’s History of the Reformation in Scotland, with the Authorities therein cited.]

Chapter 2.

Liturgies always used in the Church – Forms commanded in Scripture – Examples – Psalms used in the Temple service – Examples from the Prophets – Our Saviour and the Apostles prescribed Forms – Jews used Forms of Prayer – Lord’s Prayer – Remarks – A Badge of our Profession – One Mind and one Mouth – Examples from the Revelations – First Christians’ Form of Prayer – Extract from the Liturgy of the Church of Jerusalem – Liturgies in the Early Ages of the Church – Decisions of Councils – Opinions of the Nonconformists – Of Calvin – Romanists separate – Extemporary Prayers first introduced – Jesuits – Preach against set Forms – Advantages of a Liturgy – Disadvantages of Extemporary Prayers – Beauty of the Liturgy – Composition left to the Governors of the Church – Obedience necessary.

The stated form and manner of worship was prescribed by our Heavenly Father himself. Before the law, it consisted of sacrifices offered by none but the patriarch, or head of the family. Under the law, it consisted both of sacrifices and a stated Liturgy. The use of a Liturgy is not peculiar to the Church of Rome, nor is it one of her inventions. Prescribed forms of public prayer were used in the Church long before there was such a thing as Popery. They were used by the ancient Jewish Church under the Law. Our Saviour, his apostles, and the primitive Christians, invariably worshipped by a known public form of prayer. Therefore, our Saviour’s precept and example, with that of the apostles, and the current usage of the Church in all ages, is sufficient warrant for the use of a Liturgy, even were it not so obvious to common sense and decency as it unquestionably is. The public worship of God should be unchangeable like its object. He “is the same

yesterday, today, and forever.” He is without variableness or shadow of turning. So should our public prayers be also. The sins, infirmities, and necessities of mankind are perpetual. The devout prayer, therefore, of *Lord have mercy upon us*, is as powerful and necessary this day as it was the preceding. The spirituality of prayer does not consist in a constant change of words, but in the sincerity of the heart. This sincerity is known only to God, and it must be greatly excited and assisted in the united prayers of priest and people in a known, well-understood, and never-varying “form of sound words”. There is no command in Scripture to use forms of prayer only; but it is certain that several forms of prayer are commanded in Scripture. Moses was commanded to speak to Aaron, and instruct him to bless the people by a form dictated from heaven: “On *this* wise shall ye bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” [Num. 6:23.] Here, then, is a form prescribed for Amon, who was a man of *great natural eloquence*. In the event of uncertain murder, a form of prayer is prescribed to be used by the elders and judges. [Deut. 21:7–8.] Not only a form of words, but an order of ceremonies to be performed. The Lord is entreated to be merciful, and on the due use of these prescribed words and ceremonies, he promises to be merciful and to remove the guilt of blood. He also prescribed a form of words to be used when the people had made an end of tithing all the tithes of their increase. It occupies three long verses. [Deut. 26:13–15.] After the passage of the Red Sea, Moses composed a song of thanksgiving, which he and the men sang alternately first. Then his sister Miriam the prophetess, and all the women, took timbrels, and sang it by course afterwards: “I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.” [Exod. 15:21.] King David composed and appointed by Divine inspiration the Book of Psalms for the public service. This appears evident from the titles of several of them. We read in the Book of Chronicles that he delivered them unto the hands of Asaph and his brethren as set forms of praise and thanksgiving. He likewise appointed the “Levites to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even.” [1 Chron. 23:30.] Solomon and Hezekiah commanded the Levites to use the Psalms in the Temple service as the stated regular form of prayers. This sacred and invaluable Liturgy was renewed by Ezra. In the books of the inspired Prophets there are repeated

instances of prescribed forms of prayer used on particular occasions. It amounts, therefore, to a demonstration that set forms of prayer are more agreeable to Him to whom all flesh shall come, than extemporaneous prayers. Had the unpremeditated effusion of the moment been most acceptable, he would never have composed prayers himself for the Jewish Church, nor suffered his inspired servants to have done so. Above all, he would never have promised forgiveness of sins, the acceptance of thanksgivings and praise, nor the donation of a blessing, when these forms of prayer were used with faith and repentance. On the occasion of a solemn fast, he condescended to prescribe the very words in which the priests and people were to deprecate his own fierce wrath: "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them. Wherefore should they say among the people, where is their God? *Then* will the Lord be jealous for the land, and *pity his people.*" [Joel 2:17–18.] This form of prayer is used daily in the Litany. In it not only the words are set down, but the *place* where the priests were to officiate is prescribed. So that the order and decency of churches are not so indifferent or unimportant as some imagine. But besides there is a special promise of forgiveness annexed, *pity* must in this place mean forgiveness, if it mean anything. At another time he entreated Israel by the prophet Hosea to return to their duty. At the same time he commanded them "*Take with you words*, and turn unto the Lord, *and say unto him*, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips, for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy." On the use of this *set form*, he immediately adds this gracious promise; – "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel, he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his root as Lebanon." [Hosea 14:1–5.] At the ceremony of laying the foundation of the second Temple a set form was used: "And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David, king of Israel and they sang together by course, in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord, because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel." [Ezra 3:10–11.] It is evident, therefore, that the Spirit is given in greater abundance in the use of a Liturgy than in extemporaneous prayers. A Liturgy must, therefore, be more

acceptable. The fact that He himself composed forms of prayer for the Jewish Church proves it. The Psalms are the most sublime Liturgy, out of which the greatest part of the Common Prayer is taken. The most careless perusal of the New Testament will show that our Saviour joined in the liturgical service of the Jewish Temple.

It appears from Scripture that it is the proper province of the priest to make public intercession for the people. The people ought, however, to bear their part by responding. They are required to do so by the inspired Psalmist. In a Psalm of prayer and praise, the people are commanded, "Let all the people say *Amen, praise ye the Lord.*" [Psalm 106:48.] In obedience, we find, that in "David's Psalm of Thanksgiving" "all the people said Amen, and praised the Lord." [1 Chron. 16:36.] That whole chapter is a set form of thanksgiving, which David prescribed to the Jewish Church. Again, at the dedication of Solomon's Temple, the priests and Levites praised God, saying, "for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever." This was their usual form of praise, which is so often repeated in the Psalms, but particularly in the hundred and thirty sixth Psalm. Solomon composed a long prayer, which he himself, having a Divine commission, used at the dedication of the Temple. [2 Chron. 6:1-42.] "Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices: and the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house." [2 Chron. 7:1-2.] Here is the most convincing proof that a precomposed set form of prayer was acceptable. It was answered by fire from heaven, and the glory of the Lord filled the house. After Solomon had prayed, and the priests done sacrifice, then the people performed their parts: "They *bowed themselves* with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and *worshiped* and praised the Lord, saying, He is good, for his mercy endureth forever." The Spirit of God ordered this service. It is, therefore, a demonstration that He approved of the people bearing their part in his public worship. It may be said that this was the manner of worshipping God under the Law, but which is now abolished, as well as the other Levitical services. It may be answered that most of the institutions in the Christian Church are adopted from the Jewish. But the apostles have removed this objection by continuing the practice in the Christian Church, and admitting the people to bear their part in the public worship of God. It is, therefore, not an abolished legal ceremony. St. Paul

determines that even the ignorant and unlearned had a duty assigned to them in the public assemblies: "Else when thou shalt bless with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say *Amen* at thy giving of thanks." [1 Cor. 14:16.] In the description of the prayers and praises of the Church triumphant, the angels and elders represent the clergy, and the multitude the people. Each of them, in allusion to the custom of the Church militant, had their own special parts to perform. And ever since the Christian worship was established, the people have always enjoyed the inestimable privilege of joining their voices with the priest in responses.

Our Saviour also prescribed a set form of prayer to his apostles, and through them to the whole Church. That prayer is besides the *rule* of our desires. In the Sermon on the Mount, he instructed his disciples to pray *after this manner*. It is contended that these words merely imply a general direction for prayer, and perhaps it may be so; but the same words used again on another occasion show, at least, that they were intended for a form. The *form* was given two years after the *directory*, yet precisely the same words were used on both occasions. The *directory*, *after this manner*, was delivered in the Sermon on the Mount. The *form*, the peremptory command, *when ye pray, say*, was delivered on another occasion, and after a lapse of at least two years. Our Saviour had been engaged in social prayer with his disciples. At the conclusion of which, one of them requested him to teach them to pray, as John and all other masters in Israel taught their disciples a peculiar form of prayer. He immediately repeated the identical words which he had prescribed in his sermon two years before. He at the same time added a command: – WHEN YE PRAY, SAY, *etc.* Besides the Psalms, the Jews used several forms of human composition in our Saviour's time. So far was he from disapproving of these, that the clauses in the form prescribed to his disciples are extant in the Jewish books at this day. The words, *Our Father which art in heaven*, was the usual preface of the Jewish prayers. Had he disapproved of forms of prayer, he never would have collected his own prayer out of existing forms. His imposing a form under these circumstances, therefore, shows his approbation of forms in general. The reflection of the learned Grotius on our Saviour's adopting the Jewish prayers is very remarkable: "So far was the Lord himself of the Christian Church from all affectation of necessary novelty." Christ, in this instance, has shown us the respect due to the ancient and approved forms of the Church before his appearance in the flesh. Christianity is the perfection of

the old religion, and Christ's Spirit governed the Church under the Old Dispensation as well as he does now under the New. Had it been designed for a directory, he would not have given them a form, and bid them use it, but have instructed them for what things in general to ask. This was the method adopted by the Westminster Divines. They give no form, but merely suggest what things the minister should ask in prayer. It has been alleged that our Saviour's command was only temporary, till his disciples should be more fully instructed by the Holy Ghost. Even so late as the nineteenth century, a member of the United Associate Synod asserted that, "I do not think that the prayer, commonly called the Lord's Prayer, is a prayer that can be used in the present day; and I object to its being inserted in our Testimony, because there is not one word about Christ in it. I consider that it was merely an *interim* prayer between the Old and the New Testament Dispensations, and that it ceased when Christianity came into full operation. Such is my opinion, and therefore I cannot use it."

There is not a particular Church in the whole world that does not use a Liturgy, the Presbyterians of all denominations in these kingdoms alone excepted. It is not much to the credit of extemporary gifts that the Lord's Prayer should be omitted, whether by design or accident. It sanctifies and renders all other prayers acceptable, not simply its bare rehearsal, but, as the Presbyterian Catechism very justly and properly says, "so that it be done with understanding, faith, reverence, and other graces necessary to the right performance of the duty of prayer." [Confession of Faith, p. 362.]

To use the language of one of the holiest and best of living men, "The daily service, morning and evening, calls forth our faith, elevates our hope, and inflames our love or charity, for the increase of which, with all that is truly good, we incessantly pray, beginning with the exercise of *repentance*. The confession of our sins is so general that the most advanced Christian will ever need to say it with a feeling sense of his imperfections and daily trespasses; and yet is so contrived that every particular sinner will find room to recollect his predominant disorders, with their aggravations. And while it fervently excites us, under a sense of our miseries, to cry for mercy, it fixes our faith and hope upon those promises made to mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. At the same time, it puts us in mind of, and earnestly begs grace that we may perform *the whole duty of man* to God, our neighbour, and ourselves, in the exercise of a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of his holy name. The *absolution* holds out the hope, and gives the

sacerdotal assurance of God's pardon, but *only if we truly repent*, and *unfeignedly believe* his holy Gospel. Upon this we have confidence to call upon Him as our reconciled Father in Christ, saying the Lord's Prayer, which EXCEEDS all that the tongue of man can say of it – a PERFECT PRAYER, worthy of its Divine author, embracing all our wants, and adapted to every act of devotion. The Church, therefore, in obedience to her Lord's express command, "WHEN YE PRAY, SAY, OUR FATHER," etc. inserts it into every distinct office, as here in the introduction, which is of great influence and importance towards the right performance of the rest; and they that negligently miss it can expect less benefit from the sequel. It is used again in the morning prayer, the Litany, and altar service, on the proper days." [Bishop of Moray's Friendly Address, p. 39.]

Can any form of words convey a more express command than, WHEN ye pray, SAY? Can any words more clearly indicate our Saviour's will that his disciples, and all that through them should believe in him, should use this Divine prayer forever? Our Saviour, no doubt, prescribed it as a pattern for other prayers, and as a remedy against that vain repetition and much speaking which he condemned in the heathen, and admonished his disciples to beware of. We cannot, we dare not omit and neglect the constant daily use of this "most comprehensive prayer," [Conf. of Faith.] taught and enjoined by the Son of God, the Head of the Church, and chief Bishop of Souls. It is a prayer which all Christian Churches have used from the days of our Saviour to the present day, and which will continue to be used till time shall be swallowed up in eternity. Its willful omission in public worship has much of the nature of spiritual pride, by preferring our own words to the gracious dictates and the peremptory command of our only Mediator and Redeemer. This prayer is only *once* used in each distinct office, and if that is thought a burdensome or vain repetition, what objections can be brought against the 136th psalm, where the words *His mercy endureth forever*, are repeated twenty-six times?

There is not the least intimation that this prayer was intended to be temporary. The words, "when ye pray," are not limited; indeed they carry the idea of perpetuity along with them. If this objection were tenable, then the institutions of the sacraments and ordination are liable to the imputation of temporary measures. As he did not limit the time, therefore their use is perpetual to the end of the world. It is a badge of our profession, imposed by Christ himself. Its use is imperative, if we desire to be accounted his

disciples. To pray in Christ's name is to pray in his mediation, in dependence on his merits and intercession for the acceptance of our prayers. Prayers may therefore be offered up in Christ's name, although his name be not expressly mentioned. There is no doubt that the early Christians prayed in the mediation of Christ, although it is not mentioned, "when they lift up their voice with one accord," [Acts 5:24.] after the deliverance of Peter and John. When Christ prescribed his prayer, he was not then ascended. His disciples were not to ask in his name till after that event. Now that he is ascended, it can be as well offered in his name and mediation as if both had been expressed in it. It is impossible to offer it in any other spirit than through his mediation, now that that doctrine is more fully explained and taught. We can only call God *Our Father* in and through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. The objection, that we do not read in Scripture of its ever having been used by the apostles, is frivolous. The same objection might be urged against baptizing in the name of the Holy Trinity, because it is not always mentioned as having been practiced by the apostles. The ancient Fathers must have known the apostolic practice, having lived so near their time, and some of them having actually conversed with them. They agree in one universal testimony, that in the apostolic age liturgies were used. It is not probable that in these liturgies the Lord's Prayer should be omitted. It was the badge of their discipleship. The petitions all run in the plural number, which is a clear proof of its catholicity and designation for a public congregation. St. Paul and Silas joined together in their prayers and praises in the jail at Philippi. St. Paul accuses the Corinthians, because in the public congregation they had different psalms and doctrines; which shows that they had broken his rule of all speaking the same thing in a precomposed form of sound words. In the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul entreats the Church in Rome to glorify God with one mind and one mouth. He could not thereby mean that the people as mere hearers should glorify God by the mouth of the priest alone. He evidently intended that the people should unite with the priest and with each other in a known set form; and all with one accord agree together in what they asked, as if they had but one mouth and one mind. This can be done in a liturgy; but by the extemporary method each congregation differs from another. They have neither concord nor agreement, because they want the bond of union, – a form of sound words. Timothy is commanded by that apostle who had "the care of all the Churches," "to hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of

me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” [2 Tim. 1:13.] – “And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses (the form of sound words), the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” [2 Tim. 2:2.] St. Paul was himself, by an immediate command from the Head of the Church, sent to Ananias and the other disciples at Damascus, for instruction in the Gospel. The knowledge received by St. Paul on this subject he afterwards communicated to Timothy, whom on that account he called “his own son in the faith”. He directed him to commit the same to other faithful men, that they might teach the same to others. Here there appears to be a form of sound words handed down through five successive stages, originating with Christ himself. From which we may safely conclude that an uniform standard of doctrine was established in the Church. In a known and uniform liturgy we show our union and communion with the Church triumphant: “They cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood.” [Rev. 6:10.] It is therefore manifest that we are warranted by the example of God’s people, both in the Church militant under the Law and the Gospel, and the Church triumphant in heaven, where just men are made perfect, to use a prescribed liturgy.

Our Saviour, in his last agonies on the cross, prayed by a set form composed by the prophet David: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” In his agony in the garden, he used the *same words* in three different acts of prayer. The repentant prodigal, in the parable, is represented by our Lord himself to have precomposed a set form, in which to address his offended father: “I will arise,” says he, “and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.” [St. Luke 15:18.] The prodigal alluded to in the parable is the Gentile world. The Father is the God of all mercies, who refuseth not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrowful. It is clear, therefore, that our Saviour approved of a set form of prayer. Inasmuch as He represents a guilty wanderer addressing a precomposed penitential request for forgiveness to a justly offended father. In conformity with this tacit recommendation, the Church of England has inserted the prodigal’s words in her excellent Liturgy. At the conclusion of all his epistles, St. Paul uses a set form of benediction, with very little variation: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy

Ghost, be with you all. – Amen.” This benediction is also adopted into the Liturgy. This benediction is *nowhere commanded* in Scripture to be used. It is remarkable, however, that in all places of worship, where extemporary prayers are used, it is the invariable, unchangeable conclusion of their service. Whereas it is equally remarkable, that the Lord’s Prayer, though authorized by a *peremptory command*, is almost never used. The disciple whom Jesus loved has shown that in heaven the Church triumphant worship God by a set form. He says that the sound of their united voices, in a set form, is like “the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings.” The Church militant and the Church triumphant being but one family, it is reasonable that we on earth should imitate the custom of just men made perfect. We should endeavour to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven. In this case it is to be done by uniting, with *one accord*, in a Scriptural Liturgy. In the use of which a whole kingdom resembles one congregation, one congregation is like one family, and one family is as one man.

In the Apocalypse the inspired servant of Christ says, that “the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*” – “And they sang a new song, saying, *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.* And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying, with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.* And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, *Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever.* And the four beasts said, Amen.” [Revelations 4:8–11, 5:9–14.] “After this I beheld,

and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, *Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.* And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God, saying, AMEN. *Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might unto our God, for ever and ever, Amen.*” – “After these things heard I a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, ALLELUIA; *Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.* And again they said, *Alleluia*, and her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, and the four beasts, fell down and worshipped God who sat on the throne, saying, AMEN; ALLELUIA. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, *Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.* And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the *voice of many waters*, and as the *voice of mighty thunderings*, saying, ALLELUIA; *for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*” [Revelations 3:1–8.]

In his sublime prayer, our Lord instructs us to pray that we may be enabled to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven. It is evident, from the vision of St. John in the Apocalypse, that He is worshipped and praised in heaven by a set form. The Church militant should therefore follow the example of the Church triumphant. Accordingly, in the first public common prayer recorded in the New Testament, the apostles and first Christians used a form. That it must have been precomposed and used in their public devotions is evident from the expression of “lifting up their voice with *one accord*”. In extempore prayers it is not possible for a congregation to pray with one accord, because they cannot know beforehand what the minister will say. They *cannot lift up their voice* at all, far less with *one accord*, because they have no share in the prayers. They are mere hearers, and cannot possibly join in words which they never heard before. When Peter and John had escaped from the malice of the chief priests and elders, they reported their danger to their own company, who

“lift up their voice to God with *one accord*, and said, Lord, thou art God; who hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of thy servant David hath said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. [The Psalmist uses the word Anointed, which meant Christ; and, accordingly, the Apostle here supplies that sacred name. Psalms 2:2.] For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings; and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy ward, by stretching forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.” [Acts 4:23–31.] Here is a demonstrative proof that the Apostles used a precomposed set form of prayer, in which the congregation joined with *one accord*. But, besides this, the Liturgies ascribed to St. Mark and St. James are still extant. They have been corrupted in the ages since the apostolic time. “For,” says Mr. Bennet, “besides many things, which have a strong relish of that age, that of St. James was of great authority in the Church of Jerusalem in St. Cyril’s time, who wrote a comment upon it even in his younger years; and it is declared by Proclus and the sixth general Council to be of St. James’ own composure, and it was probably received in the Church of Jerusalem within 170 years after the apostolic age. And that there are forms of worship in it as ancient as the Apostles seems highly probable. For, first, all the form *Sursum Corda* (lift up your hearts) is there, and in St. Cyril’s Comment; and the same is in the Liturgies of Rome and Alexandria, and the Constitutions of Clemens, which all agree are of great antiquity; and St. Cyprian, who was living within 100 years after the apostles, mentions it as a form then used and received; and St. Austin tells us that that form is words derived from the very age of the apostles! The same is asserted by Nicephoras of the Trisagium in particular. It is evident that from that primitive age there was a form of questions and answers prescribed in baptism from the questions and answers which Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and Origen speak of. And if the minister may be limited to a form of question, why not to a form of prayer, there being as great a necessity to prescribe for the latter as for the former?”

That these are not mere assertions, without foundation in fact, I shall transcribe a part of the ancient Liturgy of the Church of Jerusalem,

composed by St. James, its first bishop, from the quarto edition, printed by James Bettenham, 1744.

Priest. The love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

People. And with thy Spirit.

Priest. Lift up your hearts.

People. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto the Lord.

People. It is meet and right.

Priest. It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty to praise Thee, to bless Thee, to worship Thee, to glorify Thee, to give thanks to Thee, the maker of all creatures, visible and invisible; the treasure of eternal good things; the fountain of life and immortality; the God and governor of the universe; to whom the heaven and the heaven of heavens sing praises with all their hosts; the sun and moon and the whole choir of stars: the earth and sea, and all things that are in them: the angels and archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, authorities, and tremendous powers: the many-eyed cherubim, and the seraphim with six wings, who with twain cover their faces, and twain their feet, and with twain they fly, crying one to another, with never-ceasing voices, and uninterrupted shouts of praise, singing with a loud voice the triumphal hymn to thine exalted glory, shouting, glorifying, crying aloud, and saying, People. Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of thy glory.

Hosanna in the highest; blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

Priest. Holy art thou, O Eternal King, and the giver of all holiness: Holy is thine only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom thou madest the worlds: Holy also is thy Holy Spirit, who searcheth all things, even the depths of thee, O God. Holy art thou who rulest over all, Almighty and Good God, terrible, yet full of compassion: But especially indulgent to the workmanship of thine own hands; for thou didst make man, formed out of the earth, after thine own image, and graciously gavest him the enjoyment of paradise: and when he had lost his happiness by transgressing thy commandment, thou of thy goodness didst not despise nor abandon him; but didst discipline him as a merciful Father, recall him by the law, and train him up by the pedagogy of the prophets. And, last of all, thou didst send thine own only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, into the world,

that by his coming he might renew and revive thy image in us; who descended from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, conversed with mankind, and directed his whole dispensation to our salvation. And when the hour was come, that he who had no sin was to suffer a voluntary and lifegiving death upon the cross for us sinners, in the same night that he was betrayed, or rather offered up himself for the life and salvation of the world, Taking bread into his holy and immaculate hands, looking up to heaven, and presenting it to thee, his God and Father, he gave thanks, sanctified and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat. This is my body, which is broken and given for you, for the remission of sins.

In like manner, after supper, he took the cup, and having mixed it of wine and water, he gave thanks, sanctioned and blessed it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Drink ye all of this. This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed and given for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.

It is manifest that the English Liturgy is formed upon this model. But there is evidence from the heathen authors of antiquity, that the first Christians used precomposed forms of prayer. They were called “Common Prayers,” – “Constituted Prayers,” – and “Solemn Prayers”. The heathen called their own public prayer to their “vanities” *Solemn Prayers*. Therefore, as they designated the Christian prayers by that title, they must have meant that the Christians worshipped by a Liturgy. Pliny says, that “early in the morning it was their (the Christians’) manner to sing by turns a hymn to Christ as God.” St. Basil, St. Gregory, St. Chrysostom, and others composed Liturgies. Out of St. Chrysostom’s Liturgy, that prayer in ours before the Apostolic Blessing was taken. St. Jerome compared the people’s *responses* during Divine service to a *clap of thunder*. This simile corresponds with St. Luke’s words, *with one accord*. Both which expressions clearly indicate the use of forms of prayer. In extempore prayer there are no responses; there cannot be any. The people stand mute listeners to the minister. Extempore prayer clearly comes within the range of St. Paul’s condemnation. The extempore speaker must be “as a barbarian” to his hearers, and they can no more with safety say Amen at his giving of thanks than if he spake in an unknown tongue.

The Council of Laodicea, which was held about the year 364, expressly provides, “that the same Liturgy, or form of prayers, should be always used both morning and evening. [Canon 18.] This Canon is taken into the Collection of the Canons of the Church catholic. In the year 451, the Council of Chalcedon confirmed and established this Collection of Canons. So far as the authority of that council extended, the whole Christian Church was obliged to use Liturgies. The Emperor Justinian made these canons imperial laws. The 106th Canon of the Council of Carthage, in the year 252, ordains, “that the prayers, prefaces, and imposition of hands, which are confirmed by the Synod, be observed and used by all men.” The Council of Milevis, in the year 402, Canon 12, says, “Lest through ignorance, or carelessness, anything contrary to the faith should be vented or uttered before God, or offered up to him in the Church.” These public offices were all set and prescribed, and appointed to be uniform throughout the National Church, that all governors of churches and their people should observe one and the same rite and order of service, which they knew to be appointed in the metropolitan see.” The Council of Bracara, in the year 563, gives the same injunction: – “It is appointed that one and the same order of praying and singing be observed by us all, and that there should not be variety of usages by them that are bound to the same faith, and live in the same dominion.” These are the orders of councils, and which are in perfect accordance with the Word of Inspiration, – “That we may with one mind and one mouth glorify God.”

Archbishop Ussher asserts, on the authority of an old MS., that, at the end of the sixth century, St. Martin’s Liturgy was used as their daily office of prayer throughout the whole Island of Great Britain. It was called *Gallorum Cursus*. In Ireland they employed a different Liturgy, and which was called *Scotorum Cursus*. Thus we have sufficient testimony that, for six hundred years after Christ, precomposed set forms of prayer, or Liturgies, were used throughout the whole Church. Mr. Ball, Dr. Owen, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Norton, and Mr. Tombes, old Nonconformist ministers, expressly own Liturgies to be lawful. Mr. Clark, in his *Lives of Dissenting Divines*, says that “this is the tenet of all our best and most judicious (dissenting) divines.” The same Mr. Clark informs us, that “the first man who brought conceived prayer into use in those parts where he lived was Mr. Samuel Cook,” who died in the year 1649. He also acknowledges that “the Christian Churches of ancient times, for the space of this 1400 years at

least, if not from the apostles' times, had their stated Liturgies." Mr. Norton, another dissenter, says, – "It is lawful to embrace communion with Churches where such forms in public worship are in use; neither does it lie as a duty on a believer, that he disjoin and separate himself from such a Church." – "Is it not," says Mr. Baxter, "a high degree of pride to conclude that almost all Christ's Churches in the world, for these thirteen hundred years at least, to this day have offered such worship unto God, as that thou art obliged to avoid it? And that all the catholic Church on earth this day is below your communion for using forms? And that even Calvin, and the Presbyterians, Cartwright, Hildersham, and the old nonconformists, were unworthy of your communion?"

Although, individually, I pay no more respect to Mr. Calvin's opinions than to those of any other learned man, yet there are many who hold them in high veneration. In deference, therefore, to their sentiments, I make the following extract from his writings [Cited by Mr. R. Calder in his Controversy with Doming Anderson of Dumbarton.]: – "When the faithful meet, they are taught to join their desires, and to use the Common Prayers, not only to testify the unity of their faith, but that God may heap what is the consent of all: And John Baptist, as it is probable, did out of certain places of Scripture compose a form of prayer for his disciples, suitable to that season and the spiritual kingdom of Christ, shortly to be revealed. And our Saviour did twice prescribe that form of prayer while he taught his disciples; and I think it to be agreeable to the command of our Lord, that his saints should daily repeat this prayer. And I believe the use of Liturgies in the Church were very ancient, because it was a custom among the earliest Christians to sing not only hymns but prayers also. And that must necessarily be done by form. And certainly if singing be attuned to that gravity which may become the presence of God and his holy angels, it both procures dignity and gratefulness to sacred actions, and also availeth very much to excite the minds of men to a true earnestness and zeal in prayer; and I greatly commend it, if it be accompanied with the devotion of the mind.

"I do, therefore, highly approve that a certain form of prayers and ecclesiastical rites be published; from which it may not be lawful for the pastors to vary in their administrations, whereby to provide against the simplicity and inability of some; and that the consent of all the Churches

with each other may more certainly appear; and, lastly, to put a bar to the desultory levity of ethers who affect innovations.

“I did, therefore, compose certain forms of prayer to be used by the ministers in Geneva in the public worship on Sundays and other holidays, and at the administration of the Sacraments: and when the exiles that resided at Geneva in the Marian days could not agree about the use of the English Liturgy, they did, by my advice and approbation, draw up a Liturgy for their public worship, which was printed in the English tongue, anno 1556; wherein was a confession taken out of the 9th of Daniel, a prayer for the whole estate of Christ’s Church, the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, etc.” [Inst. lib. iv. c. 1, § 23 and 31.]

In the ninth year of Queen Elizabeth, some of the Pope’s emissaries introduced the method of praying extempore. Their object was to seduce the people from the Church of England, and to serve the purposes of Popery. It took mightily with the Puritans. Up to the period now mentioned, those in England attached to the Church of Rome attended divine service, and communicated with the reformed Church of England. Pope Pius V even offered to confirm our Liturgy with the stamp of his apostolic approbation. One condition, however, was that the realm and Church of England should recognize and submit to his supremacy. This radical condition the Church of England wisely rejected, and the Pope himself, therefore, made the separation. It is the undoubted right of every National Church to reform, alter, and model their Liturgy as shall be most convenient; provided, however, that nothing be inserted which is contrary to the faith. All its most violent and prejudiced enemies have never been able to accuse our Liturgy of any error either in faith or doctrine. It was not from any errors in the Liturgy, but to be revenged on Queen Elizabeth, that made the Pope condemn the Liturgy, and break communion with the Church of England. After this Bull, the extempore method of worship was introduced by the Jesuits. It is stated in a book called “Foxes and Firebrands,” and cited by the profoundly learned author of the Life of Archbishop Whitgift.

“They,” says he, “who consider the constitution of the Church as a matter of indifference, and forms and ceremonies (since, in every community, they must be regulated by custom or by canon) as the undisputed objects of local regulation, must grant that England had a perfect right to adopt the constitution which she did adopt, and to appoint the forms and ceremonies which she sanctioned; and therefore, that they who opposed

them were the aggressors. Especially did they err in independent and patriotic feeling, when they laboured to impose a foreign constitution and foreign forms, by dint of clamour and by force of faction, in the lieu of those which were maintained, as frequently as they were attacked, with all the power of reason, with all the influence of learning, and with all the soberness and energy of genuine piety. Still more strange, unseemly, and unaccountable does this appear, when we find the Popish hypocrite imitating and aiding the sectarian zealot. That we may fix this remarkable fact, which is so generally overlooked or forgot, we may refer to a remarkable narrative of *Faithful Cummin*, a Dominican friar, extracted from the memorials of Lord *Cecil*, from whose papers it was transmitted to Archbishop *Ussher*, whence it got into the hands of Sir James Ware, and was finally published by his son. In the year 1567, this monk, with the reputation of a zealous Protestant, was greatly admired and followed for his seeming piety, especially for inveighing most bitterly against *Pius V*, then pope. Nevertheless, he was accused on oath by three respectable witnesses of being a false impostor, and a sower of sedition among Her Majesty's loyal subjects. He was summoned before the Queen in council, and there examined, where it distinctly appeared, partly by his own confession and partly by the evidence of his accusers, that he was ordained by Cardinal Pole, – that he had never formally renounced the Church of Rome, nor procured the license of any Protestant bishop, – that he never attended the prayers of the Established Church, but when the prayers were ended he came forward and preached, – that he never received the sacrament in the Church of England, – *that he used extempore prayer*, – affected the spiritual cant of the Puritan faction, ‘and claimed the wide world amongst the flock of Christ scattered over the whole earth as his parish.’ He canted admirably, and maintained, with every appearance of fervour, that ‘*spiritual prayer* was the chief testimony of a true Protestant, and that the set form of prayer in England was but the mass translated.’ Fearing the consequences of his examination, and of some of the truths proved against him and elicited, from him, he wisely thought of retreat, – but previously, with the usual effusion of tears, extempore prayer, and spiritual preaching, he so wrought upon the female part of his deluded auditory, as to procure the sum of £130 sterling, for the purpose of promoting, of course, the cause of God. He soon after went to Rome, and being questioned by the Pope, he stated the object and effect of his labours: ‘I preached,’ said the friar, ‘*against set forms of*

prayer, and I called the English prayers, English mass; and have persuaded several to pray spiritually *and extempore*; and this hath so taken with the people that the Church of England is become as odious to that sort of people whom I instructed, as the *mass* is to the Church of England, and this will be a stumbling block to that Church so long as it is a Church.’ Upon which the Pope commended him, and gave him a reward of 2000 ducats for his good service.” [Scottish Ep. Mag. vol. ii. p. 333. Art. Life of Whitgift.]

Our Saviour has graciously annexed a promise to public prayer on a certain condition, with which, in extemporary prayer, it is a moral impossibility to comply. Our Lord’s words are, “Again I say unto you, that *if two* of you shall *agree* on earth touching anything that they shall ask, *it shall be done for them* of my father which is in heaven.” It cannot be doubted but that both the condition and the promise are annexed to public prayers, such as are made by several persons, but at the least by *two*. It is obvious that where two or more persons shall agree together beforehand “touching” what they shall ask, must be in a national precomposed liturgy. To the former condition and promise Christ added a blessing: “for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” [St. Matthew 18:19–20.] The Liturgy we can see and examine beforehand. By its use we agree together touching what we shall ask; but in extemporary public prayer, no matter how many are present, they cannot “agree on earth touching anything that they shall ask.” The congregation do not know what the minister will ask in prayer, therefore they cannot agree beforehand, and perhaps may not agree to it afterwards. Agreeing with the prayer after they have heard it does not comply with the condition. Consequently, the promises of being heard, and of the presence of Christ, cannot be impleaded. In obeying the condition which He has annexed to public precomposed prayer, his promise can be impleaded, because his is faithful and just. Whereas in neglecting or disobeying the condition, his mercy, but not his faithfulness, can be impleaded. “That preconceived forms of prayer and praise,” says Bishop walker, “established by public authority, are in some respects essential, is, in fact, conceded by universal practice; for what are our meter psalms, and hymns, and paraphrases, but preconceived forms of prayer and praise compiled and sanctioned by public authority, and more or less Scriptural, as all liturgies ought to be? I have always considered this fact as furnishing complete proof on the part of those who are most inimical to prescribed forms, that it is utterly impossible for a

Christian congregation to unite in common prayer or praise without them. The prayers which are generally delivered before and after sermon among those who have no prescribed form, are, in fact, so far as I am competent to judge, discourses of the minister addressed to God, to which the people listen in standing posture, but in which they rarely appear to join with the feeling of individual, and with the fervency of united prayer. It is not every man nor many men who are equal to the most difficult and delicate task of conveying to the throne of God the wants and the wishes, the prayers and the praises, of his fallen creatures, preserved by his providence, and redeemed by the condescension and sufferings of his eternal Son. Such prayers of this kind, as I have ever heard, never in it single instance contained that which I think essential to Christian prayer. They have, I repeat, more the air of discourses than of prayer, and that which distinguishes Christian prayer in the mediatorial character and intercession of the Divine Redeemer, is generally wanting. The only mark of Christianity in a long prayer I have often found in the concluding words – *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, – or something equivalent.” [Note to Bishop Walker’s Charge, 1833.]

The following sensible remarks, from a writer of the last century, are so much to the present purpose, that, though long, I do not hesitate to extract; – “We complain, and very justly too, that the Popish clergy are too assuming, and claim a superiority over the laity inconsistent with the natural rights of mankind, and the relation of brethren formed by the covenant of grace. Pardon me, gentlemen” (the ministers of the Scottish Establishment are here addressed), “if I say that you claim a very extraordinary superiority over the laity in the case before us; every one of you claims an exclusive privilege of manufacturing our public prayers, and assumes a right of making us say to the Deity whatever he thinks fit. In the most momentous affair in which we can be concerned upon earth, we must depend entirely upon the discretion, honesty, and ability of every private parson, and use the words and matter of our addresses to our God and Maker, such as he is pleased to give, without ever seeing, examining, or judging for ourselves. This is really treating us as if we were children or fools. We allow that you have a right to offer our prayers; and as it is not fit that we should all speak, the minister may be called the mouth of the congregation: but the mouth of the congregation should speak the mind of the congregation. In our congregations, the mouth runs before the mind, and

speaks without giving us any opportunity of thinking what we ought to speak, and often says things that we should certainly regret, and sometimes offers petitions that we should absolutely abhor, had we time calmly to examine them. Our mouth leads us into the gross blunder of presenting our addresses to the Deity first, and next judging whether they be proper addresses after they are offered, when we cannot mend what is wrong, or alter what is improper. We absurdly begin where we should end; for, in the natural order of things, the congregation should first be satisfied that the prayers are proper to be offered, and then the minister should offer them in their name: just as a prudent man will think before he speaks. But in our admirable plan of worship the congregation speaks by its mouth before it has considered what it is to say; that is, the parson offers up the petition, and the people may judge of its propriety after it is offered, if they please.

“The absurdity here is so great that it is astonishing that it escapes the observation of the laity; and it would not escape them in any other instance. Should the ablest member of the House of Commons propose to offer an address to his majesty, in the name of the house, without communicating it to the members, the impropriety would be immediately perceived. When the estates or counties design to address their sovereign, offer your service, and tell them, ‘Pray, gentlemen, give yourselves no trouble about the matter; we and our brethren will each of us address the king in our own way; trust the whole affair to us; every individual of the cloth is more than sufficient for the undertaking; it is your business to approve of whatever we say for you; or at least you may consider how you like the address after it has been offered.’ Take this advice, and see if the laity will be as complaisant with respect to the honour of their prince, and the concerns of their bodies, as they are with respect to the honour of their God, and the interests of their souls: yet one would be tempted to think (if the common consent of this nation were not against this notion) that the laity are as much interested in an address to the Deity as in one to the king; and that they would be at least as loath to trust the first as the last, to the discretion, ability, or honesty of every man who chanced to put on a black coat, or wear a starched band. But the grossest absurdity will be swallowed down when it is in fashion, and I think there can hardly be a grosser one than that a gentleman should mount the pulpit of whose principles or discretion we have no knowledge at all, and that this man should have a right to dictate the prayers of the whole congregation. If you will believe the author of the

‘Characteristics,’ who seems to speak from experience, there are many among you whose principles are very dangerous, and very inconsistent with the religion of Jesus: yet these men not only lead, but even compose the devotions of the people, and make us poor laymen address our Maker upon any principles that they please.

“I have come from my house a sound orthodox Christian, and have hardly taken my seat in the church, when I have found myself paying, or at least one was paying in my name, as a rank Socinian. I have been made an Arian as to my prayers very often; and, in short, there has hardly any whimsical opinion been broached among the clergy for these forty years, that I have not some time or other found mixed with my public prayers, though for my part I am a plain old-fashioned man, and content myself with the Apostles’ Creed. Sometimes, indeed, for my heart I could not have told upon what particular principles my prayers were offered; they are so excellently well contrived, and so free from all narrow notions, that they could have served a Jewish synagogue, a Mohammedan mosque, or a congregation of Persian Magi, as well or better than a Christian assembly. If the minister that officiates be a sceptic, I am made to pray like a sceptic; if an enthusiast, he addresses God in my name, according to his own enthusiastic notions. When he chances to be a factious firebrand, or a keen party man, my prayers breathe faction, my devotions in public are flaming with party heat, and tintured with the fury of his faction. It is well known that, when any disputes happen in their synods or assemblies, both sides appeal to Heaven in their public prayers, and force the laity to appeal with them (we are not supposed to base any right to judge for ourselves in these cases), and what is even worse, by an unlucky change of ministers, or by stepping into another church, I have often been made to appeal to Heaven as an advocate for both sides of the question, and to pray for and against each of the parties in one day. For though our churches have the *appearance* of the same worship, yet in *fact* their *worship* is as different as the tempers, principles, and parties of the parsons who manufacture it, and leads the laity into the dangerous blunder of offering contradictory petitions, and praying, at different times, on principles as opposite to each other as light is to darkness. It is not an unusual thing among us to pray for and against presentations in one week. I have thanked God for his decrees of election and reprobation in the forenoon, and in the afternoon offered my humble thanks that all men have equal access to salvation by faith and virtue. In a

word, there is no party nor different principle among our clergy, with respect to which I have not been made to play fast and loose with the Deity, – to ask what I did not want, and to pray against what I most earnestly wished for. This we call worshipping God! But did we deal so with our fellowmen, they would call it mockery, and take it as a gross affront. I cannot help thinking, gentlemen, that this will appear, even to yourselves, hard treatment of the laity, and that you will acknowledge that their judgment ought not to be so entirely made a property of, as to oblige them to have their public worship offered upon what principles the parson pleases to espouse; or, upon opposite principles, as the minister for the time is of this or the other party. One of your own cloth complains, that we betray a *visible impatience* till prayer be over. [Mr. Fordyce’s Edification by Public Institutions.] Is it any wonder if we do? for, as it is managed at present, prayer is to us a very dangerous part of worship; for, as that judicious gentleman observes, ‘a great deal more, a vast deal more, depends upon our own performance of this duty with judgment and propriety than most people seem to be aware of.’ They who are aware of this cannot help being impatient and uneasy, when a duty of such vast importance is entrusted to any individual of the clergy; and they who seldom think of its nature and importance will always esteem it a dry and lifeless part of our service.” [Letter from a Blacksmith to the Ministers and Elders of the Church of Scotland.]

These are the opinions of a gentleman who lived at a period when extemporary prayers in Scotland were less consistent than perhaps they are at present. An English Dissenter, however, holds sentiments pretty nearly alike, expressed in a letter to a friend in the year 1753. The letter, together with a form of prayer for the use of a private dissenting congregation, were published in that year. The arguments adduced by the writer are conclusive, and, as emanating from a dissenting preacher, must be convincing:– “Dear Sir, – Since I engaged in the ministerial service among the Dissenters, I have perceived many, and, as they still continue to appear to me, very material objections, against the manner in which public prayer is performed in our assemblies.

“To enter upon the several arguments, which, with so much warmth and violence of temper, have been often urged for and against the use of set forms of public prayer, would be tedious to myself, and to you unnecessary. The circumstance, I confess, which has the greatest weight with me, and bears hardest upon our method, is the tendency it hath in general to destroy

the very nature of prayer itself, considered as a direct solemn address to, and immediate intercourse with, the Almighty.

“This, you will say, is a material objection indeed! It will be necessary, then, that I lay before you the reasons upon which it is founded: and this I shall do in my usual manner, with that unreserved openness and freedom with which the sentiments of friendship, when accompanied with a love of truth, will be communicated.

“The case, then, to me appears briefly to be this:—

“By leaving that part of public worship, of which we are now speaking, entirely to the care and performance of the minister, it is to be feared our people are apt to look upon it as His business, and not to consider it, at least not so much as they ought, as a duty in which they themselves are equally concerned. Nothing is more common, when our people are making their observations upon their ministers, than to hear them say, ‘I have heard such an one, and he prayed but very indifferently; or such an one, and he prayed admirably well’: but were you to ask these very persons how *they themselves* had prayed at the same time, they would probably be surprised at the question, or at least give but a very indifferent account of the matter.

“This perhaps is an unavoidable inconvenience, which will always take place where social prayer is not conducted by some public forms. It must be difficult, if we will speak honestly, to have the mind fixed upon the grand object of worship; and to preserve in any intense and equal degree those sentiments of reverence, humility, and adoration, that total bent and direction of the soul towards the Deity, so very desirable, nay so necessary, in all acts of real communion with him. This, I say, must be acknowledged difficult, whilst the ideas and affections of the worshipper so very much depend upon another’s management, and the hearer’s attention wholly hangs upon the lips of the speaker. But what if the latter is considered, which I fear is often the case, as exercising only a personal gift; and his performance looked upon as a trial of skill, or a test of orthodoxy? What if something disagreeable in his voice or manner, or from some accidental hesitation, loss for thought or utterance, his hearers are disgusted or in pain for him? What if, from some harsh or unguarded expression, some particular act of confession or prayer, in which they cannot heartily join, and which they cannot possibly be aware of, they are all at once disconcerted? Nay, let me add, what if they are entirely delighted with every

part of his service, and his words drop sweeter than honey or the honeycomb, – may they not probably, even in this case, be as far from filling up their part of the duty as in any of the former? Yes, it is easy enough to conceive that they may be perfectly charmed with his performance, and struck with admiration at the variety and turn of thought, the propriety of expression, the copiousness of language, the ease and decency of address, and yet they themselves may, all the while, *be far from praying*.

“These disadvantages attending the method in which public prayer is conducted in our congregations, I have briefly mentioned, so far only as they concern the people; nor with respect to the minister himself, will they, in my apprehension, be found less considerable. Suppose him learned, modest, ingenuous; sensible of the greatness and dignity of the service committed to his care; himself a lover of eloquence and propriety; and consequently afraid and ashamed to speak anything, as the mouth of the people, which might appear low, unmeaning, and unworthy of his character as a scholar, or leader of public devotion. Must not even these very qualities, in themselves so lovely, prove oftentimes a hinderance to his right performance of this duty; so far, I mean, as it relates to his own religious sentiments and temper? Must not the concern he will be under to conduct this part of the public service in a becoming and respectable manner frequently make it a work rather of the *head* than of the *heart*? Must not his care for proper thoughts and language, even when he is actually engaged in this duty, oftentimes fetter his mind, and confine it to things below? An untimely conception half formed; an unsuitable phrase almost uttered; or an actual slip and impropriety in point of sentiment or expression, to others perhaps unnoticed, but felt by himself; may not this raise in him sometimes a conscious blush, and fill him with such inward confusion as must greatly discompose his mind, and throw it very much off that settled devout frame, in which it ought to be when conversing with the Almighty?

“This, I believe, every man at one time or other, nay perhaps oftentimes, must have found who hath any *sensibility for himself*, or *any respect for his auditors*. For my own part, I will frankly confess, this hath frequently been my own case, especially when I have occasionally preached to a strange congregation; or where there have been many persons of reputed good sense and discernment, an ill-timed respect for men hath disturbed my devotions towards God; an anxiety to please or affect them

hath made me neglect a much greater concern; I spoke in the language of prayer for others, but forgot, alas! to pray myself. *Pudet haec opprobria nobis.*

“But allowing a man, by long habit and a rich furniture of natural and acquired abilities, to be ever so well qualified for discharging this part of public worship, yet, after all, must he not now and then find that bodily disorders or worldly cares do greatly cloud and disturb the mind, very much interrupt the freedom and ease with which he used to carry on this exercise, and render his whole performance of it dead and formal? – a circumstance very uneasy and painful to everyone who would offer unto God a living and reasonable service.

“Here it may possibly be said, – Granting the above-mentioned objections against our method of extemporary prayer to be just, yet will public stated forms always secure a right temper and good affections in the worshipper? – I do not suppose by any means that they will. It is not in the power of any outward scheme or mode of worship to do this; all that I would suggest is that the latter method hath by far the advantage, and very sufficiently deserves the preference, if it is free from those material inconveniences to which the former seems to be so subject. The one can be no hinderance to a settled, devout, and praying frame of mind; the other (I speak only with respect to public prayer), I am afraid, is oftentimes an actual interruption to it.”

As our limits are small, and the rest of the letter of less interest, we shall only give an abstract of it:–

“To remedy these difficulties and inconveniences, so far as they concerned myself, I resolved to prepare and introduce into my congregation a form of prayer, such as all who acknowledged my authority to do the office of a minister might honestly join in. But though the more sensible of my people would willingly have coincided, yet the generality, who, as you know, take up their mode of worship from custom and prejudice, would have been scandalized at the attempt, and transported into all those passionate resentments which inflamed bigotry and zeal, hardened by ignorance, are apt to inspire against every appearance of encroachment upon what they esteem the very essence of prayer; so that I was prevented from putting my design into practice, for fear of exciting like confusions as happened at Edinburgh, when an attempt was made to restore the use of the Liturgy. You will remember, that when the service commenced, the people

immediately cried out, A POPE! ANTICHRIST! and honest *Janet Geddes*, flinging her stool at the minister's head, exclaimed, *Out, thou false thief, dost thou say mass at my lug?*

But seriously, though I am obliged in prudence to decline introducing it, I cannot forbear wishing that other ministers, whose situation may be more favourable to such a design, and who may have a sufficient number of sensible people in their congregations to support them, would endeavour to introduce a practice, which, whatever may be said as to the GIFT of prayer, would, in my opinion, greatly promote the GRACE and SPIRIT of it, and would tend to render the Dissenters of this kingdom as much more respectable body than they at present are.

“I have therefore sent you the form which I composed for my own private use; selected from various sources, but chiefly from the established Liturgy, as well to prevent a charge of too great vanity and presumption, as on account of the real excellence of the offices themselves.

“You may wonder, perhaps, why I should introduce so many responses, while such a thing is unheard of in our congregations; but you must feel that our prayers are too much left to the performance of the minister, and that the people ought to have a share in them. Responses are well fitted for this purpose, as they give them greatest interest in this part of public worship, – keep them attentive and awake, by finding them something to do, – help them to consider what they are about, and have a tendency to raise and settle in their minds such sentiments and reflections as are suited to the particular service in which they are engaged.

“But it is time to finish this long letter. The accompanying papers I commit to your perusal, and, submit entirely to your judgment. – I am, dear Sir, your assured friend,” *etc. etc. etc.*

The English Liturgy is not novel. It is, as Bishop Jewel, in his Apology, says, “agreeable to primitive usage.” – “It is not, however, for its antiquity alone that I respect and venerate the public worship of the Church. I am struck with its excellence, I admire the beauty, the order, the fitness of the whole service; and to me it appears to bear internal marks of its divine original, for it approaches nearest to the sublime simplicity and inspiration of Scripture. I know not any human composition, which in chastity, in grandeur, in energy, in sublimity of thought, and simplicity of expression, can be compared to the established Liturgy of the Church of England. There is in its prayers such a chastened and sober dignity, such unaffected

humility, such a sanctity befitting the temple of God, such fire of devotion, such aspiration of faith, hope, and charity, such conciseness, and yet such fullness, that nothing short of inspiration has ever attained to so near a resemblance of that *perfect* form of prayer which our Divine Master has left us for our use and for our pattern.” [Why am I a Churchman? answered.]

“Though all the Churches in the world have, and ever had forms of prayer, yet none was ever blessed with so comprehensive, so exact, and inoffensive a composure as ours; which is so judiciously contrived, that the wisest may exercise at once their knowledge and devotion; and yet so plain, that the most ignorant may pray with understanding; so full, that nothing is omitted that is fit to be asked in public; and so particular, that it comprises most things which we would ask in private; and yet so short, as not to tire any that hath true devotion. Its doctrine is pure and primitive; its ceremonies so few and innocent, that most of the Christian world agree in them. Its method is exact and natural; its language significant and perspicuous, most of the words and phrases being taken out of the Holy Scriptures, and the rest are the expressions of the first and purest ages; so that whoever takes exception at these must quarrel with the language of the Holy Ghost, and fall out with the Church in the state of her greatest innocence. And in the opinion of the most impartial and learned Grotius (who was not a member of, nor had any obligation to, this Church), ‘the English Liturgy comes so near to the primitive pattern, that none of the Reformed Churches can compare with it.’” [Dr. Combers’ History of Liturgies, Preface.]

The Rubric directs that “all priests and deacons shall be bound to say, daily, the morning and evening prayer.” This corresponds with God’s own appointment under the law: “Thou shalt offer upon the altar two lambs of the first year, day by day continually; the one lamb in the morning, the other at evening.” [Exod. 29:38.] Christians are under greater obligations to the Almighty than the Jews were. Our grace is greater, our promises clearer, and therefore our righteousness should exceed theirs. The public worship of the Jews – *the sweet-smelling savour* – was appointed by God himself. Under the Gospel our Saviour appointed the materials and essentials only of public worship. Prayers, praises, thanksgivings, confessions, hymns, and the eucharistic sacrifice, are commended to be offered up in Christ’s name. The Jewish services were but types of these, and were accepted through the merits of the promised Redeemer. His merits extended to all ages of the

world; and he is therefore called the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Our Saviour did not particularly specify the manner and order of public worship. He left the method to be determined by those to whom he delegated his own place and power on earth, to govern his Church till his second coming. These were the apostles and their successors in the apostolic commission. *As my Father sent me, so send I you.* Consequently, the public prayers are called the Apostles' prayers; in which the first Christians continued steadfastly, as well as in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship? [Acts 2:42.] St. Paul accordingly commands Timothy, the bishop and governor of Ephesus, to compose prayers for all men, for the use of his diocese. He also gives the Corinthians some instructions how to celebrate the holy eucharist, adding, that "the rest will I set in order when I come." In their public services, treated of in the chapter at large, he says, "Let all things be done decently and *in order.*" That is the right and lawful public worship which is prescribed, according to our Lord's general rules, by the governors of every particular Church. What they determine, therefore, agreeable to his rule, is God's service and worship, established not only by human but by divine law. All other public services whatever, therefore, made by private men, to whom God has given no such commission, are like that of Nadab and Abihu, "strange fire before the Lord." [Lev. 10:1.] And this because it was not commended. Under the law, the lamb appointed for a burnt offering was alone the lawful daily worship, the *savour of rest*, because it was commanded. All other sacrifices, however valuable, even whole hecatombs, offered in its place, would have been unlawful and strange, because they were not commanded. So in the Christian Church the public worship prescribed by its lawful governors is the only true and lawful worship. All other forms or additions to, or interpolations of, the authorized form, are strange worship and unlawful, because not commanded. It is not the polished period nor the elegant conception that is acceptable to God in his public service. It is *obedience*. "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken than the fat of rams." [1 Sam.15:22.]

This holy service, offered up to God by the priest in the name of the Church, is more acceptable to the Almighty than the devotions of any private man. It is the service of the whole Church. Every man has given his previous consent to it, and confirms it by saying, *Amen*. Many have agreed upon earth touching what they shall ask, and that it should be asked by the authorized priest. Therefore we have confidence in God's promise that He

will grant what we faithfully ask. He has commanded the public prayers to be made by those whom he has appointed as governors. They must, therefore, be most acceptable to him. And as he has commanded them, without doubt he will accept them. They will be accepted without reference to the private virtues or vices of the priest who offers them. The public service is accepted, not only for those that are present, but for all those who are absent through any just cause or impediment, and for all who do not renounce the communion of the Church. Because it is the common service of all, it is commanded to be offered up in their name, and on their behalf. It is agreed by all to be offered up for them all. It will therefore be accepted for them all, though it be presented to God by the priest alone. In the same manner as the lamb was the sacrifice, the sweet-smelling savour of the whole congregation (or Church) of Israel, though offered by the priest alone. Preaching is a very useful part of the priest's office, but it is inferior to prayer. St. Paul exhorts Bishop Timothy "to preach the word, be instant in season, out of season." But he exhorts him, in *the first place*, to attend to the more important office of presenting the morning and evening sacrifice at the throne of grace. "I exhort, *first of all*, that prayers and supplications, intercessions and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." The Church of England lays St. Paul's charge to Timothy [1 Tim. 2:2.] on all that are admitted into the holy once of her ministry. That they should offer up this sweet-smelling savour, this holy sacrifice of prayers, praises, and thanksgivings, "daily throughout the year". When this is duly performed, there is no doubt that He, who has promised to be in the midst where two or three are gathered together in his name, will be gracious and bountiful to us as he promised to be to the Jews in offering of the lamb. As He promised to meet them, so He will meet and speak with us; that is, he will graciously answer our petitions. He will dwell with us and be our God; and we shall know, by comfortable experience of his great and manifold blessings, that HE IS THE LORD OUR GOD.

Set and prescribed forms of prayer in the public worship of God are both useful and necessary. They oppose and prevent all extravagant levities and impieties, which extemporary effusions are calculated to admit. They prevent enthusiasm, which frequently ends in atheism. They are the people's safeguard, by placing the weak and the powerful minister on a level. They prevent ostentation and vainglory in the learned, and assist the

weakness of the unlearned minister. The people understand beforehand in what petitions they are to join, and know the nature and condition of church communion. But above all, a Liturgy secures the established faith and doctrine of the Church. In extemporary prayers the minister may introduce his own private opinions and impose them on his hearers as points of faith. False doctrines and heresies may be propagated more easily by prayers than by sermons; for men will conclude that no man would dare to address what he did not believe to be truth to his Creator; but, on the contrary, a Liturgy composed and prescribed by the wisdom of the Church is a complete barrier, under God, to innovations in faith or doctrine. In our Liturgy we confess the faith of all the ancient creeds. The frequent doxologies to the most holy and ever blessed Trinity secure us against the heresies of Arius and Socinus. This is a special reason why the Socinians are such decided enemies to the English Liturgy. Under the shelter of extemporary devotions, all sorts of heresies may find shelter without discovery. Whereas in the English Liturgy both ministers and people must confess the faith of Christ crucified, and witness against ever heresy.

I conclude with some short reasons for set forms of prayer from Bishop Taylor's apology for authorized Liturgies:—

“1. That we may imitate the perpetual practice of the Jewish and Christian Churches. 2. That we may follow the example, and obey the precept of our blessed Saviour, who established a set form. 3. That all that come may know the nature of public communion, the settled principles of their religion, and manner of their address to God. 4. That we may know beforehand for what to pray to God, and not to do it by an implicit faith of an extemporizer. 5. That there may be an union of hearts, spirits, and tongues. 6. That there may be a public symbol of communion, and that our united prayers may have more weight with God. 7. That the ministers less learned may have provision of devotion made for them. 8. That the more learned may have no occasion of boasting, and so their prayer be turned into sin. 9. That extravagant levities and secret impieties may be prevented. 10. That the offices ecclesiastical may the better secure the articles of religion. 11. That they may edify their hearers by their books of daily use. 12. That men, by the intervening of authority, may be engaged to devotion. 13. That not only the duty but the very form of its ministration may be honoured by the countenance of authority, and not be exposed to contempt by reason of the insufficiency of its external warrant. 14. To secure the ministry from the

intrusion of men whom God hath not sent. 15. That the indetermination of the office may not introduce indifference, nor indifference lead to a freer liberty, nor liberty degenerate into licentiousness, nor licentiousness into folly and vanity, and these come sometimes attended with secular designs, lest these be cursed with the emission of a peevish spirit upon our priests, and that spirit be a teacher of lies, and these lies become the basis of impious theorems, which are certainly attended with ungodly lives, and then either atheism or antichristianism may come, according as shall happen in the conjunction of time and other circumstances; for this would be a sad climax, – a ladder upon which are no angels ascending or descending, because the degrees lead to darkness and misery.” [Bishop Sparrow’s *Rationale*. Bennet’s *London Cases* abridged; *Case of Forms of Prayer*. Bingham’s *Origines Ecclesiasticae*. Bishop Bull’s *English Works*, vol. ii. Bishop Taylor’s *Apology for Liturgies*. Archbishop King’s *Inventions of Men in the Worship of God*.]

Chapter 3.

The Institution of Public Assemblies – Jewish Temple – Usual Hones of Prayer – Unity what – Burnt offerings and Incense – Third and Ninth Hours the proper Time for the Morning and Evening Sacrifice – Holiness of the Jewish Institutions – Clerical Habits – Common Prayers what – Prefatory Sentences – The Example of King David – A Broken Heart what – What is meant by Divine Repentance – The Rod of Affliction – The Prodigal Son – Divine Faithfulness and Justice – The Exhortation – Its Object – The Necessity of Confession – Hypocrisy – Consecrated Places – What Constitutes Schism – Object of Public Assemblies – Prayer well pleasing – Unity Necessary as well as Unanimity – Note.

The Book of Common Prayer commences with “the order for Morning and Evening Prayer, daily to be said and used throughout the year. The morning and evening prayer shall be used in the accustomed place of the church, chapel, or chancel, except it shall be otherwise determined by the ordinary of the place. And the churches shall remain as they have done in times past. And here is to be noted that such ornaments of the Church, and of the ministers thereof, at all times of their ministration, shall be retained, and be in use, as were in this Church of England, by the authority of Parliament, in the second year of King Edward the Sixth.” The institution of public assemblies for the celebration of Divine worship is as ancient as religion itself. The Jews had their consecrated temple and synagogues,

which were frequented by our Lord and his apostles “at the hour of prayer”. It was in the temple (literally the *holy place*) where alone the sacrifices were offered up which represented the death of Christ, in whose name, and through whose merits alone, the prayers of the Jewish Church were heard. The temple was the metropolitan or mother church, to which the synagogues were as parish churches or chapels of ease. The usual hours of prayer at the temple were the *third* and *ninth* hours of the day, which correspond with our *nine* o’clock forenoon, and *three* afternoon. The people met in the synagogues throughout the whole country at exactly the same hours, that they might communicate in the sacrifices and incense which were offered in the temple, and to preserve communion with the high priest. *Unity* does not consist in being all subject to one visible head, nor in agreeing precisely in the profession of the same faith, hope, and charity. It consists in *one external visible communion*, which can alone unite all Christians in *one* external body. At the third and ninth hours daily throughout the year, the Jewish high priest offered a lamb as a continual burnt offering, and a type or representation of that *grand* sacrifice which Christ, the *Lamb of God*, was, in the fullness of time, to offer up for the sins of the whole world. While the lamb was burning without, the high priest took some coals off that altar on which it was burnt, and carried them into the holy place. He then laid them on a golden altar before the veil, and burnt *incense* upon them, which was a type of Christ’s *intercession*. While the incense was burning *within*, the people were engaged in prayer *without* the temple. Their devotions and the incense ascended up to heaven together, and God smelled a sweet savour, and accepted the prayers of his people, only through the merits and intercession of the death of Christ, the angel of the covenant. The first was represented by the *lamb* burning without, and the second by the *incense* burning within the temple.

It is recorded that Peter preached his first sermon at “the *third* hour of the day,” [Acts 2:15.] and that Peter and John went up together into the temple at the *hour of prayer*, being the *ninth* hour. [Acts 3:1.] This was intended to teach the Church catholic in all ages that certain hours were set apart for offering to God’s glory the never-ceasing sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving. Accordingly, as God himself appointed the third and ninth hours of the day for offering up the Jewish burnt sacrifice and incense, so all Christian Churches have assembled and met together at nine o’clock morning and three afternoon, as is done in all cathedral churches in England

still. The reason for which is sufficiently obvious. The Jewish Church was a type of the Christian. At the *third* hour, or our nine o'clock morning, Christ was delivered to Pilate, accused, examined, and condemned. About the sixth hour, or noon, the *Lamb of God* was laid upon the altar of the cross. From that hour till the *ninth* there was darkness over all the land, Nature refusing to look upon the dreadful crime. At the *ninth* hour, or three o'clock afternoon, He yielded up the ghost. At this awful moment the veil, before which the incense typifying his intercession for those who had imprecated his blood on their own and children's heads, as well as for *all* the world, was at that very moment burning, "was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened." Prayers and thanksgivings, and the Eucharist, are the continual sacrifice of the Christian Church. [Heb. 13:15.] The Jewish high priest offered up a lamb daily, as a type of Christ *to come*. Whilst they prayed, Christ's *death* and *intercession* was typically represented by the lamb burning upon one altar, and by incense upon another. The Christian Church offers up *prayers* to God, in the name of Christ himself, as already sacrificed for us, and as presenting our prayers to his Father, with the continual *incense* or intercession of his own merits.

God himself made the Jewish priests holy: "Thou shalt sanctify him therefore, for he offereth the bread of thy God, he shall be *holy* unto thee." [Lev. 21:8.] The priesthood were more honourable than all the other tribes; so that Levi was called *holy*, whereas the other tribes were called profane; hence to dishonour a priest was called *profaneness*. He was forbid to marry a woman that was profane, that is, of another tribe which were profane with respect to him, because "the crown of the anointing oil of his God was upon him." [Ibid.] It was profaneness in a priest to marry the widow of a layman, neither was he permitted to mourn for the dead, as the laity might do. The nation of the Jews were *holy* in contradistinction to other nations which were *profane*. The *holy land* itself was profane compared with Jerusalem, which was the *holy city*. [Ezek. 48:15.] Ezekiel calls the suburbs profane in respect of the city itself, and *it was* profane in respect of the temple which was *more holy*; but the sanctuary was *more holy* still than the rest of the temple. Within the vail where the high priest alone entered *once* a year, which was called the *Holy of Holies*, was *more holy* still than the sanctuary, where the other priests officiated. The Holy of Holies represented Heaven,

but the *high priest* was *more holy* even than it, for he represented Christ himself, the great High priest.

Under the Law, God was himself pleased to appoint sacred vestments for Aaron and his sons, but especially were they to wear a *white linen ephod*. [Exod. 28.] White being what best represents the innocence and righteousness with which God's ambassadors ought to be clothed. "The fine linen is (or represents) the righteousness of saints." [Rev. 19:8.] And as the white linen ephods of the Jewish priesthood were girt tight about them, to signify the bondage of the Law, so the looseness of the surplice used by the Christian priesthood represents the freedom of the Gospel. White garments were worn by the Christian priesthood long before the mysterious iniquity of Popery was in existence. Could it only be established that white garments and Popery are coeval, it would do that ambitious hierarchy an important service. Ignorant objections serve only to advance their pretensions. The hood denotes the degree which the person officiating has taken in the English universities. It is of different colours according to the degree. It was originally a covering for the head among the ancient Romans, and from them was borrowed by the monkish orders. It afterwards came into use with the canons and dignitaries of cathedral churches, and from them the universities adopted it to denote the difference of degrees among their members. In order that these might be known elsewhere, and produce greater respect, the Church enjoins every graduate to wear his proper hood during Divine service.

Common prayers mean simply that the Liturgy or Prayers of the Church are common or public to all the people, and are uttered by the common voice and consent of the whole Church. *Common* is not intended as a contrast to anything uncommon or secret. Prayer is the most excellent, the most necessary, and the most beneficial act of religion. In relation to God, it is an acknowledgment of all his infinite and adorable attributes and perfections; and in relation to ourselves, it is an acknowledgment of our own daily wants, necessities, and great unworthiness, of our utter inability to help ourselves, and that our best estate is altogether vanity. St. James directs us "to ask in faith, nothing wavering." From which it is obvious that to ask with success, it is absolutely necessary that we steadfastly believe that we shall receive, with a firm reliance on his infinite power and ability to give more than either we desire or deserve. The wise man instructs us that in our petitions to God our words should be few; and our Saviour

blamed the heathen for thinking to be heard for their much speaking. He blamed also the Pharisees for making long prayers, while at the same time they devoured widows' houses. St. Paul assures us, that the assistance of the Holy Spirit in our prayers does not consist in supplying us with many and new words, but in making intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. [Rom. 8:26.] The life and spirit of prayer does not consist in the outward motion of the tongue, but in the inward breathings and longings of the heart. "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God." [Ibid. verse 27.] To ask aright, we must ask in faith and humility, and with a due sense of our own wants and unworthiness. St. Peter assures us that God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace only to the humble. The ostentatious and arrogant declamation of the hypocrite is an abomination to Him. He does not measure our devotions by their length or loudness, but by our humility and submissive dependence on Him. Remembering the severely-tried faith of the Syro-phenecian mother, our prayers ought always to be accompanied with her earnestness and importunity, [St. Mark 7:29.] because it is the fervent prayer of a righteous man that is alone effectual, and availeth much. [St. James 5:16.] Our Church teaches us to pray heartily, fervently, and constantly, asking all in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ, and in the humble hope that he will dismiss us with the same gracious assurance with which he comforted the Canaanitish mother, – "O Woman! great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

The Sentences. The preceding are only a few remarks on the duty of prayer. The Liturgy itself begins with a rubric or direction in these words: "At the beginning of morning prayer, the minister shall read with a loud voice some one or more of these sentences of the Scripture that fellow; and then he shall say that which is written after the said sentences." Prayer requires so much attention and serenity of mind, that it cannot be well performed without some preparation. Before we enter upon our prayers, or expect that God would hear our supplications, our Church has wisely ordered that we shall first hear His word. The service, therefore, begins with some sentences of Holy Scripture to excite and encourage our devotion, and to fix and attract our attention. The first sentence that begins the Liturgy is, *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.* – (Ezek. 18:27).

I. These words are an encouragement to turn from sin, which is the great impediment to true devotion, and mars the whole success of our prayers. It is rather a mockery than a true service to beg pardon for those sins in which we are resolved to continue, and to solicit those graces and blessings, of which we are neither sensible of the deficiency, nor really desirous of the supply. Repentance, or turning from sin, being so necessary a preparative for true devotion, and the best ingredient of an effectual prayer, the Liturgy, therefore, begins with an exhortation and encouragement to it. Despair is of itself a great sin. To prevent which, and lest we should think it too late to repent, or that the gates of mercy were shut against us, we are assured from God's infallible word; that whensoever we turn from our wickedness, and do that which is right, God will, through the merits and mediation of Christ, be merciful, and forgive us our sin. That is, if we put them away, and undo them by repentance and a new life. But as all men are not of the same disposition, nor always in the same temper, our Church has collected many sentences, and left it to the minister's discretion to use such of them daily throughout the year, as he thinks will suit best with his own and his people's circumstances.

II. The next sentence, therefore, is from David's penitential psalm, where that monarch bewailed his two great and crying sins: – "*I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.*" – (Psalm 51:3). We are thereby directed to follow his pious example, by acknowledging our transgressions, and instead of concealing or diminishing, to disclose and magnify them. It is confession that paves the way for the discharge and removal of the burden of guilt, by opening the heart, and bringing ease to the mind. Our Saviour, therefore, calls upon all who are thus "weary and heavy laden" with the burden of their sins, "to come to him" by confession and prayer, and he will give rest unto their souls. In this sentence, the Church teaches her members to imitate the devout Psalmist, by acknowledging our transgressions in general, and having our particular sins ever before us, that God may also forgive us the iniquity of our sins.

III. *Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.* – (Verse 9). From this penitential psalm, which contains the various parts and passages of David's repentance, several sentences have been with great felicity selected to be publicly read, and to supply the matter of several petitions. The great things for which he sues throughout the whole of this

psalm are the pardon and remission of his sins, that neither their stain nor guilt might remain. In his earnest suit, he frequently varies his expressions. In the first verse, he beseeches God “to have mercy on him, and to do away his offences”; in the second, to be “thoroughly washed from his wickedness, and cleansed from his sins.” For which purpose, he prays “to be purged with hyssop, that he might be clean and to be washed, that he might be whiter than snow.” And, now in this sentence, he reiterates his petitions, begging God to turn away his face from his transgressions, and remember them no more. This shows the earnestness and importunity of his suit, that he would take no denial, nor cease his petitions till his request was granted. This is that sacred violence by which the kingdom of heaven is represented as being taken by storm. Cold and indifferent requests more frequently meet with frowns than favours: and David’s example shows the great value and importance which he placed on the blotting out of those two great sins in particular, for which Nathan was commissioned to reprove him. The Psalmist prayed that God would not look on his transgressions with displeasure, nor with an avenging eye, but to behold them veiled or covered with the righteousness of Christ, that they might no longer be imputed to him.

IV. Again, *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* – (Verse 17). This is another of the preparatory sentences prescribed for the introduction to our prayers. In the preceding verse, the Psalmist tells us that God desireth not sacrifices, nor delighteth in burnt offerings. In this, that He cared not so much for sacrifices, as for the prayers and praises of a broken and a contrite heart. The heart and spirit here spoken of, means that spiritual part of a man which is called the soul, with all its powers and faculties, as the understanding, will, and affections. It is called in Scripture the *inner man*, or the *hidden man of the heart*. A broken heart does not mean a divided or a double heart, shared between God and mammon, but a heart bruised and wounded with a sense and sorrow for sin. The expression is figurative, and is opposed to a stony heart, which is hard, insensible, and unrelenting, incapable alike of fear and sorrow, or of love and affection. But when the evil heart of unbelief is changed from this hard and insensible state, and becomes more tender, tractable, and relenting; when it is possessed with a fear and dread of the Divine Majesty, and sorrow for having sinned against him; when it becomes humble and lowly, and full of inward compunction, then it is rightly termed

a broken heart, or a contrite spirit. The offering of a broken heart is of more value in the sight of God than were all the legal sacrifices and offerings under the old Law. The humble aspirations of a contrite heart send up a more sweet-smelling savour than clouds of the most costly incense. The tears of the truly penitent are more piteous than any drink offering, and the devout thanksgivings of a grateful heart are better than whole burnt offerings. The term, that He will not despise a broken and a contrite heart includes much more than it seems to express. He will not only not despise it, but He will highly value and esteem it. When the apostle forbids us “to despise prophesying,” he means that we should highly honour it. When Christ says that he will “in no ways cast out those that come unto him,” he clearly means that he will affectionately receive and embrace them. Of His acceptance of a broken heart we have many instances in Scripture: The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and will save such as be of an humble spirit.” [Psa. 34:18.] – “He healeth those that are broken in heart.” [Psa. 147:3.] And the prophet Isaiah, speaking in the name of God, says, “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a *contrite and humble spirit*, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” [Isa. 57:15.] – “To him will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my ward.” [Isa. 66:2.] All which decidedly show how acceptable a meek and broken spirit is in the sight of God. He is not only ever near to it, which is of itself a mighty condescension, but even vouchsafes to dwell in it; and though the heaven of heavens cannot contain his glory, yet he is pleased to dwell within the narrow limits of a contrite heart. If we turn to the sacred record, we shall find many instances of His gracious acceptance of this brokenness of heart. The humble and secret prayers of Hannah at the altar more readily prevailed and obtained her suit, than all the costly offerings and oblations of her husband Elkanah. [1 Sam.] Manasseh’s humiliation and self-abasement restored him to the favour of God, and consequently to his lost kingdom. [2 Chron. 33:12–13.] For the tender and humble heart of Josiah, and because he rent his clothes and wept before the Lord, – He also heard him, and promised that he should be gathered to his fathers, and to the grave in peace, and that his eyes should not behold the evil which the Lord threatened to bring upon his stiff-necked nation. [2 Kings 22:19–20.] Turning to the New Testament, we find the despised publican who stood afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his

breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner, graciously accepted and *justified*, rather than the self-righteous Pharisee, who magnified his supposed virtues, but knew not of what spirit he was. [St. Luke 18:13–14.] When the prodigal son “came to himself,” and his heart relented for his riotous living, he counted himself “unworthy to be called a son,” and humbled himself even to be ranked among his father’s hired servants. For this brokenness of spirit, his father ran to meet him when he was yet a great way off, and received him with great rejoicing into the arms of his mercy. [Ibid. ch. 15.] Our Church has appointed this sentence to be read before we begin our prayers, because a broken and a contrite heart being the most acceptable sacrifice that we can offer, God will “have compassion on us,” and cover us with the “robe” of Christ’s righteousness, *for it is in that only* in which we can stand. Without which our repentance is weak and unworthy, fit only to be repented of, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags. But the heart of man “is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” This contrition of heart is therefore the gift and work of God, and is only to be attained by prayer to him. It is by the grace and assistance of His Holy Spirit that this happy state is to be acquired, and therefore we pray with the Psalmist, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” This he has graciously promised to do to those who sincerely ask for it: “I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them a heart of flesh.” [Ezek. 9:19.] This is sufficient encouragement; and accordingly the Church leads her members “boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” [Heb. 4:16.]

V. *Rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.* – (Joel 2:13). This is the next sentence prescribed to usher in our prayers. It is generally directed to be said on days of fasting and humiliation, being chiefly suited for such occasions, as, in the previous verse, the prophet exhorts to turn unto the Lord with the whole heart, with *fasting*, and with weeping, and with mourning. In these words there are, first, a call to repentance; next, the manner of showing that repentance; and, lastly, a strong motive and encouragement proposed, arising out of the nature and properties of God. – This call to *turn*, or to repentance, implies a previous revolt, or departure

from God. Repentance is the grace that brings us back, and leads us into the right path from which we have swerved or revolted. Of this accordingly our Church puts us in mind; and next recommends us to rend our hearts rather than our garments, as was the Jewish custom in grief or despair. That is, not to be satisfied with mere external signs of sorrow, but in breaking the heart, in bruising the spirit, and putting on the robe of Christ's righteousness, and wearing his garb of humility. Then God will be *gracious*. That is, prompt and ready to meet us, – will be *merciful*, full of compassion and pity towards all who are in miser, and *slow to anger*; long suffering, and not easily provoked, not forward to punish, for he does not willingly grieve the children of men; *and of great kindness*, that is, an overflowing fountain of goodness that never fails, an inexhaustible well of mercy. He is kind, not only to those who serve Him in an honest and good heart, but even to the who have offended Him. To those on whom he exercises his judgment, He always remembers mercy even in the midst of judgment; *and repenteth Him of the evil*. – He removes or revokes the punishment he had threatened, when *men* repent and turn to Him. In condescension to our finite capacities, God has said in Scripture to *repent*, – to be *grieved*, – to be *angry*, *etc*. He is not subject to any of these passions as we are. Such expressions, taken strictly and properly, are inconsistent with the being of a God. In the present instance of His *repenting*, the change is not in Him, but in *us*, and is to be understood with an *as if*. Because we have repented and turned unto Him, He is represented *as if* He had repented. We are taught that He has neither body, parts, nor passions.” [First Art. of Religion.] To assert, therefore, that He can repent, in the strict sense of the word, is to suppose the knowledge of something after, of which he was before ignorant, and a consequent change of mind, which would imply such weakness and imperfection as is sinful either to think or affirm. Repentance, therefore, must be understood as being spoken, after the manner of men, *as if* God had repented and been grieved. This is to express by a figure His high displeasure, and a change in us who are mutable and subject to change, but none in Him who is immutable and unchangeable. Tearing the hair, rending the clothes, wearing of sackcloth, and sitting in dust and ashes, were the external manner of exhibiting sorrow among the Jews. All which might be most outrageously done without the slightest sorrow or compunction of heart, like the hypocritical Pharisees, who disfigured their faces. But God, who knows the heart, will accept only the rending of *it*, and not of the garments.

VI. *To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us.* – (Dan. 9:9–10). In the last sentence, the Church encourages us with the declaration of the prophet Joel. In this, she revives the spirits of such as fear they may have outlived the mercies of God, and turned His kindness into indignation and wrath. Here the prophet declares Him to be the Father and fountain of mercy. Neither the multitude nor the heinousness of our sins can change or alter His nature, or obstruct the influence of His free grace, for to Him belong mercies and forgivenesses. Isaiah introduces the Almighty as reasoning with his rebellious people: “Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” [Isa. 1:18.] Teaching by this comparison, that by whatever aggravations our sins are enhanced, yet on true repentance they shall be all done away, and the white robes of our baptismal innocence restored.

VII. *O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.* – (Jer. 10:24). By the last sentence, the Church teaches us to make a right use of mercies and forgivenesses, by encouraging in us a more cheerful performance of our duty, and in suffering ourselves to be drawn by the cords of love, rather than to be driven by the terrors of the rod. In this sentence she teaches that the rod is sometimes necessary to bring us to a just sight and sense of our sins. We know not what is best for us. We are apt to wish for prosperity, when its gift would be prejudicial: and we deprecate adversity, when its infliction would be salutary and most for our good. That we may not perish, therefore, through our own fondness, or be reined by sparing the rod, the Church teaches us, especially on days of fasting and humiliation, to pray that God would remember mercy in the midst of His judgment, lest in His anger He should bring us to nothing. In this sentence there are, first, – a petition for temporal chastisement, – secondly, – for its mitigation, – and, thirdly, the ground or reason of both. We are rather to desire than to despise the chastising of the Lord; willing Him not entirely to lay aside the rod, but to use it gently for our amendment. Beseeching him that He would correct us in love, so as to bring us to Himself, not in anger and rigour, lest He bring us to nothing. We are not too anxiously to desire prosperity, but rather to court adversity, which ministers to future happiness. It is our duty to choose, like the meekest of

men, rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

VIII. *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* – (St. Matt. 3:2). This great and primary duty of the Gospel was the first lesson which was taught by St. John the Baptist, the harbinger of the Messiah, when he was sent to prepare the way of the Lord. It is also well adapted to preface our prayers, and to introduce our devotions. “The kingdom of heaven” is Christ’s kingdom, or the grace and favour of the Gospel which He brought with it. To us the kingdom of grace is already come, and the kingdom of glory is not far distant. It is repentance *only* that can make us fit subjects for either. The return of the prodigal son produced ecstasies of joy, and we are informed that “there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

IX. *I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.* – (St Luke 15:18–19). The Church prescribes this preparatory sentence as an encouragement to go to our heavenly Father, from whom we have all gone astray, and to beg of Him the supply of those wants which our wandering from Him has unhappily occasioned. The father here meant is the Almighty Creator and Proprietor of all Things. By the prodigal son in the parable we are to understand the Gentile world, but now all mankind, who are his creatures and servants, and who are made his sons by adoption and grace in baptism. The portion of goods given to them are the several gifts or talents entrusted with them, and committed to their charge. The Church, therefore, exhibits the prodigal’s example for our imitation, and exhorts us to arise and bestir ourselves, and go quickly by faith and prayer to our heavenly Father. She instructs us to prostrate ourselves in humble confession before Him, to acknowledge our own unworthiness, and to trust wholly to his mercy and compassion, never doubting of receiving the same affectionate welcome as the prodigal experienced. Although a mother may forget the fruit of her womb, yet will He never forget, but will clothe the nakedness of our souls in the robes of Christ’s righteousness.

X. *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.* – (Psalm 143:2). The Church has appointed this sentence to be read before we begin our prayers, to let us know that we must not expect to be heard for our own worth, but entirely through the

clemency and goodness of God. His absolute right to enter into judgment with us, proceeds from his power and dominion over us, grounded on the right of creation, preservation, and redemption. His relation, therefore, as our Maker, Preserver, and Redeemer, gives Him full power to call us to an account for the talents which He has committed to our charge. Of these talents we are not so much the owners as the stewards; and as such, accountable to Him who bountifully bestows on every man severally as he will. He may justly enter into judgment with us for either embezzling or neglecting His talents, and demand an account of our stewardship. And we, of this nation in general, and of this Church in particular, might justly fear such a reckoning, were He strict to mark what is done amiss. While other communions are disputing which heresy is the most orthodox blasphemy, and while the German sects are tainting the Word of God with the leprosy of the Socinian philosophy, and the pure lights of evangelical truth are extinguished in their assemblies; while the valleys of Piedmont, where the faithful witnesses prophesied in sackcloth during the long night of Romish apostasy, are now the haunts of speculative theologians, and the heresy of Romish superstition is again *triumphant* in Ireland; the Protestant Episcopal Church of these kingdoms alone maintains her primeval purity. She alone enjoys the light of the Gospel with all the clearness and freedom that ever any Church did. But if we consider the bad use we have made of all these favours, and their little effect in our improvement, we may well deprecate His entering into judgment with us.

XI. *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* – (1 St. John 1:8–9). This is the last of the preliminary sentences, and is particularly applicable. Till we see our sins, we shall never confess them, till we confess them we shall never amend them, and till we amend them they will never be forgiven. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, on their being confessed and forsaken. This act of faithfulness is founded on His many promises, and we may safely rely that the Judge of all the earth will fulfill them. It was not from our merits, but His own free grace and goodness, that these promises were made. We may now, therefore, implead Him upon them, and on the performance of the conditions on our part, we may without doubt expect their fulfillment. For He is faithful and just that has promised. Christians may now plead the satisfaction of Christ for removing the

punishment, and the merits of His blood for cleansing us from the pollution of sin and of all unrighteousness. The wisdom of the compilers of the Liturgy is evident in placing these sentences on the very threshold of our common prayers, because they prepare our minds for the great duty and benefit of confession. It engages the attributes of God in our favour; His wisdom to contrive, His power to execute, His goodness to pardon, and His faithfulness to perform.

If these sentences are heard in the frame of mind which the Church requires, they must be highly beneficial as a preparative for the prayers that are to follow. But perhaps many who have heard them repeated all their lives think little about their import. It is, however, our duty to listen to them with devout attention, and consider that the minister is declaring to us the words of the great God by the holy prophet or apostle from whose writings these sentences are taken. They are very judiciously selected, and are generally calculated to lead to repentance and confession of sins. “Here,” says Bishop Jelly, “you see, on the very threshold of the Church, the Gospel meets you, holding out to you repentance and remission of sins, as its Divine Author, after His resurrection, gave the sum of those *glad tidings* which the word Gospel signifies, commanding them to be preached in His name among all nations; confirming the word of the angel at His birth, ‘I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all* people’; not to a select few, but to *all people*, who; upon hearing, shall give ears and faithfully receive the gracious proclamation of pardon and peace, upon true repentance. It is thus, in truly evangelical style, that the Church leads us into her house and service; exhorting us, as it were, in the words of the prophet, ‘Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips.’ And, thus prepared, we proceed to render Him thanks and praise, speaking alternately in psalms and hymns, – to hear also and declare our faith in His most holy word, – and to ask things needful both for soul and body.” [Friendly Address to the Episcopalians of Scotland by the Bishop of Moray, p. 40.]

The Exhortation follows these sentences. It is not a prayer, but an exhortation or call to confession, and therefore ought not to be repeated after the minister, but listened to with devout attention, so as to apply the foregoing sentences. He begins with an affectionate and courteous salutation, following the example of St. Paul and the other apostles, *Dear*

beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge

and confess our manifold sins and wickedness. This is not an idle compliment, but a significant indication of love, which is more likely to engage the people to obey his voice, and hear his instructions, than the rougher mode of reproof and invective. In it the minister, who is God's ambassador, offers to lead us to the throne of grace, to put words into our mouths, and to plead both with us and for us, not doubting that his Master will show the same joy at seeing him with so many penitents in his train, as He expressed on the return of the prodigal son. Archbishop Secker says, "that the first words express very strongly and properly the good will and tender regard which the ministers of God's word should have for their people, who should in return receive their admonitions meekly and thankfully, since they speak to them the truth in love."

Confession is an act of the soul, displaying or laying open our sins before God, and heartily bewailing our folly and wickedness in having committed them. Although with the mouth confession is made unto God, yet the heart is the spring which sets the tongue in motion, for out of it are the issues of life. Unless they proceed from the heart, our confessions are mere hypocrisy and lip labour. We can afford Him no information, for unto Him all hearts are open, all desires known; "even the heavens are not clean in His sight, and He chargeth his angels with folly." Confession is, therefore, an act of humiliation and self-abasement for all our sins, negligences, and ignorances, of which we are daily guilty. To bewail our weakness and folly is a necessary concomitant of confession, in order to manifest its truth and reality. David constantly confessed, and St. Peter wept bitterly, after his Lord's gracious look, "more in sorrow than in anger," had recalled him to a sight and sense of his sin. We can neither increase nor diminish God's essential glory, but by humble and sincere confession we endeavour to vindicate the honour of His attributes, and the authority of His laws, from the insults which we by our sins have cast upon both. Sin is an invasion of His sovereignty and authority over us; – an impeachment of His wisdom; – an affront to His omniscience and all-seeing eye, to His omnipotence and infinite power; – an indignity offered to His justice; – and an abuse of His goodness, by perverting the end and design of all His mercies.

The words of the Exhortation that follow, are, "*And that we should not dissemble nor cloak them before the face of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father.*" Daily experience shows that every man endeavours to

conceal his faults, thereby adding sin to sin. This is a primeval propensity. After their transgression our first parents hid themselves among the trees of the garden, and gathered leaves from the *fig tree* to cover that shame which they had contracted from the fruit of the *forbidden tree*. Their posterity have ever since been heirs of the shame, as well as the guilt of their disobedience, which makes hypocrisy, and wearing the cloak of religion, so prevalent a sin, – doubling the guilt, and barring the pardon. We are likewise apt to dissemble and cloak our sins in ever-ready excuses and apologies for them, like Saul, and Ananias and his wife. To deny them, like Gehazi; or to shift their guilt from ourselves to our neighbours, as Adam transferred his to Eve, and Eve hers again to the serpent. But if we should succeed in playing the hypocrite before our fellow men for some short time, yet all the wit of man cannot conceal our sins from the sight of God, for He is privy to all our ways, and searcheth out the very secrets of our hearts. Neither can a man long suppress the reproaches of his own conscience, – a faithful register and monitor that constantly reminds us of those sins which we endeavour to dissemble and cloak from our neighbours. But it is even a matter of some difficulty long to conceal our faults from them, – a discovery which seems to be our chief fear. But however secretly the commission of sin may be practiced here, it will be exposed to assembled men and angels hereafter. Therefore, if we have been unhappily drawn or betrayed into sin, let us rather confess, and be forgiven, than cloak it, and double its guilt. “Blessed is the man whose sin is covered” (with the robe of Christ’s righteousness), “and to whom the Lord imputeth no sin.”

The next words are: *But confess thin with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart, to the end that may obtain forgiveness of the same by his infinite mercy and goodness.* Our confession of sins ought to be both private and public; the first to be made in our closets, the second in the church. And both ought to be free and ingenuous, like that of sons, proceeding from love and a filial fear of offending our Heavenly Father, not forced and extorted by a servile dread of punishment, like slaves. In our private confessions we are bound to lay all our particular sins and transgressions, both of omission and commission. In the public confession of the church, we are to join in the general confession of sins that are common to all men, without descending publicly to parties, of which perhaps some in the congregation cannot accuse themselves. Although all men are guilty before God, yet all are not alike guilty of the same

transgressions, and therefore our general or common sins must be the sole subject of public confession, that all present may join in it. Nevertheless, in our hearts we ought also to confess our own particular sins, which can be done without permitting our right hand, that is our neighbour, to know what our left is doing, but which is seen and known unto God. True confession proceeds from an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart. Formal confessions are no better than begging leave still farther to offend, and instead of lessening, add to the number and guilt of our offences. A memorable instance of this hypocrisy remains on record “for our ensample,” in the Pharisee who went up to the Temple to pray. God resisted his pride, but gave grace to the humility of the penitent Publican. Confession must also proceed from it *lowly heart*, in token of our self-abasement. The lowliness of the heart must be evidenced by the humble gesture of the body, and therefore our Church commands us to fall low on our knees. No posture is so becoming as kneeling, when we confess our sins and beg for pardons and mercy. Shame and sorrow (*a penitent heart*) are most suitable when our actions have been base and unworthy. And an *obedient heart* is the most acceptable, which is possessed with a dislike and abhorrence of sin, and a perfect resolution, through God’s assistance, “to go and sin no more.” This exhortation likewise cures us, that the end and object of our confession is to obtain forgiveness; but although confession and forsaking of sin are the best means of obtaining it, yet forgiveness is not the result of our merits, but of the infinite goodness and mercy of God, through the incense of Christ’s intercession. The end of confession, therefore, is forgiveness. By confessing our sins we give glory to God; for, in debasing ourselves, and in acknowledging our own vileness and unworthiness, we magnify and glorify Him, by adoring his infinite purity and perfection. We acknowledge His power to forgive; we put our whole trust and confidence in Him; we demonstrate our belief that He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and ready to pardon, which is the best way in which we can show forth His praise and glory.

The next words are: *And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God, yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands; to set forth his most worthy praise; to hear his most holy word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul.* Here our Church teaches us the

necessity of confession at all times, but more particularly when we assemble for public prayer. In this exhortation we are also taught what is the end and design of our meeting together; which is, that we should be ever ready and willingly disposed, on all fitting occasions and opportunities, to lay open our offences without hypocrisy and guile. We daily renew our sins. It is therefore reasonable that we should daily confess them, which is what is here meant by acknowledging our sins at all times, but which is more particularly to be done when we meet together in the church. It is the meeting in consecrated places, under the authority of, and in communion with, the Church, that alone makes a Church assembly; otherwise, unless in cases of absolute necessity, we are guilty of separation and schism. In such regular assemblies we enjoy the inestimable benefit of “rendering thanks to Almighty God, for the great benefits that we have received at his hands.” We ought daily to return hearty thanks for mercies daily received, mercies too numerous to be calculated. Those which more immediately call for our warmest acknowledgments are those of redemption through Christ’s merits alone by which we obtain repentance and forgiveness of sins, justification before God, and are made fit to be partakers of the kingdom of heaven. The Almighty daily pours his benefits, both temporal and spiritual, upon us, liberally and without upbraiding, in the presence of all men. We ought, therefore, publicly to yield Him our humble and hearty thanks in return. Another object in meeting together is, “to set forth his most worthy praise,” which corresponds with the custom of the temple and synagogues, of singing hymns and hallelujahs, in the words of the royal Psalmist. Another most important object is “to hear his most holy word.” This again corresponds to the reading and expounding the Law among the Jews: “For Moses of old time hath in every city, them that preach him; being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.” Timothy was commanded to give attendance to reading, as well as to exhortation and doctrine. And it was our Lord’s last command to the apostles, “to *teach* all nations the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.” His ministers are still appointed to wait continually on preaching his holy word, and administering his sacraments. The last object of our assembling is, “to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul.” Of ourselves we are feeble and impotent, utterly unable to supply the wants of either body or soul. We depend entirely on the bounty of our Heavenly Father, without the constant influence of whose grace and goodness our souls would languish, and our

bodies decay. We, therefore, petition for health and strength, for food and raiment, for peace and plenty for the welfare of our bodies, as well as for redemption, instruction, and sanctification for the comfort of our souls. There is no doubt that if we go to church with the same humility as the prodigal son approached his father, we shall meet with the same kind reception.

We are taught in Scripture that Sunday was made for man, and not man for it. We are also taught that prayer is a duty so well pleasing to God, that He has appointed it to be the means of obtaining all the blessings that we can either want or desire. These He has promised to grant, if we ask them as we ought, in Christ's name, and with faith in His word and promise. "*Ask* and it shall be *given* you; *seek* and ye shall *find*; *knock* and it shall be *opened* unto you." [St. Matt. 7:7.] – "And all things whatsoever ye shall *ask* in prayer, *believing ye shall receive.*" [Ibid. 21:22.] – "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, *believe* that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." [St. Mark 11:24.] – "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it to you." [St. John 16:23.] If, therefore, such gracious promises are made to private prayer, how much better must public devotions be, to which so many promises are also made; for God is said "to love the gates of Sion better than all the dwellings of Jacob." One promise in particular, "If *two* shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them, of my Father which is in heaven." [St. Matt. 18:19.] By the uniform use of a liturgy, we perform the *condition* annexed to this promise, for to that which we publicly ask we have previously agreed. Where *two* or *three* are gathered together, therefore, in Christ's name, we can with confidence implead the gracious promise of Him who is faithful and just, to grant our petitions. Neither do we doubt, but believe as firmly as ever faithful Abraham did, that it shall be done for us of our Father which is in heaven.

We are now arrived at the conclusion, in these words: *Wherefore, I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me.* As the minister began this exhortation with a kind and courteous *dearly beloved brethren*, so he concludes with an earnest *entreaty* to all present. Although the Church has a right to command, yet for love's sake she rather beseeches all persons, high said low, rich and poor, one with another, young and old, and persons of all ages, sexes, states, and

conditions, all, the very best, being miserable sinners, to worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord their Maker, and confess their manifold offences. The Christian priest invites us to accompany him to the throne of the heavenly grace, – a greater privilege than the Jews enjoyed under the Law. They were admitted no farther than to the outer court; the priest alone entered into the Temple. But under the Gospel we are graciously permitted to come boldly in the company of the priest to the throne of grace. He offers up the sacrifice of our prayers and thanksgivings, both with us and for us, which we ought to do at all times with *a pure heart*, free from hypocrisy and worldly lust, and with an *humble voice*, and audible, but not so loud as to disturb the devotion of others, that according to St. Paul's advice, "we may with one mind and one mouth glorify God." Some men who live and thrive by divisions, say that it is impossible for all men to be of one mind. They assert that we may as well expect to see all men of one stature and complexion, as of one mind; and that it is as reasonable for all men to be of one calling or profession, as to have the same judgment and opinion in the public worship of God. But to this it may be replied that it is neither in our power, nor are we commanded to have the same stature or complexion. Although there must be many trades and professions in the world, yet there is but *one communion*, *one baptism*, *one calling* to Christianity, which are alike imperative upon all. *Jerusalem*, which in Scripture signifies the whole Church, is expressly said to be at "*unity* within itself." We read that the first converts were "all of *one heart and mind*"; – that "they were continually together in the Temple blessing and praising God"; – that "they met together in one place, with *one accord and one mind*"; – that "they continued *steadfastly* in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayer"; – and that "they were daily in the Temple with *one accord*." This showed their blessed harmony and concord in the matter of public worship. Besides, the many precepts enjoining unity, and our Saviour's fervent prayer for it, that his ministers might be one, even as his Father and himself are one, show that it is both a possible and a practicable duty. If unity were impossible, to what good purpose were the many sharp rebukes and cautions against divisions? St. Paul beseeches the Corinthians "that they may be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." He exhorts the Philippians to "stand fast in one spirit, with *one mind*, striving together for the faith of the gospel," and "to be likeminded, having the same love, being of *one accord* and of *one mind*."

St. Peter also exhorts us to “be all of one mind.” He lays no burthen on us, but which, with His grace helping us, we are able to bear. The necessity and propriety of uniformity in public prayer are strongly urged in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. After descanting on the absurdity of prayer in an unknown tongue, the apostle proceeds to censure those who, when they came together, hath everyone a psalm, a doctrine, a tongue, a revelation, an interpretation. [1 Cor. 14:26.] This censure particularly applies to extemporary worship, where, as there can be no concord, there must be different psalms, doctrines, tongues, revelations, and interpretations. In extemporary worship it is impossible that one congregation, far less a whole nation, can “with *one* mind and *one* mouth glorify God.” But again, it is maintained that unity in the *matter* of prayer is sufficient, without uniformity in words and syllables, because men differ from each other in sentiments, tastes, and even in doctrine. Unity, however, is the beauty of holiness, the chief ornament of the Church, and the bulwark of religion, and as it is the most pleasing to God, so it must also be more prevailing with Him. If what *two shall agree together to ask* shall be granted, is it not reasonable to conclude that the common and united desires of the Church will more readily prevail, and be successful! To unity we ought to join uniformity in our public prayers, which is the true way to glorify God with one mind and one mouth. In this exhortation the minister accordingly calls on the congregation to make our requests known unto God, and to accompany him in our confession, saying after him. [Dr. Comber’s Companion to the Temple. Dr. Holes’ Discourses on the Liturgy. Bishop Beveridge’s Great Necessity and Advantage of Public Prayer. Leslie’s Theological Works; Oxford Edition, 1833.]

Note. – In the Liturgy, the Church of England, the glory and the bulwark of the Reformation, has provided a source of comfort and consolation for her members, both in their public devotions, and also when circumstances of time and place prevent their assembling and meeting together which cannot be supplied by extempore worship, because it depends entirely on the breath of a fallible creature. Not only does this sublime composition solace her own faithful children, in whatever quarter of the globe they may be situated, but, like the early and the latter rain, which falls alike on the just and on the unjust, it is the consolation of those who despise her sober doctrines and are bound to extirpate her divinely instituted government. A most interesting illustration of this is to be found in the Juvenile Kaleidoscope. The scene is in the wilds of South Africa, and is related in a very simple and affecting manner by one of the settlers: – “We were placed on our location, says an interesting emigrant or colonist, to South Africa, with his very

respectable party of Scotch settlers, near the source of the *Baviaan's River*, on the 29th June; next day we were visited by Captain Harding, the magistrate of the district, and formally installed in our new possessions. By the advice of this officer, we resolved to place a nightly watch to guard our camp from any sudden attack that might be attempted by Caffre or Bushman marauders; and as Captain Harding considered our position to be very exposed, we agreed to continue at least for the first season in one body, and to erect our huts and cultivate our crops in one spot, for the sake of common security and mutual help. The day following we made a complete tour of our united domain, to which we gave the Scottish name of *Glen-Lynden*, – an appellation afterwards extended to the whole valley of 'Baviaan's River'. We erected temporary landmarks to divide the allotments of the different families; and in our progress started a good deal of wild game, quaggas, hartebeestes, riteboks, oribis, and two wild boars, one of we killed; but we saw no beast of prey, except a solitary jackal.

“The next day, July 2d, was our first Sunday on our own grounds. Feeling the high importance of strictly maintaining the suitable observance of this day of sacred rest, it was unanimously resolved that we should abstain from all secular employment not sanctioned by absolute necessity; and, at the same time, commence such a system of religious services as might be, with propriety, maintained in the absence of a clergyman or minister. The whole party were accordingly assembled after breakfast, under a venerable acacia tree, on the margin of the little stream which murmured pleasantly beneath. The river appeared shaded here and there by the graceful willow of Babylon, which grows abundantly along the of the African streams, and which, with the other peculiar features of the scenery, vividly reminded us of the beautiful lament of the Hebrew exiles: – ‘By the rivers of Babylon there we sat, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.’ It was, indeed, an affecting sight to look round on our little band of Scottish exiles, thus congregated for the first time to worship God in the wild glen allotted for their future home, and the heritage of their offspring. There sat old _____ with his silvery locks, the patriarch of the party, with the Bible on his knees, a picture of the grave, high-principled Scottish husbandman; his respectable family seated round him. There was the widow _____ with her meek, kind, and quiet look, – like one who had seen better days, but who, in adversity, found pious resignation, with her three stalwart sons, and her young maiden daughter placed beside her on the grass. There was Mr. _____ with his two servant lads the younger brother of a Scottish laird, rich in blood, but poor in fortune, who, with an estimable pride, had preferred a farm in South Africa to a humiliating dependence on aristocratic connections at home. There, too, were others still more nearly related to the writer of this little sketch, – the nominal head of the party. Looking round on these collected groups, on this solemn day of assemblage, such reflections as the following irresistibly crowded on his mind: – Have I collected from their native homes, and led forth to this remote corner of the globe, all these my friends and countrymen, for good or for evil? to perish miserably in the wilderness, or to become the honoured founders of a prosperous settlement, destined to extend the benefits of civilization, and the blessed light of the Gospel, through this dark and desolate nook of benighted Africa? The issue of our enterprise is known only to Him who ordereth all things well. ‘Man proposes, but God

disposes.’ But though the result of our scheme is in the womb of futurity, and although it seems probable that greater perils and privations await us than we had once calculated upon, there yet appears no cause to repent of the course we have taken, or to augur unfavourably of the ultimate issue. Thus far Providence has prospered and protected us. We left not our native land (deeply and dearly loved by us) from wanton restlessness or mere love of change, or without very sufficient or reasonable motives. Let us, therefore, go on calmly and courageously, duly invoking the blessing of God on all our proceedings: and thus, be the result what it may, we shall feel ourselves in the path of active duty. – With these and similar reflections, we encouraged ourselves, and proceeded to the religious services of the day. Having selected one of the hymns of our national Church, all united in singing it to one of the old pathetic sacred melodies with which it is usually conjoined in the Sabbath (Sunday) worship of our native land. The day was bright and still, and the voice of praise rose with a sweet and touching solemnity among those wild mountains, where the praise of the true God had never, in all human probability, been sung before. The words of the hymn, – composed by Logan, – were appropriate to our situation and our feelings, and affected some of our congregation very sensibly:–

“O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;

Who through this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led;

“Through each perplexing path of life
Our wandering footsteps guide;
Give us each day our daily bread,
And raiment fit provide.

“O! spread thy covering wings around,
Till all our wanderings cease,
And at our Father’s loved abode
Our souls arrive in peace.’

“We then read some of the most suitable portions of the English Liturgy which we considered preferable to any extempore service that could be substituted on this occasion; and concluded with an excellent discourse from a volume of sermons, by a friend well known and much esteemed, the late Dr Andrew Thomson of Edinburgh. We had a similar service in the afternoon, and agreed to maintain in this manner the public worship of God in our little settlement, until it should please Providence again to favour us with the regular dispensation of our holy religion. While we were singing out the last psalm in the afternoon, a roebuck antelope, which appeared to have wandered down the valley, without previously observing us, stood for a little while on the opposite side of the stream, gazing at us in innocent amazement, as if yet unacquainted with man, – the great destroyer. On this day it was, of course, permitted to depart unmolested.

On this and other occasions the scenery and productions of the country reminded us, in the most forcible manner, of the striking imagery of the Hebrew Scriptures. The parched and thorny desert, – the rugged and stony mountains, – the dry beds and torrents, – ‘the green pastures by the quiet waters,’ – ‘the lions’ dens,’ – ‘mountains of leopards,’ – ‘the roes and the young harts (antelopes) that feed among the lilies,’ – ‘the cony of the rocks,’ – ‘the ostrich of the wilderness,’ – ‘the shadow of a great rock in a weary land’; – these and a thousand other objects, with strikingly appropriate descriptions which accompany them, reminded us continually with a sense of their beauty and aptitude, which we had never fully felt before.” Pp. 411-415.

Chapter 4.

The Rubric before the General Confession – Bodily Worship – Kneeling the proper Mode of Worship – Precepts and Examples from Scripture – The General Confession – Divided into four Parts – Titles or Attributes of God – Erring and Straying, what – Devices and Desires, what – Sins of Omission and Commission – Meaning of Health – Deprecation of Evil – His great Compassion – Restoration from the Pollution of Sin

– Petition for Good – Mediatory Saints – Christ alone the Mediator – A godly, righteous, and sober Life, what – Meaning of Amen.

The Rubric. – The Sentences and Exhortation are succeeded by a Rubric, or direction to the congregation to make their confession humbly kneeling. It is called *A General Confession, to be said of the whole congregation after the minister, all kneeling.* These brief instructions or directions are called Rubrics, because at first they were printed in red ink, although they are now always in italics.

This confession is *general* because it is made by the whole congregation. Without confession there can be no pardon. There is no man that liveth and sinneth not, and without pardon there can be no acceptance of our sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving. In conformity with the usage of the primitive Church, therefore, ours most appropriately begins with confession of sins. Before we offer up our prayers and praises to Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, it is fit that the whole congregation, minister and all, who are all equally concerned in the issue, should confess, and ask forgiveness of their sins. It is necessary to attend to the *posture* of the body in this act of worship, and the Rubric enjoins the whole congregation to *kneel*. This posture is enjoined by the authority of the Church, to which we owe great respect and obedience. It is confirmed also by human laws; but, above all, it is enforced by Divine precept and example. By visible or bodily adoration, that is, by uncovering the head, bowing, and kneeling, we show outward signs of reverence and submission. We openly acknowledge the mercy, the justice, and the power of God. We hereby significantly express our inward sense of these attributes. There are many positive commands for bodily worship in Scripture. The inspired Psalmist says, “O come let us worship, and *bow down*, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.” [Psalm 95:6.] This command to bow and kneel is not meant figuratively, but literally. It is also to be understood of *public* worship; for in the same psalm it is said, “Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving: and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.” Bowing and kneeling must therefore be understood in the same sense as singing, thanksgiving, and psalms, which are certainly to be understood literally. The second commandment requires bodily worship. It forbids us to bow down to idols, or to worship them. This prohibition to worship the creature includes a command to bow down and worship the Creator. This is s

universal rule, and is very distinctly stated in the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism. "Where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden: and where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded; so where a promise is annexed, the contrary threatening is included: and where a threatening is annexed, the contrary promise is included." Therefore he that either bows, kneels, or uses any posture of reverence to a graven image, breaks the second commandment. Those who refuse to bow, kneel, or use a reverential posture to God, likewise break the second commandment. It is a contempt of God, and contrary to his commandment, to pray to him without some posture of adoration, when in our power. It is idolatry and sacrilege to kneel before an image, even although we do not pray to it, as some Christians pretend. Bowing down is an act of worship due to God only. Whether we bow down to an image, or refuse to bow down to God, we are equally robbers of Him. We deny him the honour due to his name, and are guilty of sacrilege. *Worship* is the subjection of our minds to God. That, therefore, is a proper act of external worship, which directly exhibits this subjection or submission of our minds. In all occasions of public worship recorded in Scripture, the people knelt, bowed, or prostrated themselves. Praying, praising, reading the Scriptures, or administering the sacraments, are not called in Scripture worship. They are indispensable duties which we owe to the honour of God, but they are not immediate, direct acts of worship properly so called. Prayer signifies our desire of good things from God; and only indirectly our subjection to him. Praises indicate our sense of God's excellencies, and only consequentially our submission. Reading the Scriptures is the means of instruction which induces us to submit to him, but it does not directly express it. The sacraments rather signify God's grace given to us, than our submission to him. All these may in an extended sense be called worship, because they imply submission. But bending or bowing the body is what in Scripture is properly called worship. Because they immediately and naturally signify the *bending* and *submission of our souls*. In the Old Testament, says Archbishop King, the words rendered *worship* properly and originally signify to bow down, to prostrate the body. In many instances, where it is in the original "they bowed down themselves," it has been translated "they worshiped." In the opinion, therefore, of our translators, to bow to the earth, to prostrate, is that proper act which they call *worship*.

We shall find many precepts and precedents in Scripture for this gesture. David calls upon all men to “worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord.” When Ezra made confession to the Lord, he fell upon his knees, and spread out his hands.” [Ezra 9:5.] At the dedication of the Temple, Solomon *kneeled* upon his *knees* before the altar of the Lord. [1 Kings 8:54.] Daniel “kneeled upon his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks.” [Dan. 6:10.] Our blessed Lord, who, in his human nature, ought to be a pattern to us in all things, not only taught his disciples in what words to pray, but also in what posture. St. Luke says, “he *kneeled* down and prayed.” [St. Luke 13:41.] Upon that awful occasion, he prayed three times, saying the same words, and the third time “He prayed more earnestly,” and “he *rose up* from prayer,” which shows that he had first knelt, or fallen down. St. Matthew says, “he went a little farther, and *fell on his face*, and prayed.” [St. Matt. 26:39.] St. Mark says, “he went forward a little, and *fell on the ground*, and prayed.” [St. Mark 14:35.] Those who approached our Lord, either to ask forgiveness of their sins, or restoration to health, fell down before him on their knees. At his birth, the wise men worshiped him in his cradle, by prostrating themselves before him. [St. Matt. 2:11.] Jairus “fell at his feet and besought him greatly.” [St. Mark 5:22.] The father of the lunatic “*knelt down*, and said, Lord have mercy on my son.” So did the leper in St. Mark; “he beseeched him, *kneeling down*, and saying.” When Mary, afflicted with grief for her brother’s death, saw Jesus, “she *fell at his feet*.” [St. John 11:32.] After his resurrection Jesus met his disciples and said, “All hail. And they came and *held him by the feet* and *worshiped* him.” [St. Matt. 28:9.] The Samaritan leper returned thanks to Him by the same bodily homage; he “*fell down on his face*, giving him thanks.” [St. Luke 17:16.] Our Saviour considered this bodily worship as so indispensably necessary, that he accepted it from the very devils; “and unclean spirits, when they saw him, *fell down before him*, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.” [St. Mark 3:11.] We see that even in the state of his humiliation, his disciples, the devout Jews, the heathen themselves, and even the unclean spirits, approached his sacred person with this external worship of prostrating their bodies. How much more necessary is it for us humbly to kneel on our knees before him now, in his state of exaltation and glory. The protomartyr’s prayer for his murderers was *on his knees*. So was Peter’s for the raising of Tabitha. St. Paul commanded the Corinthian converts to *glorify* God in their *bodies* and in their *spirits*, which are God’s. [1 Cor. 6:20.] The same apostle,

speaking of a heathen entering into a Christian assembly, and being convinced, says, “and so *falling down on his face*, he will *worship* God.” [1 Cor. 14:25.] St. Paul *kneeled* down and prayed with all the Ephesian elders at parting with them. He told the Ephesians that he *bowed the knees* for them, and declared to the Philippians, that at the name of Jesus every *knee* should *bow*. Bodily worship is so intimately connected with prayer, that in Scripture bowing the knee sometimes signifies prayer itself. “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” [Eph. 3:14.] Besides, many instances might be produced to show that *all* Churches have enjoined kneeling as a proper posture to mark the humility of the heart. In the Revelations, St. John frequently mentions the *falling down or kneeling*, as the posture of the Church triumphant while praising God. “And the four and twenty elders *fell down* before the Lamb.” [Rev. 5:8.] – “The four and twenty elders *fell down* and worshipped him that liveth forever and ever.” [Rev. 5:14.] – “And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and *fell* before the throne, *on their faces*, and worshipped God.” [Rev. 7:11.] In short, wherever the four and twenty elders are mentioned, they are represented as *falling down* to worship. St. John himself *fell at the feet* of his fellow servant, mistaking him for the Alpha and the Omega. There is none too good to make confession, nor any too great to fall down and kneel before the Lord their Maker. David and Solomon did so, and Daniel among the prophets. But above all, our blessed Lord himself, who knew no sin, not only knelt down, but he fell on his face on the ground. What are we, therefore, that we should stand erect or sit at our ease in his presence, as if we were pure, and needed no forgiveness, or were thankful for being better than other men?

Were we to consider the nature of religious worship, which consists in a great awe and reverence for the Divine majesty, a kneeling posture would most readily suggest itself to an humble and contrite heart. “The very word *worship*,” says Bishop Jolly, “*signifies* a reverential bending of the body.” Indeed in Scripture, bending or bowing the knee is the usual manner of describing worship, – as bowing the knee to Baal meant worshiping that “vanity”. Refusing to bow the knee to him betokened those worthy seven thousand who rejected his worship. We should come into the presence of God, therefore, with the greatest humility of mind, with profound admiration of his infinite perfections, and with deep apprehensions of our own vileness and unworthiness. We should fall low on our knees, and give

him, with heart and soul, both the inward affection of the mind, and the outward reverence of the body, – because both body and soul were created and united together for his service. When we are willfully deficient in either, our service must be lame and imperfect, and consequently unacceptable to Him in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.” Our earthly superiors, our fathers in the flesh, to whom we have given reverence, would not permit disrespectful behaviour in their presence; how much more respectful and reverent, therefore, ought our behaviour to be in the immediate presence of the King of kings, whom no man can see and live! In token of reverence, the devout Jews put off their shoes, bowed their bodies, knelt, fell down, and lifted up their hands and eyes to heaven. In the apostles’ days, we find uncovering the head, bowing and kneeling, to be the postures of reverence usual in their assemblies. The danger of irreverence is very great; for “if we regard iniquity in our hearts,” of which this irreverence is a great sign, “the Lord will not hear our prayers.” And if we do not serve him with an humble, as well as a holy worship, our services will be an abomination to him. We shall, besides, farther run the peril of his saying to us, as he did to the Jews, “Bring no more such *vain* oblations, incense is an abomination unto me; your new moons, sabbaths, and solemn assemblies, I cannot away with, *it is iniquity*, even the solemn meeting; your appointed feasts my soul hateth, they are a trouble to me, I am weary to bear them.”

The Confession. – Having spoken of the posture necessary in confession, I now proceed to the act itself. This pious confession is so methodically composed that it naturally divides itself into four parts. I. The Introduction. II. The Confession, properly so called. III. A deprecation of evil. IV. A petition for good.

I . The first words are: *Almighty and most merciful Father.* “The Church,” says Comber, “hath been curious and exact to select such titles for God in the beginning of every prayer, as are most proper to the petitions to which they are prefixed, and most likely to produce affections suitable to those requests in him that useth them, which, as it is everywhere apparent to a considering person, so it may appear particularly in the fitness of these two compellations, being the attributes of his infinite power and mercy.” The first word, *Almighty*, is an acknowledgment of the greatness of Him whom we have offended, and of his power both to punish and to pardon. The second, *Most merciful Father*, implies his infinite goodness, in being

most merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness. To which we add the endearing name of Father, as we have been graciously taught by our Saviour. This teaches us that, as an earthly father pitieth a son whom he loves, so our heavenly Father has compassion on all his erring and repentant children. We may therefore learn humility and true contrition from the first title, and faith and hope from the second. Here the great wisdom and piety of the Church may be remarked in selecting such titles and attributes of God in the beginning of all the prayers, as are most proper for the petitions that follow them, and are most likely to produce suitably affections.

II. The next words are: *We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.* This is the second part, and commences with St. Peter's words, "Ye were as sheep going astray." [1 Peter 2:25.] This may either imply the first grand defection, by which all men have strayed from the works of God's commandments, or of those errings and strayings in both our hearts and bodies from the ways of his laws; and the works of his commandments, of which we are daily guilty, both in thought, word, and deed. Both of these, however, are fitly to be confessed and bewailed. God's commandments are the rule of our duty and the way that leads to everlasting life. His word is the rule of our faith, vouchsafed to us, by which we may walk and attain the heavenly rest. While we keep these, we are in the path of life to which, through Christ's merits, we shall surely attain, if we faint not. But if we break his laws, and transgress his rule, we depart from the path that leads to life, and err and stray into the ways of sin and destruction. Some have made a distinction between the words *erring* and *straying*. They make the former relate to sins of ignorance, infirmity, and the daily incursion of sudden thoughts, involuntarily springing up in the mind. "These," says Bishop Jolly, "while we watch against their intrusion, and reject them as soon as we perceive them, while they humble us under a sense of our weakness, – dust and ashes as we are, – shall not be laid to our charge. But if we do anything to invite wandering thoughts, as the wandering of the eye necessarily does, they then become sinful, and endanger the turning of our very prayers into sin." [Friendly Address, p. 41.] In our lesser, sudden, and unobserved sins, we go out of the straight path of life. We make our way crooked by vain thoughts, rash and idle words, light and foolish carriage. These being done from ignorance are called errors, which, though small, yet they become formidable by constant repetition. But that the latter relates to greater enormities, whereby men continue longer, and wander farther out of the

way. They contract bad habits and evil customs, and become hardened in the deceitfulness of sin, such as malice, envy, pride, lust, intemperance, *etc.* Here, therefore, our Church instructs us to confess that we have erred by lesser, and strayed by greeter, provocations. The least, however, are so often committed, that they are neither to be despised nor overlooked. The greater are so heinous that they cannot be hid. But be the sin what it may, without repentance the lesser errings may become mortal sins. The Church here uses the language of Scripture, [St. John 10:2.] where our Saviour compares himself to a shepherd, and us to sheep. This is an animal of all others the most liable to stray, and least able to defend itself from its enemies, or to return, when strayed, to its owner's fold. So we are apt to leave the good Shepherd of our souls, and refuse to hear his voice. We become entangled in the thorns of worldly cares and inordinate affections, ensnared by the wiles of our grand enemy, and misled by our own corrupt mind deceitful hearts. We follow after wolves in sheep's clothing, and were he not to seek and save us when we are lost, and cause us to turn and hear his voice, and follow his holy will and commandments, without doubt we should perish everlastingly.

Next: *We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.* This is another way of going astray; and seems to be an acknowledgment of original sin, under which, I much fear, we are but too apt to impute our own *actual* sins to our great progenitor, and excuse ourselves by accusing him of what we are willfully guilty. By these words, the Church means the original corruption and deprivation of our nature, by which we are liable or disposed to evil, and averse to that which is good. What we call original sin, the Jews expressed by "the evil devices and desires of the heart"; and Moses tells us that "every imagination of the thoughts of men's heart was only evil continually." During the time of men's innocence and integrity, his understanding was clear to discern good, his will ready to choose it, and his affections resolved to embrace and delight in it. But since his fall, and consequent degeneracy, the mind often devises evil, the will desires it, and the affections are set upon effecting and executing it. "It is not alone the Inclinations of nature," says Dr. Comber, "but the complying with them, and following them, and the neglect of God's restraining grace, that lead us into evil; it is our misery that our nature is so evil disposed, but it is our fault when we reject God's directions, and neglect his assistance, taking these false principles and

vitiated appetites for our guides.” By *devices* we are not to understand the innocent thoughts of the mind, but the evil designs and imaginations of the heart. These devices are either public against the government in Church or State, or private against our neighbours. When we meditate how to overreach them in their affairs, and to bear malice, hatred, and revenge against them. And when the heart has devised evil, then the desires pursue it to its consummation, according to our Saviour’s warning, “Out of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.” [St. Matt. 15:19.] Sin is progressive, and, accordingly, St. James says that, “a man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed; and when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” [St. James 1:14–15.] This, therefore, is what we are taught to confess and bewail, when we say that “we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.” The meaning is that we have listened too much to the solicitations of a corrupt heart.

Then follows: *We have offended against thy holy laws.* God has graciously given us a law to supply all our defects. It is a lamp to lighten the darkness of our minds, a counsellor to direct the weakness of our judgment, and a guide to direct our actions, that we may find true happiness. The apostle says that “sin is the transgression of the law,” and that the wages of sin is death, because it is a violation of our Maker’s authority, and a contempt of his righteous laws. This is therefore what the Church teaches us to confess; that we have broken his commandments and violated his laws. This is the more heinous and aggravated, in that they are not the laws of a mortal prince, which still we are bound to obey, but the peremptory commands of the King of kings. His kingdom is everlasting, and power infinite; His laws were enacted in heaven, and proclaimed to the whole earth, and particularly among Christians, by special messengers, or ambassadors, so that we can by no means plead ignorance. If we search our own hearts, we shall find that we have, in many ways, broken the decalogue of Moses, the precepts of Christ, and the injunctions of the apostles, both by sins of omission and commission.

Again: *We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done.* God’s perfect rule prescribes to us what we ought to do, and which are called affirmative precepts, sins of omission, or leaving a duty undone. It forbids what we ought not to do, which are the negative precepts, and are

called sins of commission, or doing what we are forbidden to do. These two divisions comprehend all the sins that can be committed against the Divine law. It would be improper in a general public confession to name any sin in particular; but as we can be as private between God and our own hearts in the congregation as in the closet, we can easily call to remembrance our sins of both sorts. Of the first, the neglect, or improper performance of the duties of prayer, and receiving the sacrament, the omission of alms, of obedience to our superiors, of charity to our brethren's souls, and also our deficiency in the evangelical graces of faith, repentance, humility, and patience. Of the second, our sins of Atheism, apostasy, blasphemy, perjury, rebellion anger, malice, lust, with its supporters gluttony and intemperance, oppression and cheating, lying and slandering, envy and covetousness, and of speaking rashly and unadvisedly with our lips. Should this duty be negligently performed in the general confession, the Church affords us another opportunity where we can be more particular. When the commandments are being read, we can not only confess our particular sins, but examine our own hearts. Less time is permitted during the reading of those of the second table than in those of the first. But, short as the time is, let us bear in mind the distich, that "Between the stirrup and the ground,

Mercy may be asked and found.

We shall thus avoid the guilt of hypocrisy, and of covering our sins under the cloak of a *general* confession. This can hardly be done with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart, unless we know the particulars, examine the numbers, and consider the guilt of those sins which we can truly lay to our own charge. There are degrees of guilt. Those of commission are of a deeper dye than those of omission. Therefore we find sins of omission punished by withholding blessings, whereas those of commission by the infliction of judgments. The man who neglects to hear God's word will soon fall into ignorance, security, and hardness of heart. To omit what we ought to do, is to do that which we ought not, and therefore the Church appoints sins of omission, though in their own nature of a lesser guilt, to be first confessed. Because by these we forsake God, lay ourselves open to temptation, and eventually fall into actual and positive wickedness. Let us not, then, neglect positive duties, lest we fall into greater offences, nor deceive ourselves with the thought that we can assume the cloak of a strict religious exterior to conceal a wicked life. Were we to consider the deadness of our affections, the volatility of our thoughts, the hardness of our

hearts, and the constant mixture of hypocrisy and pride that cleaves to us in all holy offices, we should always find that we have left undone the best, the most acceptable, and most evangelical part of every duty. We are therefore bound to acknowledge that were He strict to mark what is done amiss, He might justly account our slight performances of positive duties as total emissions.

We are next taught to say: *And there is no health in us.* The *health* here meant is not the health of the body, but the health, safety, or salvation of the soul. In Scripture the diseases of the body are frequently employed by the Holy Spirit to represent the sinful distempers of the soul. David frequently says there was no health in him. Isaiah, bewailing the national sins of his day, says, “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.” [Isaiah 1:5–6.] He most expressly indicated by this metaphor that the people, from the highest to the lowest, were all corrupt, and become abominable, having no sound part in them, but were infected with the plague of sin, the fever of lust, the consumption of envy, [Prov. 14:30.] the swelling of pride, [Jude verse 16.] the venom of malice, and the gangrene of error. [2 Tim. 2:17.] Were we therefore to ask Jesus to wash us, we ought to cry out with St. Peter, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. By these examples our Church emphatically uses the words of the Holy Ghost, *There is no health in us:* that is, after so many provocations, there is no salvation nor means of health in ourselves. Our help lieth entirely in God, who hath himself told us, “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, *but in ME is thine help.*” [Hosea 13:9.] To Him therefore the Church directs us to have recourse. In the foregoing part of the General Confession, we acknowledge our *errings* and *strayings* from His laws, both by our original and actual sins, – by our general and particular vices, – and by our sins both of omission and commission. The remainder contains petitions for mercy and pardon for past offences, and for grace to walk in His ways all the days of our lives.

III. The next words, *But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners,* commences the third division of the Confession, or the deprecation of evil. When we have discovered our deplorable condition, by the confession we have just made, we must guard against the great sin of despair on the one hand, or the presumptuous thankfulness of the Pharisee on the other. But let us approach His footstool with the Publican’s humility;

whose words and example the Church here teaches us to follow. Before we ask for favours, we should first beg for a removal of those evils with which we are afflicted, the guilt, the punishment, and the dominion of sin. These are the first things in our view in our present misery, and are so palpable that we can neither overlook nor avoid feeling them, but which are the proper objects of that benign attribute of mercy that moves God to forgive and pardon; “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will remember no more.” [Heb. 8:12.] Having now a full sight and sense of our sins and danger, and being convinced of our own misery, though, with the contrite Publican, not daring to look up to heaven, yet we can earnestly and anxiously unite with him in his cry of “Lord have mercy upon us.” He will never shut his merciful ears to this cry if it pass not out of feigned lips. It is not, however, *our* merits, but *His* compassion and free grace through the merits of Christ, which disposes God to remove our guilt. To trust to any worldly succour, or to mediatory saints, is to lean on a broken reed, which will rather wound than support. He is ever ready to hear our prayers, and to show us that mercy of which we stand so much in need. The Prophet Isaiah says that “it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer, and whiles they are yet speaking, I will hear.” [Isaiah 65:24.] Our blessed Lord himself exhorts all that labour and are heavy laden with the burden of their sins, to come unto Him and He will give them rest. [St Matt. 11:28.] The Church therefore directs us to flee to Him as our best refuge and tower of defense, when we labour under the burden of our sins. But if we mock Him with hypocritical cries during the day of our prosperity, we run the risk of His laughing at our calamity, and mocking when our fear cometh and the prospect of death forces us to cry in earnest. Mercy, then, is what the Church directs us here to beg, being that which all, even the best of men, require, and which alone can help us in our forlorn condition. Our own misery is our chief object in asking it, and which is our best plea for mercy.

The Confession still continues to petition for mercy, for the next words are: *Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults.* Our Church has here added three deprecatory petitions, because to do away our offences implies the removal of their *punishment, pollution, and power.* This petition therefore relates to the removal of the punishment. It earnestly beseeches God to exercise His glorious attribute of mercy and pity, to spare us from condign punishment, and not to inflict that penalty which our sins deserve. He that considers the multitude of his own offences, and God’s utter

abhorrence of them, that remembers the terrors of his threatenings, the strictness of his justice, the fierceness of his anger, and the impossibility of avoiding that stroke, from which no place can hide him, no speed flee from, nor strength endure, will naturally deprecate God's wrath with strong crying and tears. This petition, therefore, is a deprecation of the just punishment due to our sins. It is an appeal from the justified to the mercy of God, beseeching him not to deal in rigour and severity with us, nor to suffer his whole displeasure to arise, but in the midst of judgment to remember mercy, to abate the fierceness of his anger, and for Christ's sake to avert his vengeance from us. The condition on which we ask it, is the confession of our sins, for without that there can be no hope. But with it there is a sure promise of mercy. Accordingly the Church does not say; Spare all miserable offenders indiscriminately, but spare those only "which confess their faults."

The second deprecatory petition which follows is: *Restore thou them that are penitent.* This relates to the *pollution* of sin. By the former petition we prayed to be spared from the *punishment* of sin, so here we pray to be restored from its *pollution*. There is a stain as well as guilt in sin, which at once defiles and destroys the soul. We are therefore here taught to pray that we may be purified as well as pardoned, to be cleansed from all iniquity, and in some measure restored to the primitive purity and perfection of our nature. Though we are apt to think those friends troublesome, who from one request granted are encouraged to persevere in their solicitations yet it is otherwise with God. His rule is to give to him that hath. He will not be displeased if, after we have prayed for a removal of our guilt, we should prefer a further and a greater request of being restored from our remaining ignorance, security, distrust, worldly-mindedness, and hardness of heart, so as to be made "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." But it must not be such an importunity as Esau's, who despised the hopes of heaven, and chose rather the sinful pleasures and transient enjoyments of this world. It is only sincere repentance and real purposes of amendment that will move God. He sees the heart and knows our intentions, and will bind up our broken hearts, heal our wounded spirits, remove the load of heaviness from our souls, and *restore* us to His favour, and to the voice of joy with salvation.

The following words express our faith in pleading the promise through Christ. Its insertion here was absolutely necessary, because faith must ever

regulate repentance, and repentance strengthen our faith. These two ought never to be separated. The Church therefore teaches us to say: *According to the promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Here we venture to implead Him on His gracious promises, which he has interposed as a sure foundation on which to build our hopes. By the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, He has given us a title to that which before we could not expect. He is bound by his own immutable veracity, who is truth itself, – “thy word *is* truth,” – to fuel his word, which does not, however, abridge his freedom, as he knows all that can possibly happen. He is not displeased at our urging His promises, because we then only desire that which He judges fit to be granted. These promises are certainly conditional, and we ask them on the condition which they were made. That is, we trust that by God’s grace we are truly penitent, otherwise our requests could not be according to His promises. In His promises we have three grounds of hope: 1. Because He has not only therein purposes of mercy, but He has published and communicated them by word and writing at sundry times, and in divers manners. 2. They were made to man, and not to the apostate angels. These not only fell from glory, but were permitted to remain in that undone state. But after man fell, Jesus graciously took him up, and made a covenant with him. Although we are offenders, yet we are in a salvable state, and though despicable, yet we are those to whom the promises are made. We believe that His mercy purposely contrived the promises so extensive that no repentant sinner might want encouragement. When we see ourselves to be the chief of sinners, we may take comfort in the universality of His promises, because they were made to *all* mankind, and thanks be to His holy name, we are not excepted. 3. We hope in these promises, because they were made in Christ Jesus, who first clearly revealed them to us, procured and sealed them, as a mediator between God and man. And because they are made in him, we believe that they will be faithfully performed, because they are yea and amen, that is, intended to be performed. Christ is the first and great promise made to Adam, and God having already sent him, has shown His love to us, and manifested His faithfulness to perform all the rest in due time. We believe in these promises, because they are to be fulfilled by our gracious Redeemer, whose merits are the foundation of our faith and hope; and we hope for his sake to receive our portion, as He that made them looked on Jesus, and through him with mercy on us. [2 Tim. 1:1 and 9. Gen. 3:15. 2 Cor. 1:20. Rom. 8:32.]

IV. The third and last petition, and which makes confession effectual is, *And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life.* This is a petition for good, and refers to the power of sin, from the dominion of which we here pray to be delivered. We call to mind the mercy and goodness of God in Christ Jesus, on whom the penitent is taught to look. We ask in his name, and through his intercession, as he himself commanded us, in and through whom God is merciful, and has promised that we shall prevail. [St. John 14:13.] If we ask in the name or merits of any saint or angel, we shall be more likely to meet with condemnation than mercy. They themselves are created beings, and have received all that they enjoy through Christ's merits. Our Church strictly obeys, and teaches her people to follow the command of our only Saviour, by asking all things in his name alone. "If ye shall ask," says he, anything in my name, I will do it," – and, "verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." There is no warrant in Scripture for that multitude of mediators on whom the Church of Rome teaches her people to depend for salvation. They defend this practice entirely on account of the gain which the priesthood derives from it. Every collect or prayer in our Liturgy disowns the Romish doctrines of merit, pilgrimages, shrines, images, indulgences, and penances. We acknowledge our own unworthiness, and our faith in the man Christ Jesus as our *alone* Mediator, to procure our pardon, and to purchase grace to help us to walk in all the commandments of God blameless. The words *that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life,* are taken from St. Paul's Epistle to Titus, "teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts." Indeed the whole of the confession and the collects are taken *verbatim* from Scripture, which accounts for the sublimity of the language. We here pray for grace, that sin may not reign in our mortal bodies, but that where sin abounds, there grace may much more abound. The method of this confession teaches us to look successively inwards for humiliation; upwards for pardon; and forwards for amendment. To look up to God before we have seen our sins, is to mock Him, and in this state to look forwards, is to deceive ourselves. To look inwards and not upwards, will lead to despair; and to look upwards and not inwards, to presumption. At the same time to see our sins and seek for mercy, and yet not look forward to amendment, is to dissemble and play the hypocrite, sooner than whom, publicans and harlots, we are told, will enter the kingdom of heaven. The Prophet Micah

delivers the law in three words, “What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do *justly*, and to love *mercy*, and to walk *humbly* with thy God?” Accordingly the Church here teaches both Law and Gospel, in the words of St. Paul, to “live a godly, righteous, and sober life.” There are the three great branches of a virtuous life, and contain the sum and substance of all religion; – the first comprehends our whole duty to God, the second to our neighbour, and the third to ourselves. A *godly* life requires of us, “to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength, to worship him, to give him thanks, to put our whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of our lives.” A *righteous* life requires of us to do unto all men, as we would they should do unto us”; – to honour all men in their several places and stations wherein God has been pleased to place them; – to be true and just in all our dealings, firm to our words, faithful in our promises, and honest in all our bargains and contracts one with another; – to render unto Caesar the things that be Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s. That is, tribute to whom tribute is due, and tithes to whom tithes are due; to entertain no malice or hatred in our hearts towards any, and to abstain from injuring them in body, goods, or name. And because we are daily beset with many corrupt principles and temptations, we are taught to pray daily for grace to overcome them, and to keep this brief summary of our duties to our neighbour, and to endeavour at all times to lead a just, honest, and righteous life. A *sober* life requires of us the observance of all the duties which we owe to ourselves, – that is, to be sober and temperate in all things; to avoid gluttony and drunkenness, which are gross abuses of God’s bountiful goodness; to be humble and thankful in prosperity, patient and submissive in adversity, and to learn, in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content.

The conclusion, *To the glory of thy holy name. Amen*, – respects the whole of the foregoing petitions, as well as to final one. Because we believe that the felicity of having our prayers heard will tend to His glory as well as to our own good. We ought ever to remember with joy and thanksgiving, that we have found in Him a readiness to pity the miserable, unspeakable kindness in helping the unworthy, and omnipotent power in rescuing those who were ready to perish from eternal ruin. The thought of so much goodness ought ever to preserve the flames of gratitude upon the altar of

our hearts, whence ought daily to ascend in clouds the incense of thanksgiving and praise. It may also be annexed in particular to the last petition, that He would give us grace to live godly, righteously, and soberly, not so much for our own credit as for His glory. When, therefore, we have done all that we are commanded to do, let us still say we are unprofitable servants.

The word AMEN has in the Liturgy, as well as in the Holy Scriptures, two meanings. One is *affirmative*, as at the end of the Creed, the other *expressive of desire*, as at the end of the Collects, and particularly here at the end of the Confession. In this place it expresses a strong wish or serious desire that God would grant all our petitions. It was always used in these senses by the Jews, from whom our Lord adopted it, and placed it at the end of his Prayer, which implied a peremptory command that all Christians should use it. And it would appear that the apostles had ordered it to be used; for the ignorant were to say Amen when others prayed. [1 Cor. 14:16.] From the practice of the apostles it descended into the constant use of the Church in all ages. In the primitive times the people answered *Amen* to the public prayers, as loud as a clap of thunder. And we ought to pronounce it audibly, heartily, and distinctly, as an evidence both to God and our neighbour, that we have all one Lord, one faith, one hope, and that we all glorify God with one heart and one mouth. If we omit saying *Amen* from negligence or contempt, how can we expect that God will accept that prayer, to which we have never consented by joining devoutly and attentively with the minister! And therefore that God may say SO BE IT to all our prayers, may He grant us grace to say *Amen* devoutly to our own. [Dr. Comber's Companion to the Temple. Dr. Holes' Practical Discourses on the Liturgy. Bishop Sparrow's *Rationale* upon the Book of Common Prayer. Archbishop King's Inventions of Men in the Worship of God.]

Chapter 5.

Rubric before the Absolution – Power of the Keys – Who have that Power – Absolution Judicial as well as Declaratory – The Acts of a Herald and a Judge – Erroneous Censures – Reversible in Heaven – Church Catholic, what – Christian Ministry succeeded the Jewish – Bishop Taylor – A Divine Commission necessary – St Peter's Confession – The Priest to stand – The People to kneel – The Absolution – God's Attributes and Mercy – Calvin – The Penitent only are absolved – Three Forms of Absolution – Repentance and Faith necessary before Absolution – Presumption and Despair dangerous – Repentance, what – The Sum of the Whole – Priest and

Presbyter – Sacrifices in the Christian Church – Priests not peculiar to the Jewish Church, and lawful in the Christian.

The Rubric. – The Absolution follows the General Confession. It is intended for the ease and comfort of penitents, that they who are humbled by the sight and sense of their sins may be relieved by the assurance of pardon. The Absolution is prefaced by a rubric, which points out the person who is authorized to pronounce it, and the postures of both the priest and people. It is called “*the absolution or remission of sins, to be pronounced by the priest alone standing, the people still kneeling.*”

This is what is called the power of the keys. It was given to the eleven apostles, after our Saviour had triumphed over death and hell, with the promise, at the same time, that “whosoever sins *they remitted*, they should be remitted unto them; and whosoever sins they retained, should be retained.” The Evangelist records this grant in a more remarkable manner than any other passage of our Lord’s life. It was the first act of authority which Christ performed after his resurrection. “Then the same day at evening, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you. As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” (that is, with precisely the *same commission and authority*); “and when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. *Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.*” [St. John 20:19, 23.] He promised to be with their office or apostleship “always, even to the end of the world.” He conferred on them and their successors at the same time, both their commission to preach, to baptize, and also their *authority* to remit sins. He also promised that *their* act of authority in *his* name, should be confirmed in heaven, “even to the end of the world”. Their commission is therefore not more undoubted and permanent, than their authority is supreme. This we are taught to acknowledge in that article of the Creed in which we confess our belief of “the holy catholic and apostolic Church.” If we deny to them the power of the keys, that is, of the forgiveness of sins in God’s name, on true repentance, to be consistent we must deny also the succession of their office. Because both the power of the keys and the descent of their office

“even to the end of the world” are included in the same Divine commission. The one is therefore as peremptory and binding as the other.

None but those who have a *Divine* commission are qualified to execute this great mystery. Christ has committed the government and administration of his sacerdotal kingdom to a special order of men, who, being “taken out from among men, are ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that (they) may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.” [Heb. 5:1.] That is, every high priest among men on earth stands in the presence of God, to perform divine offices for them, to reconcile *them* to God, and *Him* to them, to obtain for them graces and favours and as it were to interpose between Him and them. Priests represent God Almighty, to publish His laws, to pass His pardons, and to preside in His worship. To whom He has committed the ministry of reconciliation, and the keys of His kingdom. These He promised on the frank and special confession of St. Peter, and which he afterwards conferred on them all, before He gave them their final commission to *preach the Gospel to every creature*. “Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. VERILY I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.” [St. Matt. 18:15, 18.] And elsewhere, when ready to leave the world, he again repeated, in a more solemn and emphatic manner, this gift along with their commission; “Then Jesus said to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, He *breathed* on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*” [St. John 20:21–23.] Lawfully ordained clergy are, therefore, the “stewards of the mysteries of God,” – the “ambassadors” of heaven, – the dispensers of his Holy Word and Sacraments, and on their ministrations the assistances of the Holy Spirit and all the graces of a good life depend. When God instituted offerings and sacrifices among the Jews, He at the same time appointed a peculiar order of men to be their administrators, and nothing less than *death* was the penalty of invading any

of their offices, of which there are many instances. Both the ministers and the ministrations themselves were alike of *Divine institution*, and everyone but “the seed of Aaron,” [Num. 3:10.] who were *alone* commissioned to do so, was prohibited from offering incense before the Lord. St. Jerome asserts that “what Aaron and his sons and the Levites were in the temple, such are the bishops, presbyters, and deacons in the Christian Church.” Because they also received a Divine commission, and received the *same power* with which Christ himself was invested; “*As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*” At the same time He made a real donation or gift, by *breathing* on the apostles, and saying, “*Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*” [St. John 20:21, 23.] This gift meant the presence of the Holy Spirit for their direction, support, and assistance, and it was not only bestowed on *them*, but was promised to be continued to *all their lawful successors*; “and lo, I am with you *alway*, even unto the *end* of the world. Amen.” That the gift then bestowed was the power of the forgiveness of sins is undeniable, because the remission of sins is immediately added after his “breathing” on them, and saying, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” God properly reconciles the world to himself, by “not imputing their sins,” through the ministry of the apostles and other ministers of the Gospel, as Christ’s ambassadors. To them is committed the word and ministry of reconciliation; and the forgiveness of sins is certainly a reconciliation with God.

The sacerdotal absolution is and must be effective and judicial, and ensures to the *penitent* the very absolution or remission of their sins. In the morning and evening service it is drawn up in a declarative form, because it is pronounced to a promiscuous congregation. The priest cannot know who are sincere penitents, and who are only feigned. He is, therefore, not allowed to prostitute so sacred an ordinance amongst the good and the bad indifferently, but is directed to assure those only of pardon and remission of sins “*who sincerely repent, and unfeignedly believe God’s holy Gospel.*” This declaratory power is likewise judicial, as it is exemplified in the absolution for the visitation of the sick. Even though the priest himself, be a wicked man, God will “loose in heaven” him whom his duly commissioned agent “looses on earth.” “So that,” says Calder, “we need bring no new words with us, but an *humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart*, fresh and earnest affections, to join with the good words that the Church has prepared to our hand, *and then we are sure of the comfort of the absolution from God*, pronounced by a duly commissioned person, though the priest himself were

a wicked man; *so the PENITENT may assure himself that his sin is pardoned*, on his resolution of immediately forsaking the sins which he has confessed, *in the very instant that the absolution is pronounced.*”

The declaration of a judge is a sentence, and has its due effect in law; but the same words pronounced by any other person, although done with the greatest pomp and circumstance, would be null and void, because that person has not a commission. A herald who reads a declaration of war with all the appointed *solemnities*, authorizes and *begins* the war. Another person might read the same proclamation as well and as loud, or perhaps better than the herald, but his reading signifies nothing, and has no effect whatever; whereas the herald’s reading declares the war, because he is empowered and appointed by the sovereign so to do. In the same manner, the clergy are heralds, appointed and authorized by Christ to proclaim his peace to those who obey his commandments, and his wrath to the disobedient. He has promised to ratify in *heaven* what his commissioned servants thus declare, in his name, and by his authority, on *earth*. No doubt, God will reverse any unjust sentence which his deputies may pass, either through malice or ignorance. He is a king, they are merely his ministers, and the king may pardon those whom the judge has condemned. This decides, therefore, that the sentence is judicial, and not merely declaratory, for nothing else can be reversed, or is reversible. If one man should pass sentence of death, confiscation, or imprisonment on another, no court would *reverse* that sentence, because it goes for nothing, neither party having authority over the other. But if a lawful judge pass sentence, though it should be an unjust one, his sentence will be executed, unless it is reversed by a higher *authority*. When a superior court, therefore, reverses the sentence of an inferior, or the king pardons a criminal condemned by law, the *sentence*, though reversed or superseded, is still judicial and effective. The supreme authority of Christ, the king, is always implied and supposed. He is not tied up by any *unjust* sentence, which the Church may pass, upon false evidence. For while the administration of government is committed to the hands of men, it is liable to mistakes and errors, and a man may be condemned by false witnesses, though the judge himself, in passing the sentence, may be incorrupt. Therefore, when Christ promises to ratify the sentence in heaven that the Church shall pass on earth, it is still supposed that the sentence has been justly passed.

God will reward or punish, more or less, according to the censures of the Church on earth. That is, he will reward our obedience to, and punish our neglect of, the Church. In the case of an erroneous censure (*clave errante*), we are obliged to pay the same deference and respect to the sentence of the Church, as to a civil judge in a similar instance, and to plead our innocence in a decorous manner, without reviling or reproaches, even although unjustly condemned. All scripture is given for our ensample; we are, therefore, to follow St. Paul's conduct before Ananias, who was unjustly condemned and "smitten contrary to law". Nevertheless St. Paul condemns himself for reproaching the High Priest, saying, "I wist not, brethren, that he was the High Priest, for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people." [Acts 23:1-5.] But if, after all lawful defense, an innocent man should be unjustly censured by the Church, there is no doubt but that the Supreme Judge in heaven, who knows the heart, will reverse the sentence. But should a man, justly censured for a crime, become truly penitent, yet despise or neglect to make reconciliation with the Church, and by due submission be absolved from her censure, God will not remit his crime, even although the man may be sorry for it in his heart. He will ratify the ecclesiastical sentence, so long as a man continues obstinate in refusing reconciliation with the Church. It is impossible to be reconciled to God, nor our repentance to be efficacious, while we obstinately despise his ministers. Because God will maintain his own institutions, and "bind in heaven" those whom his duly authorized deputies have "bound on earth". To maintain, therefore, that the Church has not the power of the keys, is to assert that Jesus Christ made a jest of his final commission. If this part of the authority committed to the apostles be denied, by consequence, the rest of their commission, "to go unto all nations, baptizing them," must be denied also.

The objection of clergymen being perhaps wicked men is of no force. They do not administer their *own* sacraments, or pronounce their *own* absolution, but the sacraments, and absolution of Christ. Their efficacy, therefore, is neither increased by the minister being a *good* man, nor diminished by his being a *wicked* one. Since their virtue and efficacy depend on Christ alone, the wickedness or virtuousness of the minister can neither hinder nor advance their comfort to the recipient. "Who then is *Paul*, and who is *Apollos*, but *ministers* by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, and Apollos watered: but God

gave the increase.” [1 Cor. 3:5–6.] Judas Iscariot preached the Gospel, and cast out devils, though he himself had a devil, and his ministry was as good and efficacious as that of the other eleven. But even among twelve, we find one who betrayed, another who denied, and nine that forsook him and fled, one only following him to the foot of the cross; and yet by these men was the world recovered from darkness to light. If we meet with such desertion and treachery among twelve, and that too while enjoying the society of their blessed Master himself, what may we not expect among the “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues,” who have been the priests of the Lord, and the lights of the world in their several generations? “The scribes and Pharisees *sit in Moses’ seat*; ALL, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not.” [St. Matt. 23:2–3.]

Of the three forms of absolution in the Book of Common Prayer, Bishop Taylor observes, “the rare temper and proportion which the Church of England uses in commensurating the forms of absolution to the degrees of preparation and necessity. At the beginning of the morning and evening prayer, after a general confession, there is a form of absolution in general declarative, and by way of proposition. In the office of the communion, because there are more acts of piety and repentance, previous and presupposed, then the Church’s form of absolution is operative, and by way of intercession. But in the visitation of the sick, when it is supposed and enjoined that the penitent shall disburden himself of all the clamorous loads upon his conscience, the Church prescribes a medicinal form, by way of delegate authority, that the parts of justification may answer to the parts of a good life. For as the penitent proceeds, so does the Church; pardon and repentance being terms of relation, they grow up together till they be complete; this the Church with the greatest wisdom supposes to be at the end of our life, grace by that time having all its growth that it will have here, and therefore then, also the pardon of sins is of another nature than it ever was before, it being now more actual and complete; whereas before, it was in the beginnings and smaller increases, and upon mere accidents apt to be made imperfect and revocable. So that the Church of England, in these manners of dispensing the power of the keys, does cut off all disputings and impertinent wranglings, whether the priest’s power were *judicial* or *declarative*; for possibly it is both, and it is optative too (expressive of

desire), and something else yet, for it is an emanation from all the parts of his ministry, and he never absolves, but he preaches or prays, or administers a sacrament; for this power of remission is transcendent, passing through all the parts of the priestly offices, for the keys of the kingdom of heaven are the promises and the threatenings of the Scripture, and the prayers of the Church, and the word, and the sacraments; and all these are to be dispensed by the priest, and these keys are committed to his ministry; – and by the operation of them all, he opens and shuts heaven’s gates ministerially; and therefore St. Paul calls it *verbum reconciliationis*, and says it is dispensed by ministers, as by ambassadors or delegates; and therefore it is an excellent temper of the Church, so to prescribe her forms of absolution, as to show them to be results of the whole priestly office, of preaching, of dispensing sacraments, of spiritual cure, and authoritative deprecation. And the benefit which pious and well-disposed persons receive by these public ministers, as it lies ready formed in our blessed Saviour’s promise, ‘*erit solutum in coelis.*’ So these men will then truly understand when they are taught to value any instrument of grace or comfort, by the exigence of a present need, as in a sadness of spirits in an unquiet conscience in the arrest of death.”

Our blessed Saviour was a man in every sense the same as we are, sin only excepted. He had the Spirit *without* measure, and was not deficient of any gift to qualify him for the apostolic office for which he was sent. Although at twelve years old he gave sufficient evidence of his abilities, yet he never assumed that office till he was commissioned *externally* by the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon him. By an audible voice from heaven, He proclaimed him to be the Messiah, and commanded men to hear him. None of his many followers ever presumed either to preach, baptize, or cast out devils, till they received a special commission from him. Out of the multitude whom he called up into the mountain, “he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.” [St. Mark 3:14–15.] “After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.” [St. Luke 10:1.] After his mighty resurrection, when he advanced the eleven to be apostles, that is, to take his own place, he first solemnly *breathed* on them, and communicated the Holy Ghost to them. Then, after first assuring them of his own authority, he gave them the power of the keys, and conferred the same authority on them which he himself till

then had exercised. He empowered them to do all holy offices in the Christian Church, and to convey the *same authority* to others, and among other things the power of remitting sins: – *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.* This power of remitting sins was not to be peculiar to the eleven apostles alone, and to end with their lives, but it constitutes a part of the ministry of reconciliation to the end of the world. [St. Matt. 28:20. Eph. 4:11–13.] When, therefore, the priest absolves, God absolves also, *if we be truly penitent.* This ministerial act of the priest in remitting sins, to which God has promised confirmation in heaven, is not the act of preaching, or baptizing, or admitting men to the holy communion. All these powers were conferred long before the grant of remitting sins. “And as ye go, *preach*, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand; heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.” [St. Matt. 10:7–8.] It appears from St. John that Jesus himself did not baptize, only his disciples did. Their baptism at that time was not the regeneration by water and the Holy Spirit, spoken of by our Lord in his conference with Nicodemus, but a baptism unto repentance, like that of John the Baptist. In the same night in which he was betrayed, he instituted and delivered the Eucharist, and gave the apostles power and authority to offer the same sacrifice in remembrance of him. All these powers were conferred before our Saviour’s resurrection. Although he *promised* the power of the remission of sins to St. Peter, when he made his celebrated confession, yet it was not granted till *after* the resurrection, and at his glorious ascension. It was then conferred more solemnly by the ceremony of *breathing* on them, which signified that it was then given, and by the word *receive*. If it had been previously conferred, he could not properly have used the word *receive*. Therefore, the power of remitting sins, which God here bestowed and authorized, and to which He promised his certain assistance and cooperation, consists neither in preaching nor baptizing, but in that which the Church calls absolution. And, granting that we are truly penitent and such as God will pardon, to doubt of its efficacy is to deny the truth of His word, and to be “guilty of sin, for whatsoever is not of *faith* is *sin*.” God is the party offended in all our transgressions, and who can for a moment question His absolute power to remit the offence? He that gave us laws can dispense with them although we cannot, and having all power and might, can forgive whom and when and how He pleases. He has committed this power ministerially to His priests on earth, so that whom they lawfully bind

or loose in the Church, will be bound or loosed in heaven. Why this gracious promise should be doubted or disbelieved, while all the other promises, and some of them much more obscurely intimated, are readily embraced and full trust reposed in them, is astonishing.

Bellarmino and all Popish writers contend that the power of the keys was given to St. Peter only. [St. Matt. 16:19.] They say the other apostles, as well as the Church diffusive, derive this power from him and his successors, and that this power is judicial, *Sacerdos est judex condemnare vel salvare*. When St. Peter made that confession on which Christ has built his Church, he then, addressing St. Peter in the first person, promised that he would confer on him the power of binding and loosing *at some future period*, but he did not give it at that time. He bestowed it afterwards on the eleven at once by breathing on them all. It does not appear that St. Peter was in any way excepted; he does not appear to have received either more or less power than the other ten. Our Saviour's thrice-repeated commission to feed his sheep and lambs, [St. John 21.] was a solemn and affectionate restoration to his original apostolic rank, which he had forfeited by the denial of his Lord, and conveys no extraordinary or superior commission. The lambs and sheep have reference to the favourite people, the Jews, who were thus more particularly committed to St. Peter's care. To whom accordingly his subsequent labours were always confined, and he is specially designated as "the apostle of the circumcision." – "The keys of the kingdom of heaven," says Bishop Horsley, "here (in the 16th of Matthew) promised to St. Peter, must be something quite distinct from that with which it hath been generally confounded, – the power of the remission or retention of sins conferred by our Lord after his resurrection, upon the apostles in general, and transmitted through them to the perpetual succession of the priesthood. This is the discretionary power lodged in the priesthood of dispensing the sacraments, and of granting to the penitent, and refusing to the obdurate, the benefit and comfort of absolution. The object of this power is the individual upon whom it is exercised, according to the particular circumstances of each man's case. It was exercised by the apostles in many striking instances; it is exercised now by every priest, when he administers or withholds the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, or upon just grounds pronounces, or refuses to pronounce, upon an individual the sentence of absolution. St. Peter's custody of the keys was quite another thing. It was a temporary, not a perpetual authority; its object was not individuals, but the

whole human race. The kingdom of heaven upon earth is the true Church of God. It is now, therefore, the Christian Church; formerly the Jewish Church was that kingdom. The true Church is represented in many passages of Holy Writ, under the image of a walled city, to be entered only at the gates. Under the Mosaic economy these gates were shut, and particular persons only could obtain admittance, Israelites by birth or legal incorporation. The locks of these gates were the rites of the Mosaic law, which obstructed the entrance of aliens. But, after our Lord's ascension and the descent of the Holy Ghost, the keys of the city were given to St. Peter, by that vision which taught him, and authorized him to teach others, that all distinctions of one nation from another were at an end. By virtue of this special commission, the great apostle applied the key, pushed back the bolts of the lock, and threw the gates of the city open for the admission of the whole Gentile world in the instance of Cornelius and his family. To this, and to this only, our Lord prophetically alludes when he promises to St. Peter the custody of the keys. The promise was indeed simply a prediction that he would be selected to be the first instrument in a great work of Providence, which was of such a nature as to be done once for all, and being done it cannot be repeated. The great Apostle fulfilled his commission in his lifetime. He applied his key, – he turned back the lock, – he loosed and he bound. The gates of the kingdom of heaven *are* thrown open, – the ceremonial law *is* abrogated, the moral *is* confirmed, – and the successors of St. Peter, in the see of Rome, can give neither furtherance nor obstruction to the business.”

The sense and practice of the primitive Christians, as expressed by Tertullian, [Apologet. c. 39.] shows distinctly that God vested the pastors of the Church with the power of the keys: “We Christians,” said he, “are a corporation most strictly united by the same religion, by the same rites of worship, and animated by one and the same hope. When we come to the public service of God, we come like an army, as if we were to storm heaven by the force of our prayers; and this force is grateful violence to God. – We meet together likewise for reading the Holy Scriptures. – In these assemblies also we exhort, reprove, and *pass the Divine censure* of excommunication. For the judgments in this place are delivered with all gravity and solemnity, as among men who are sure they stand in the presence of God. And the judgment here pronounced against delinquents is the last previous sentence of the judgment to come, against him who hath

sinned to such a degree as to be excluded from our assemblies, and from the communion of prayers, and other religious commerce. The Presbyters who preside in these assemblies are raised to this dignity, not by money, but the testimony of their lives.” From this it is evident that in the second century a censured sinner was considered as pre-condemned; and as the sentence of excommunication was *judicial* so, consequently, absolution must be both *declarative* and *judicial* also. In this there is no assumption of God’s power to forgive sins. The priesthood act *ministerially* and in Christ’s name, as an earthly judge does not condemn a felon by his own power, but by virtue of his sovereign’s commission. The prince’s pardon is conveyed ministerially by some inferior magistrate, which the poor felon very joyfully accepts, although it is not conferred by his prince in person, who alone possesses the attribute of mercy. The pardoned felon never thinks of asking, Can any one grant a pardon but the king? It can be easily shown that absolutions were granted frequently during the three first centuries, and penitent sinners require comfort now as well as then: the disease remains, why should the remedy be removed? Christ gave the power of the keys to all the apostles and their successors, through whom it has descended to all his ministers. St. Peter absolved the penitent Jews, bidding them repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins. [Acts 2:38.] As a convincing evidence of his power of retaining sins, he punished Ananias and Sapphira with death for their offence. [Acts 5:1–12.] St. Paul first “delivered to Satan,” and afterwards absolved, the incestuous Corinthian, being penitent, “in the person of Christ”. He had power to strike Elymas the sorcerer with blindness, to raise Eutychus from the dead, and to heal the cripple. To convince the Jews of his power to forgive sins, Christ healed the impotent man. These powers, therefore, having been conferred on the apostles, is a convincing testimony of their power ministerially to forgive sins. St. John applies this power to all ministers; “If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death.” [1 John 5:16.] Absolution is therefore not to be given, neither will it be effectual without repentance.

The Rubric directs that the absolution is to be pronounced by the *priest alone, standing, the people still kneeling*. This is according to reason, because it is an act of authority on his part, in declaring the will of God as his ambassador, and by virtue of his power and commandment; – “Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted.” – “And,” says Bishop Sparrow, “if

our confession be serious and hearty, this absolution is as effectual as if God did pronounce it from heaven. So says the Confession of Saxony and Bohemia, and the Augustine Confession. St. Augustin and Cyprian, and generally all antiquity, say the same; so does our Church in many places; but, above all, Holy Scripture is clear, ‘whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.’” And in this particular the Westminster Confession agrees with all other confessions. The word *alone* stands not only in opposition to the people, but likewise to the inferior order of deacons, who do not possess this power, it being entirely confined to the priesthood. This commission was not given to the deacons, when Christ breathed on the apostles, and conferred the Holy Ghost, and the power of binding and loosing on earth, on them and on all their successors. Neither is it at present bestowed in their ordination. To the deacon the bishop says, “Take thou authority to execute the office of a deacon in the Church of God committed unto thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” But to the priest he says, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God, and of His holy sacraments; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.” So that for a deacon to pronounce the absolution is not only to usurp an authority never committed to him, but also to deceive the people, and flatter them with the promise of a blessing which he cannot confer. As God’s ambassador the priest *stands*, but the people who receive so great a blessing are to continue *kneeling*, in token of their faith, humility, reverence, and submission. If a deacon is not authorized to pronounce this absolution, clearly the people ought *not to repeat it* along with the priest, because by doing so they thoughtlessly usurp the priest’s office. Bishop Jolly recommends that at each sentence we should *mentally* say Amen, which is an expression of our faith, and thankful reception of the glad tidings of God’s pardon. And at the conclusion repeat Amen audibly and heartily, which applies it to ourselves, and expresses our assent and consent in the doctrine. “Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.”

The Absolution. – Having ascertained who it is that has the right to pronounce absolution, we now come to the act itself. It may be divided into

three parts: – I. The commission. II. Its execution. III. Its application, or a direction to prayer.

I. The preface contains such attributes and properties of GOD as ushers in the Absolution with great majesty and decorum: *Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who wouldest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live.* By the word *Almighty*, we acknowledge that God has all power and might, and the right to do whatsoever He pleases with the sons of men. Consequently that it is His entire power and prerogative to forgive sins, – “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.” [Exod. 34:6–7.] His laws absolutely forbid sin, and His holy Word denounces punishment for it, “visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.” But this neither binds Him nor takes away His privilege to forgive. He can dispense with His own laws, being Almighty, the Supreme Ruler of the universe; and having all power and might in His own hand, can forgive whom and when He pleases without appeal or control. This term Almighty appears dreadful to the penitent sinner, as representing a judge that will not remit without blood. Should he ask with Isaac, “Where is the Lamb?” in the next words we behold the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ the righteous. This Almighty Being is the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort; whose justice being satisfied with Christ’s all-sufficient sacrifice, “he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” [1 John 1:9.] The truly penitent ought to be deeply penetrated with reverence and love to this Almighty and most merciful Father, who being the Father of Jesus Christ, has, for his sake, and at his intercession, blotted out the handwriting that was against us, sealed our pardon, and sent us a full and free absolution by the hands of a steward of his mysteries. What posture, therefore, can be sufficiently humble on our part to receive it, – what return of love great enough for such a benefit?

Jesus having said to us, through the instrumentality of the minister, *Go and sin no more, – thy sins be forgiven thee*, we should not think so much of the *earthen vessel* who says it as the power, the goodness, the mercy that sent, and the merits that purchased it. It has been asserted that the Absolution conveys nothing more than the first of the sentences

intimates, – “When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness which he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.” Did the Church mean nothing more, or had no more power, the Absolution, in this place at least, would be useless. The solemn proclamation of the priest’s “power and commandment” would be a mockery, were nothing more intended than a mere declaration of the forgiveness of sins. The Church not only exhorts us here to repentance, by declaring that God will forgive us our sins, but also designs to convey an instant pardon from God, by the mouth of the priest, to all “who truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.” The Church adopts the language of the prophet Ezekiel, “Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God, and not that he should return from his ways and live.” [Ezek. 18:23.] For a better confirmation, this gracious declaration is repeated and strengthened by an oath. As He could swear by none greater, He sware by himself, saying AS I LIVE, saith the LORD GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” [Ezek. 33:11.] God requires no bonds to keep him to his promises. But he has sworn by himself in condescension to our infirmities, and for the confirmation of our faith, “for without faith it is impossible to please him.” To “believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him,” is the foundation of all religion, since no man can come to God unless he believes that He delights in mercy, and is willing to receive those that turn to Him. It must therefore be a great sin to doubt His promises, but especially this which He himself has confirmed with an oath. He unwillingly resorts to those acts of severity, which our obstinate wickedness alone extorts. Upon submission and turning to Him, He is ever ready to show mercy and compassion. He desireth not the death, but delighteth in the life of every returning sinner. It is one of the devices of Satan to represent the Almighty as dreadful and inexorable, that he may prevent us from turning unto the Lord, and serving him without fear. We have no reason to dishonour God by such unworthy and dismal apprehensions. The beloved disciple assures us that *God is love*, and “there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear.” When Israel’s, ingratitude provoked God to punish them, the prophet represents him as earnestly expostulating with Ephraim. “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together: I will not

execute the fierceness of mine anger; I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am GOD, and not man, the Holy One in the midst of thee.” [Hosea 11:8–9.] When we call to remembrance, therefore, the price paid for our redemption, – the covenant made with us, – the many promises made to us, – the earnestness of His invitations, – His long-suffering and patience, – and the continual protection of His good providence, – to doubt of His ministerial absolution is a great aggravation of our sins, and in a great measure renders our other acts of faith void. But while we avoid despair, let us not encourage presumption, lest we deceive ourselves. His all-seeing eye knows our purposes, and will not confirm the priest’s words unless we turn from our wickedness, by hearty repentance and true faith, that we may live, and not die everlastingly. The constant and authoritative use of the Absolution is an invincible proof that the doctrine of the Church of England is anti-Calvinistic. When Calvin offered his assistance in compiling the Liturgy, “Archbishop Cranmer rejected it; he knew the spirit of the man, his obstinance, self-sufficiency, and contempt of the most primitive antiquity, and was therefore resolved not to let him have any hand in the English Reformation: he had taken all opportunities to detract from, and revile our Reformation, and was continually importuning the Duke of Somerset to alter and lay aside everything that disagreed with his own *passion and prejudice*. These harsh expressions” (in a letter too long for quoting here) “would never have fallen from Calvin’s pen if the Liturgy had been modelled according to his directions, but may very naturally be supposed *to be the furious expressions of his resentment*, on account of the disrespect shown him in refusing to obey his dictates, and comply with his unprimitive platform.” [Historical Account of the several Reviews of the Liturgy, by the Rev. S. Downes, St. John’s College, Oxon.]

The next words are, – *And hath given power and commandment to His ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins.*

The power of absolution consists in removing the guilt and punishment of sin, and receiving the penitent into favour, as if he were perfectly innocent. This power is expressed in Scripture by the remission or retention of sin, by the opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven, that is, by admitting into, or excluding from, the visible Church. None will be received into the kingdom of glory hereafter, but such as have been admitted into the Church or kingdom of grace here, by water and the Holy

Spirit, [St. John 3:5.] and which is therefore called the power of the keys. St. Matthew calls it the power of *binding and loosing*, and St. John the power of *remission and retention*. [St. Matt. 16:19. St. John 20:23.] Sinners are said to be “tied and bound with the chain of their sins,” to be “holden with cords,” and to be in the “bond of iniquity”. Now, the power of absolution granted to his Church by our Saviour frees us from these chains, unties these cords, and loosens this bond. Which power, as noticed before, was conferred on the apostles by our Saviour at his ascension, when he devolved the government of the Church on them and their successors, “always, even to the end of the world”. It is only “people being penitent,” whose sins are remitted by this ministerial act. Although the words are pronounced in general and indefinite terms, for the comfort and encouragement of all returning sinners, yet they are not intended to extend to those who willfully persist in sin. Their efficacy is restrained to those only, who, by faith and repentance, have made themselves capable of forgiveness. God himself will pardon none but the penitent, and we may be sure that He has given no power to his ministers to pardon the impenitent. This is everywhere the sense and language of Holy Scripture. In conformity with which, our Church has three several forms of absolution in her public liturgy, all of which are confined to the penitent and returning sinner: – 1st, That in the morning and evening prayer, which is declaratory. But the word *pronounce*, and its being made a priestly act, shows it to be also judicial, and more than a general declaration of pardon. The 2d in the communion service is *petitionary*. In it the priest prays to God, who hath “promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, to have mercy upon them, and to pardon and deliver them from all their sins.” His prayer is of greater force, and will more surely prevail, than the prayer of anyone who has not a Divine commission. The 3d is *judicial*, or authoritative, in the office for the sick. Upon the hearty confession and desire of the sick person, the priest is empowered to say, – “Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners that truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences; and by his authority committed to me, *I absolve thee from all thy sins.*”

Here, then, we see the great blessing of absolution which Christ has vouchsafed to his Church; – the persons authorized to pronounce it, namely, ministers duly called, as was Aaron; – and those who are to receive its benefit, who are all that confess their sins with an humble, penitent, and

obedient heart. This shows the great honour and dignity of Christ's ministers, who are called not of men, but of God. Their commission is from heaven, being appointed by God the Father, given by God the Son, and sealed by God the Holy Ghost. The apostle commands us "so to account of them, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." They are "fellow workers with God," and His instruments. They are dispensers of His pardons, and His heralds, proclaiming peace and the "glad tidings of good things" to us. "Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." It is more especially required of stewards in God's household, who are appointed to bring forth things new and old, to dispense to everyone their meat in due season, and to feed Israel with a faithful and true heart. The people also committed to their charge may hence infer their duty, which is, to receive their instructions, and to submit to their authority, for, as the apostle asked the Corinthians, What have we that we did not receive? If the people will not be taught and ruled by them, Christ's sending them to "command and teach," – to "preach the word, to be instant in season and out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine," were to no purpose. It is also the people's duty to qualify themselves by sincere repentance for receiving the great blessing of absolution at their hands.

II. The absolution farther says, *He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his Holy Gospel.* Mark well that the absolution is pronounced by the minister not in his own, but in God's name. HE, that is, GOD, *pardoneth and absolveth*, for the power of forgiving sins is originally in God only. He exalted the man Christ Jesus to this power and prerogative, and who again conferred this ministerial power of his apostles, when he gave them the same powers which he himself possessed while he was the visible governor of his Church. He promised that the sins which they remitted or retained on earth, should be remitted or retained in heaven. Ministers, however, are not entitled to assume a power of granting or withholding pardons as they please, nor to sell such for money. The Church of Rome practices both of these to the incalculable injury of religion and morality. It is our duty to acknowledge God to be the author, and the clergy to be the ministers of His bounty. They are His witnesses and messengers to convey the glad tidings to the people, and to those only who "truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel." – "Repent," says St. Peter, "that your sins may be blotted out." [Acts 3:19.] St.

Paul “testified that repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,” [Acts 20:21.] were the necessary terms of absolution. From this part of the absolution, we may infer that the minister is directed to publish a pardon to all that truly repent, but to absolve none but the penitent. Because his sentence will only be ratified in heaven to the recipient, on the terms of faith and repentance. The priest can only know the people’s penitence by outward expressions; it is God’s prerogative alone to know the thoughts of the heart. A minister who knowingly absolves an impenitent person is an unfaithful steward, and a betrayer of his trust; and such sentences, not being within his commission, are null and void. He is neither to go beyond nor to stop short of his commission. He is to pronounce pardon to the penitent who unfeignedly believe the Gospel, and is not to withhold absolution from any that are qualified to receive it. The Church requires him to “declare and pronounce it to all that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe the holy Gospel.” The people to whom this absolution is pronounced, must neither presume on a pardon without observing the conditions of faith and repentance, which Christ has inseparably annexed to it, nor despair of the remission of their sins on the due performance of these two qualifications. God will neither justify the wicked nor condemn the righteous; to presume upon the former is to deny His justice, and to fear the latter is to distrust and deny His mercy. Presumption and despair are alike dangerous. That we may derive the benefit of this act of grace, we must duly perform the conditions of faith and repentance. Without the assistance of His grace and Holy Spirit we can do no good thing; let us therefore constantly beg of Him “to direct, sanctify, and govern both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of His laws, and in the works of His commandments.” Let us receive this absolution with humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient hearts. Let us sorrow deeply, fear exceedingly, confess humbly, and heartily resolve against all sin for the time to come. At same time, let us beware of hardness of heart, and contempt of God’s Word and commandments, of formal confessions, and hypocritical pretenses. He pardoneth the penitent only; but although our sins have been like scarlet, yet shall they be made white as wool. Let us therefore approach His footstool with unfeigned faith in His Gospel, and in full assurance of His promise, and this “faith unfeigned” will open the door of mercy.

III. *Wherefore, let us beseech Him to grant us true repentance and His Holy Spirit, that those things may please Him which we do at this*

present, and that the rest of our lives hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to His eternal joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Here the minister exercises two parts of his office, – instruction and exhortation. He has assured us that remission is to be obtained, and now he exhorts us to seek it of Him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. Repentance is a change of heart, of will, and affections. It is a sort of new creation, and He alone that brought light out of darkness, and life out of death, can bring us from the death of sin to a life of holiness and purity. Nothing but the power of Divine grace can effect this change in us. The Church teaches us in the comminution office that repentance consists of three parts, – contrition, or lamenting our sinful lives, – confession, – and satisfaction, or an endeavour to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. Contrition and satisfaction are requisite after pardon has been obtained, because we ought to be grieved with the remembrance of our sins. To think of them afterwards with pleasure, is to renew and act them over again, and therefore so long as we do so, we cannot be truly penitent. Satisfaction or amendment of life is absolutely necessary after remission of sins, lest we should be again entangled and led into captivity. Christ himself teaches us, after we have asked forgiveness of our trespasses, to pray that we may not *be led into temptation*. That is, that He would save us by His restraining grace from falling again into sin. The Church here wisely follows this method. Immediately after the priest has pronounced absolution, she [i.e. the Church] directs us to pray for *amendment* of life, and for the grace of God’s Holy Spirit to enable us to bring forth worthy fruits of repentance, – that both our present service and future life may please Him, and that we may “go away and sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto us.” Therefore let us pray for true repentance to qualify us for His mercy, and likewise beseech Him to grant us His Holy Spirit, which alone can work it in us, and help us to amend our lives. To encourage us to make this request, our Saviour has himself assured us that our fathers in the flesh are not more ready “to give good gifts to their children,” than our heavenly Father is “to give the Holy Spirit to him that asks.” Repentance must precede the gift of the Holy Spirit, and prepare the soul for His reception. He is a spirit of holiness and purity, and will not enter into a corrupt, much less inhabit a polluted heart. Therefore the heart must be “swept and garnished,” for the reception of such a heavenly guest, by true repentance and amendment of life. All our prayers, without repentance, will be rejected as mockery; and

without the aid of His Holy Spirit all our most solemn observances are “stale, flat, and unprofitable”. The Spirit of God helps us to ask, inclines Him to give, and fits us to receive all that we pray for. If we, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto our children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give good things, according to St. Matthew, [St. Matt. 7:11.] the Holy Spirit, according to St. Luke, to them that ask him? [St. Luke 11:13.] Who would not, therefore, earnestly ask for such a true repentance as might invite the Holy Spirit into our hearts, to be the seal of our pardon, and to make what we do at *all times*, as well as “at this present,” well pleasing and acceptable to God. He will then ratify the sentence of absolution pronounced by the priest, and accept our prayers as incense, and the lifting up of our hands as an evening sacrifice. Another motive or encouragement to pray for repentance and God’s Holy Spirit is “that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy.” We request His future assistance in all our endeavours, in the whole course of our life, in addition to His acceptance of what “we do at this present,” – “that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in Him, we may glorify His holy name, and finally by His mercy in Jesus Christ, obtain everlasting life.” Without Divine aid and assistance joined to our own endeavours, we can neither begin nor continue a holy life by “true repentance”. The Church, therefore, directs us to pray for penitence to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and for God’s Holy Spirit to enable us to lead pure and holy lives, that the people’s confession and the priest’s absolution may be effectual, “so that at the last we may come to His eternal joys, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” This is the greatest encouragement to all our prayers, which will then be turned into praises. Confession of sin will then cease, and absolution terminate in the consummation of bliss and glory. The pardon sealed to us in time will be delivered in eternity, and all our hopes of mercy swallowed up in fruition. The Father who forgave us, the Son who died for us, and the Holy Spirit who effectually wrought in us, will communicate to us “joy unspeakable and full of glory” for evermore. We are taught to ask all our petitions through Jesus Christ our Lord, whom “God hath exalted to be a prince and a saviour, to grant repentance and remission of sins.” He purchased redemption and forgiveness for us, which of ourselves we could never accomplish, and it is through his merits and mediation alone that we obtain it. All our prayers, therefore, must be offered in his name, to which we are taught to add our own hearty assent by saying audibly, *Amen*.

I will now sum up and bring the whole into the smallest possible compass. The words of St. Chrysostom are clear that the absolution is *judicial*. “What is comparable,” says he, “to the power of the priest, to whom Christ hath said, ‘Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven!’ Heaven waits and expects the priest’s sentence here on earth; for the priest its judge on earth; the Lord follows the servant, and what the servant binds or looses on earth, *Clave non errante*, that the Lord confirms in heaven.” St. Jerome, the supposed patron of Presbytery, and of a barely *declaratory* power, says, – “God forbid that I should speak a word against the priests, who with sacred mouth eat the body of Christ (in the eucharist), by whom we are Christians (in baptism), who having the keys of the kingdom, judge in a certain measure before the day of judgment.” Gregory the Great says, “The apostles, and in them all priests, were made God’s vicegerents here on earth, in his name to retain and forgive sins, not *declaratively* only, but *judicially*. They are made the judges of the souls of men, casting the obstinate down to the gates of hell, by the fearful power of excommunication, and lifting up the penitent into heaven by the blessed power of absolution.” But one who is greater than them all has said, “Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” These words must mean something, none of his words fall to the ground. And they can mean nothing besides a power of absolution, granted to men whom he sent with the same powers with which he had himself been sent. They cannot be understood as remitting sins by *preaching* or *baptizing*, as some have maintained, because the apostles were licensed to preach and baptize long before. This power of *remission of sins* they did not receive till after his resurrection, and just before his ascension, by the very significant ceremony of *breathing on them*, and saying, *Receive*. By breathing on them he infused that power into them which he bid them receive. He then conferred the mighty authority and privilege to distribute this gift to others, which showed it to be an entirely *new* gift, conferred at that moment and not before. God surely would not have conferred this power in vain. It was given for our benefit, and He expects that we should use the means of obtaining it. This is to be done by confession, true repentance, and unfeigned faith in His promises, and of course in this promise of forgiveness of sins in particular.

Where had St. Peter the power of striking Ananias and his wife dead, or St. Paul that of inflicting blindness on Elymas, or of delivering Hymeneus and Alexander to Satan, if it was not by this clause in their commission? While on earth Christ never in any one instance exercised these powers himself. On the contrary, he raised the dead, he healed the sick, he opened the eyes of the blind, and delivered the possessed from the power of Satan, which shows his greater love of mercy than of judgment. But that the apostles might be capable of performing things of so transcendent a nature, he conferred peculiar authority on them in as clear and distinct terms as language can convey. If we find not this authority in their final commission, where shall we look for it?

Whoever, then, assents to the Episcopal Church, believes the Scriptures, and respects the ancient fathers as credible witnesses, cannot deny to the priesthood the power of remitting sins in the name and by the authority of God. The forgiveness of sins is an article of faith. St. Ambrose doubts not that even the dreadful sin of Judas Iscariot might have been forgiven, had he made that confession, "I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood," to his God and Saviour, instead of to the Jews. The multitude of our sins cannot exceed his mercy. Although their number has been indefinite, yet if we make a new heart and a new spirit, he who commanded us to forgive our brother *as oft as he should repent*, will certainly forgive us as often as we offend and turn to him with true repentance. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." St. John does not say we shall be forgiven once or twice, but indefinitely. If with the prodigal we confess that we have sinned, the Father of Mercies will behold us with the eye of pity. He will subdue the hardness of our hearts by His grace, embrace us with the arms of His mercy, own us for His sons, and clothe us with the robe of Christ's righteousness.

The word *priest* has been objected to as savouring of Popery. As it is always used in the rubrics, an explanation may remove prejudices, and give the true sense of what the word means. The Greek and Latin words which are translated *priest* are derived from words that signify *holy*. The word *priest* signifies one whose charge and function is about *holy things*, and therefore is a most proper word for those who are set apart to minister in holy things. The rubrics in our Liturgy which direct him in his ministration, commonly entitle him PRIEST. The Greek and Latin Churches in all their

liturgies, in which the word *presbyter* is never used, do the same. In the Greek liturgies, he is called ἱερεὺς, and in the Latin, *sacerdos*, which in English we call *priest*. The word *priest* signifies one who offers up a sacrifice; and accordingly the Gospel ministers do offer sacrifices. St. Peter says, “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an *holy priesthood*, to offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” [1 Peter 2:5.] These *spiritual sacrifices* consist ordinarily of prayers, praises, and thanksgivings. The ministers of the Gospel may also, in a metaphorical sense, be called priests, because they are taken from among men to offer these sacrifices for others. But, besides these, the Gospel ministry offer the *unbloody sacrifice*, as it was anciently called, that is, the *commemorative sacrifice* of the death of Christ. It is really and truly shows forth his death as the bloody sacrifices under the law *prefigured* it. Those who offered sacrifices were always denominated priests, even by the heathens. St. Paul repeatedly calls Melchisedec a priest, and yet we read that he offered no other sacrifice than bread and wine, *for he was the priest of the most high God, and He blessed him*. If, therefore, Melchisedec be frequently and truly called a priest, and as St. Paul says, “abideth a priest continually,” and yet had no other offering but bread and wine, and our Saviour himself is called a priest forever after his order, why may not they, whose office is to bless the people, as Melchisedec blessed Abraham, be called priests also? They offer that holy bread and wine, the signs of Christ’s body and blood, of which Melchisedec’s bread and wine were at best but a type. Although the word *priest* has been used by Jews and Papists, yet every Jewish and Popish custom is not unlawful for Christians or Protestants to use. Those Jewish customs which were “shadows of things to come,” are abolished now that Christ is come. To use them, therefore, still is unlawful, because it is a virtual denial that Christ is come. St. Paul condemns, in the Colossians, the superstitious observance of the Sabbath, which was a shadow of the mighty resurrection of Christ. He cautions the Galatians against being “entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” But that other rites or usages of the Jews, which were not shadows of things to come, are unlawful to Christians, can neither be proved from Scripture, nor by necessary inference from it. The word *priest* is not peculiar to the Jewish ministry; but granting it to be exclusively Jewish, yet it is not “a shadow of things to come,” and therefore not unlawful. Christians may still, in a spiritual and refined sense, use the names of those rites and ceremonies

which were Jewish, but are unlawful to Christians. For instance, circumcision is become so unlawful to Christians, if used with an opinion of its necessity, as to occasion forfeiture of all our hopes of salvation through Christ. [Gal. 5:2.] Yet St. Paul uses the word *circumcision* repeatedly. Particularly, “in whom (Christ) ye are *circumcised* with the *circumcision* made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the *circumcision* of Christ.” [Col. 2:11.] Our Saviour, who was not of Aaron’s order or priesthood, is called a priest after the order of Melchisedec. And St. Paul says, that “every *high priest* taken from among men is ordained for men, in things pertaining to God, that he may *offer* both gifts and *sacrifices* for sins.” [Heb. 5:1.] Isaiah, speaking of the Gospel ministry, says, “And I will take of them for *priests* and for Levites, saith the Lord.” [Isa. 66:21.] Jeremiah likewise says, “Neither shall the *priests* and the *Levites* want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to *do sacrifice continually*.” [Jer. 33:18.] This prophecy can only with propriety be applied to the Gospel ministry, because the Jews at this moment have neither priest, nor altar, nor sacrifice. In defining a minister under the Law and under the Gospel, St. Paul distinctly calls them both priests: “If, therefore, perfection were by the *Levitical* priesthood, what further need was there that *another priest* should arise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the *priesthood* being *changed*, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.” [Heb. 7:11–12.] That name which was common to others as well as to the Jews, – which was constantly used by the primitive Christians, – which the prophets foretell shall be applied to the ministers of the Gospel, – and by which St. Paul calls them, may not only be lawfully, but safely, and without just grounds of offence to any sober Christian, used as a fit name for Gospel ministers. We may, therefore, still call the clergy, as the Church of England does in her rubrics – PRIESTS. [Dr. Comber’s Companion to the Temple. Dr. Holes’ Lectures on the Liturgy. Bishop Sparrow’s *Rationale* of the Common Prayer. Wheatly on the Common Prayer. Dr Lightfoot’s Works, vol. ii. Whitby’s Commentary on the Gospel. Francis Mason’s Consecration of the Bishops in the Church of England. Bishop Taylor’s Works. Bishop Horsley’s Sermon on St. Matthew 16:18. Hick’s Christian Priesthood. Lesslie’s Theological Works. Mede’s Works.]

Chapter 6.

First Rubric respecting Amen – Second Rubric enjoining Kneeling – The Lord’s Prayer – Its History – Vain Repetitions, what. – Our Lord’s Prayer taken from Jewish Forms – Consists of Three Parts – The Preface – First Petition – Second Petition – The Kingdom of Heaven – Third Petition – His Will – Daily Bread – Forgiveness of Trespases, and the Condition – Last Petition against Temptation – And Deliverance from Evil – Its Doxology – Versicles – Doxology – Song of the Church Triumphant – Arians interpolate it – Hallelujah.

Rubrics – The way to the throne of grace having been prepared by the confession and absolution, our Lord’s own prayer immediately follows. Previous to which there are two rubrics or directions. The first of which enjoins the people not only *here*, but *at the end of all other prayers, to answer, Amen*. The word *Amen* is originally Hebrew, and signifies in English, *So be it*. It has been retained in all languages to express the people’s assent. When the primitive Christians gave this assent in their assemblies, they pronounced *Amen* so heartily that St. Jerome compares it to thunder; “They echo out the Amen (says be) like a clap of thunder.” Throughout the Prayer book, it is to be remarked that the word *Amen* is printed sometimes in the same characters as the rest of the prayer, and sometimes in *italics*. When it is in italics, it is intended that the priest shall stop at the end of the prayer, and the people alone are to respond *Amen*. At the end of the Lord’s Prayer, Confession, Creeds, etc., and wherever the people are to join aloud with the minister as if taught by him what to say, it is then printed in the same character. It there denotes that the priest himself is also to say Amen; so that both priest and people set the seal of their assent and consent to what they have just said. The people must not repeat the other prayers audibly, but follow the minister silently in their hearts, so as not to disturb their neighbours, as many people inconsiderately do, by an audible whisper. The priest is the appointed intercessor for the people, and it is his office to offer up their prayers and praises in their behalf.

The other rubric says, *Then the minister shall kneel, and say the Lord’s Prayer with an audible voice, the people also kneeling, and repeating it with him, both here, and wheresoever it is used in Divine service*. The confession and absolution was rather a preparation for prayer than prayer itself, and answers to the washings of the Jews before they approached the altar. In the Liturgy the chief place is still assigned to the first and greatest of all prayers. But until we have repented of our disobedience, we ought neither to call God our Father, nor, till we have

received his pardon, can we with comfort call him so. In this we conform to the practice of the primitive Church, which always began and ended their public services with this Divine prayer. It being the foundation on which all our other prayers are built, the Church begins with it, that so the right foundation being laid, we may go boldly to the throne of grace. The ten commandments are the sum of all our duty, and this prayer is the rule of all our desires. The duties of the commandments are twofold, to God and to our neighbour; and the petitions in this prayer are threefold, for the honour of God, for ourselves, and for our neighbour. This prayer was, like the commandments, twice delivered. It was first given unasked, in the second year of his ministry, in his sermon on the mount, about Pentecost; and again, by desire, in the third year, about the Feast of Tabernacles. Whence, says Mr. Mede, it follows that when it was first uttered, his disciples did not understand that their Master intended it for a form of prayer. It is evident that they considered it only as a pattern or example, to instruct them in what manner to ask forgiveness. Otherwise they would not again, at the interval of a year, have asked him for a precise form. He then gave them the same prayer, and more exactly instructed them that when they prayed, they should say the identical words which the preceding year they supposed he had given them only as a directory. He thus so wisely ordered it that *their* inadvertency has become our advantage and confirmation. Like Pharaoh's dream, this prayer was doubled, "because the thing is established by God," that both they and we might with more certainty know that He intended and commanded it to be used as a *set form of prayer* by his Church forever. "We are directed and assisted (says Dr. Barrow) by this form of prayer, composed and dictated for that purpose by him who best knew what we ought to pray for, and how we ought to pray; what matter of desire, what manner of address, what disposition of mind, would be most pleasing and acceptable to his Father, would most become and befit us in our approaches to Him. We might consequently observe many things concerning those particulars discernible in this form: the sublimity, the gravity, the necessity, the singular choiceness of the matter; the full brevity, the deep plainness, the comely simplicity of expression; the lowly reverence signified therein, accompanied with due faith and confidence; these and the like virtues directive of our devotion, we might observe running generally through the whole contexture of this venerable form." The daily prayers of the Jews were eighteen in number. These they reduced to a brief epitome, which

contained the substance of them all, and with which the disciples must have been acquainted. It was the custom, however, of the great teachers to give their scholars some prayer as a badge of their discipleship. Accordingly our Lord's disciples besought him to give them a *symbolum*, as John had given his disciples, that they might pray with his spirit. In appointing this form, Christ neither abrogated the prayers of the Jews, in which he himself always joined, nor any other prayers of human composition. He superadded this *perfect* to our *imperfect* form of prayer, as an abstract or sum of all other prayers, and therefore most justly to be added to ours. Let it therefore never be forgot that there is no doing spiritual work, but *according to the pattern shown in the mount*. Our Lord forbids us to use the vain repetitions of the heathen, who think to be heard for their much speaking. We cannot reasonably imagine that He condemns the repetition of the same words in prayer, when it arises from a deep sense of our own necessities, and a vehement desire for Divine grace. For he himself prayed three times, using *the same words*, to be delivered from the bitter cup. Repetition can only be accounted vain, when it is not requisite to heighten our devotion. It is vain when we think that we can neither be heard nor understood, without much speaking. As if we questioned God's omniscience, and spoke *much* to inform Him of what He did not know, or to inculcate what He might not immediately attend to, or to remind Him of what He had forgotten, like the apostate Israelites crying out from morning till noon, *O Baal, hear us!* This prayer is an epitome of the Gospel. It was composed by him who had the Spirit above measure, as a direction not only how, but for what to pray. In the words of Cyprian, we shall "be more readily accepted by our heavenly Father, when we come to Him with the words of His only Son." Dr. Whitby observes, that this prayer is taken wholly out of the Jewish liturgies, with the single exception of the petition, "as we forgive them that have transgressed against us." This distinctly marks our Lord's disapprobation of novelty in our prayers, and his preference of *set forms*, and is therefore a powerful argument in favour of liturgy.

Our Lord's Prayer. This sublime prayer consists of three parts: I. A preface; II. Six petitions, which regard either the glory of God or our own good; and, III. A doxology.

I. *Our Father which art in heaven.* This preface is addressed to the first Person in the Holy Trinity, and is agreeable to the custom of the Jews, who always styled the God of Israel *our Father*. In this prayer God is called

Father in three senses; 1. By right of creation, “having made us, and not we ourselves.” 2. By right of providence and preservation. 3. By right of vocation and adoption. We were called in baptism to that faith in Christ, which constitutes us the sons of God. We are all “children of God, through faith in Christ Jesus,” and by the renovation of His Holy Spirit, who enables us to cry Abba, Father. We can use this address with greater propriety than the Jews. We are the adopted sons of God. He has created us after His own image, and begotten us again by the washing of regeneration. We are therefore ingrafted into His family, made heirs through Christ, and enabled to cry Abba, Father. This preface includes faith and charity, which are the chief requisites of prayer. We can only call Him *Father* by faith, and *our Father* by charity. No man who entertains wrath to man, or doubts of God, can devoutly say Our Father. This address therefore reminds us of our duty and reverence to God, and charity to our neighbour. It teaches us that we are not to confine this privilege to ourselves to the exclusion of others; but to comprehend all men as our brethren, sons of the same common Father, and members of the same mystical body. Our Saviour frequently compared prayer to a son’s asking nourishment of his father. In his sermon on the mount, he uses this comparison to assure us, that when we ask we shall receive. “What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, *being evil*, know how to give good gifts unto your children, *how much MORE shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*” We are taught also to address God as our heavenly Father, *Our Father which is in heaven*, to signify His high honour and dignity, and likewise His might, majesty, dominion, and power over us; that heaven is His throne, and the earth His footstool. Our fathers on earth are impotent, and often unable to help either themselves or their children; but our Father in heaven is omnipotent, and can do whatsoever He pleases with the children of men. This, therefore, is a powerful inducement for us to approach Him with the greater reverence and affiance.

II. The first petition refers to God; *Hallowed be thy name*. This is the second division of the Lord’s Prayer. By His *name* in this place we are to understand God himself. Nothing can pollute God’s holy name; we therefore pray that we and all men may look on it as infinitely above us, and use it with reverence and an awful regard, not taking it in vain by common cursing and swearing. His name is Himself and all that is His, as He can be

known by us. It is His attributes, and all that His name is called upon, all that represents Him to us, or relates to Him, as His works, His worship, His revenue, the lot of His inheritance, His holy day, His stewards, and officers in church and state. Since we cannot see God's essence, which is incomprehensible, our reverence will appear by our respect for His name. We and all people hallow or sanctify His name, when we love His goodness, trust in His mercy, believe His promises, fear His threatenings, acknowledge His wisdom and providence, adore His power, and live in conformity to His attributes: when we praise Him for His works, and worship Him with humility and faith, true affections, and hearty desires; when we keep the Lord's Day holy, obey the powers that be, that is, His anointed deputy the king, respect His messengers or ministers, and be in love and charily with all men. Being called by the name of Christ, we ought not to blaspheme that worthy name by the which we are called, but, "laying apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save our souls." We ought to confess with the heavenly host, that "He is worthy of all honour, glory, and power." We then hallow or sanctify His holy name, when we join with the blessed spirits in heaven in their never-ceasing doxology, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." In this petition we pray that all men, especially that we ourselves, may sanctify His holy name. We pray that He would grant us a religious and righteous conversation, that "men seeing our good works may glorify our Father which is in heaven." We pray for grace to obey the apostolic injunction, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts."

The second petition is, *Thy kingdom come*. Objections have been made to this petition, that His kingdom being already come, it is said to be inconsistent still to pray for its advent. This petition may refer more particularly to our Lord's disciples, when the evangelical dispensation was coming. But he himself enjoined them to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send labourers into the field which was then white with ripeness. Much remains still to be done. The kingdom of darkness still overspreads a great portion of the earth. The prayer, therefore, for Christ's kingdom to come upon those who lay in darkness and in the shadow of death, is still the bounden duty of all who dwell in the light of the Gospel. This kingdom is twofold – the kingdom of grace here, and of glory hereafter. The kingdom of grace consists of all the sound members of Christ's Church militant here

on earth, that “have been received into the congregation of Christ’s flock,” and who are “not ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil, and continue Christ’s faithful soldiers and servants unto their lives’ end.” The kingdom of glory consists of all the members of the Church triumphant, that “having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labours,” and are advanced to everlasting joy and felicity. By the coming of his kingdom of grace is meant its establishment where it does not exist, and its preservation and increase when it does. Christ recommends us to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; we therefore pray that all men may become subjects of his kingdom, that the knowledge of the Christian faith, “his saving health,” may come to all nations, and that the “kingdoms of this world may be the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.” We pray that his kingdom may be advanced by the coming in of the Jews, and by the fullness of the Gentiles. We desire that the Christian religion may spread everywhere, as well in reality as in profession – that men’s minds being subdued to the obedience of the faith, they “may show forth his praises not only with their lips, but in their lives.” Without a real subjection when his sovereignty is owned, an outward profession is like the mockery of the Jews, who saluted him, Hail, master, and then buffeted him. We likewise pray that his kingdom may be within us, as well as among us. Where his laws are now broken, and his messengers despised, by the power of his grace in all our hearts, our unruly wills and affections may be tamed, our rebellious lusts and desires mortified and extinguished, and we be enabled to serve him truly all the days of our lives. – By the coming of his kingdom of glory is meant that he will shortly accomplish the number of his elect,” hasten his second coming to judgment, and receive his faithful servants into the mansions of everlasting bliss. This is the kingdom of God which we are enjoined to seek first, when all other worldly accommodation shall be added unto us.

The third petition is, *Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven*. The will of God is either secret or revealed. The former respects His secret purposes concerning the end and event of all things. His revealed will is the discovery of His mind in His holy Word, which we here pray for grace to enable us to do. This will is double. First, the will of His precepts, which shows us our duty, and which we are to do actively and cheerfully. The second is the will of His providence, showing us what we are to suffer, and

which is to be borne patiently and submissively, following our Lord's example, saying, *Not my will, but thine, be done*. The import of this petition seems to be that we should yield obedience to His holy will, and imitate the sincere compliance of the blessed angels with as much readiness and alacrity as the imperfection of human nature will permit. For this purpose we pray to Him to vouchsafe us His Divine assistance, to enlighten our understandings, incline our wills, and strengthen all our faculties to a cheerful, ready, constant, and sincere obedience to it. In heaven the angels do His will constantly, and without weariness or fainting. "They cease not day and night to cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts." The sound of their never-ceasing hallelujahs is "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings." In this petition, we pray that He would grant us graciously to perform whatever He requires of us. We beseech him "to perfect us in every good work, to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight." We here also pray for the graces of contentment, resignation to His will, patience in all adversities, and for thankful hearts under every dispensation.

These three petition relate to God; the next three respect ourselves. The first of these is, *Give us this day our daily bread*.

Here we pray that God, on whom all creatures depend for their sustenance, will be graciously pleased to give us day by day all things necessary for our bodily wants in that condition of life in which He has been pleased to place us. Under the name of *bread* are comprehended food, raiment, habitation, health, and strength. All these are to be measured by the circumstances of place and station; more things are necessary for those in a higher degree than for those in a lower. Having all these things, let us be therewith content, and join in Agur's prayer, "Give me neither poverty nor riches: feed me with food Convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." [Prov. 30:8-9.] We are taught, when we say, *Give us this day our daily bread*, that our proportion of the good things of this life does not come to us by way of merit or purchase, but is the gift of Him who, if we seek his righteousness *first*, has promised to add all these things. *This day*, or *day by day*, shows us the constant protection of God's good providence for the provision of every day: "He bringeth forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of man, that he may bring food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make him a

cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart." There can be no doubt that He will hear this prayer; for Christ himself condescended to assure us that he would send us food sufficient for this life. He even condescended to take great pains to give us an affiance on his providential care. "Take no thought," said he, "for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? and why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. *Therefore*, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? *Therefore*, take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek), for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself: sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." [Matt. 6:25–34.] The same discourse is repeated by St. Luke. The same duties are urged, and the same confidence increased by the apostles in various parts of Scripture. St. Paul bids us "be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." St. Peter recommends us to "cast all our care upon Him, for he careth for us." Therefore a fearless confidence in God concerning the wants and necessities of this life, becomes our bounden duty. The term *our* daily bread denotes that it must be gained by the sweat of our brow, and neither stolen, nor procured by false pretenses, fraud, sacrilege, nor oppression. Under this petition we pray that He will "give and preserve to our use the kindly fruits of the earth, so as in due time we may enjoy them." We pray for peace, that we may reap the fruits of our labour, and enjoy our daily bread in peace. That we may live in peace, we pray for kings and all in authority, that under them we may live peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty. This petition, therefore, includes all these, together with health and strength, and the blessing of God

upon all our honest endeavours. This petition puts us daily in remembrance of our dependence on God. Without His providence we cannot subsist. To desire to be independent of Him is that profaneness or infidelity of which the Gentiles were guilty. It is covetousness and idolatry, which, according to St. Paul, are convertible terms. We ought, therefore, to esteem His providence our surest estate, and His bounty our best treasure. If we cast all our care on Him, He “will never leave us nor forsake us,” but all that is necessary in our different stations “will be added unto us”.

The conjunction and in the next petition, shows that it is a continuation of the former, and that we are still continuing such requests as concern ourselves; *and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us*. In this petition two sorts of trespasses are mentioned, the one against God, the other against ourselves. The first consists of breaches of His holy laws, either by omitting what they require, or committing what they forbid. Transgressions against our neighbour are breaches of human as well as Divine laws, by either neglecting to do the good or right which is his due, or doing him an actual wrong or injury. St. Matthew calls these *debts*, because they imply an obligation to performance, or a penalty for the willful neglect. St. Luke calls them *sins*, which signifies the same thing, both being so many violations of our duty to God, and of our charity to men. This is the first spiritual petition which we ask for ourselves. The condition on which we ask it shows how much we are concerned to obtain it, our happiness depending wholly on the pleasure of God, and our misery on his displeasure. The essence of this petition is humility. Before we ask any spiritual blessings, we must acknowledge our own unworthiness. We must beware of the Pharisee’s sin of trusting in our own righteousness, but in his manifold mercies. Sensible of our own sins and infirmities, we must imitate the humble publican. Sins are not properly and strictly compared to debts, as by sinning we do not so properly contract a debt as a liability to punishment. The forgiveness of trespasses here meant is the passing by the wrong without demanding any farther satisfaction. To forgive a debt is to blot it out, or to cancel the bond which enforced the payment. To forgive sins is to release the person from the guilt and the liability to the punishment due to it. To obtain this forgiveness, our Saviour teaches us to ask it on the condition that we forgive our neighbour, who has injured or trespassed against us. Unless, therefore, we pray with hearts full of charity and goodwill to all men, and pure from the stain of hatred,

malice, and revenge against our neighbour, we approach God with a lie in our mouth, and cannot expect that forgiveness for our own sins, which we deny to the trespasses of our neighbour. We are apt to remember our wants, but to forget our duties. Our blessed and compassionate Lord has, therefore, annexed to this petition one of the greatest duties of the Gospel, so that we cannot ask forgiveness of our own sins, but we must promise the same to our neighbour. By this means Christ makes peace on earth as well as in heaven. And He who paid or made satisfaction for our debts, has sent us to the Father with these words in our mouths, to show his love in redeeming, and God's mercy in forgiving our trespasses. He himself expounds this petition; "for," says he, "if you forgive to men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you."

The last petition is, *and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*

Temptation is taken in Scripture for any kind of trial by affliction or any other calamity. In this sense God tempted Abraham to sacrifice his only son. He tempted Job by trying his patience in the loss of his children, and in making his riches take wings and fly away. He is said to tempt his people by trying them in the furnace of affliction and adversity, in order to improve their graces. But He never tempts them by solicitation to sin. That would make Him the author of sin, and the encourager of what He has declared himself to be the avenger. Against this St. James has accordingly cautioned us, "for God not be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." The sense in which we are to pray against temptation in this petition is that God would preserve us by His restraining grace, against all sin and wickedness, and from all the snares that would entice or lead us into it. We pray that we be neither allured into sin by the temptations of prosperity, nor frightened from our duty by the terrors of affliction and adversity. We also beseech Him that we may not be tempted beyond what we are able to bear, but that with the temptation a way may be left for escape. Here we are taught to pray that, after having been forgiven, we may be preserved from falling again into sin, and into the power of the Evil One, either as a tempter to entice us to sin here, or as a tormentor to execute God's wrath upon us in the world to come. "Evil" is understood here by some to mean the grand enemy of man, and by others the evil effects and punishment of sin. "From evil," says Barrow, "that is, principally, from sin, or evil moral and spiritual; the only evil, simply and in its own nature such, and the root of all other

evil; from that, and consequently from all mischief (evil natural and temporal, or evil penal and afflictive) which may grow on or sprout from thence. As for such evils as these: the want of things necessary or convenient for us; bodily disease and pain; disappointment in our designs and ill success in our undertakings; disgrace and reproach on our good names; dangers, difficulties, and distresses concerning our outward estate; distractions, vexations, and troubles of mind about temporal matters, with the like evils (in some sense, in some degree evils, or appearing such to our natural sense and fancy); we may, indeed, deprecate them (as even our Lord himself did), with submission (as he did) to the wisdom and will of God, in case it pleaseth Him, and He thinketh fit to remove them; but all these things being but names and empty sounds in comparison to spiritual and eternal evils (such as are vicious distempers of mind; indispositions to serve God; ill progress in our spiritual affairs; dissatisfaction concerning our state in respect to God; actual transgression of God's holy will and law; incurring God's displeasure and disfavor; being deprived of His grace and assistance; wanting the communion and comfort of His holy spirit; remorse of conscience, and anguish of spirit for having violated or neglected our duty; blindness of mind, hardness of heart; want of love, reverence, devotion towards God, of charity and goodwill toward our neighbour; of sobriety, humility, regularity of passion, and calmness of temper, in respect to ourselves and the inward frame of our souls; these and such like evils), we should absolutely request of God, that He in mercy would deliver and free us from them; they being irreconcilably repugnant to His will and glory, and inconsistent with our eternal welfare. Yet even these, and all other things, we do request only in general terms, leaving the distinct matter, and manner, and measure, according to which they should be dispensed, to the wisdom and goodness of God; who doth, as our Lord telleth us, know what things we have need of before we ask him; and is not only able, as St. Paul says, but willing also, to do for us superabundantly above what we can ask or think."

III. The conclusion is; *For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.* This is called the Doxology. It is an acknowledgment of God's supremacy, omnipotence, and eternal existence. Our Saviour added this doxology, because, to make prayer complete, praises and thanksgivings are necessary that we may ascribe to God all honour and praise, dominion and glory. Both the spiritual and temporal

kingdoms are his. He is the only ruler of princes, and the head and supreme governor of the Church. He has all power in heaven and earth, and can effectually provide for, and protect His people. Therefore, the honour and glory of all our mercies and blessings are to be paid to Him from whom we receive them. “Now,” says Whitby, “the import of this clause seems to be, We pray thy kingdom may come, and that thy name may be hallowed, and thy will be done by all men, for thine is the kingdom, and all men are concerned to honour thee, and to obey thy holy laws; we pray for temporal blessings to be derived from them, for the pardon of our past sins, and preservation from them in future, for thine is the power to provide for, and protect us, and thou alone canst pardon our offences; we pray for all these, for by thus hallowing thee, owning thy kingdom, and doing thy will, by thus pardoning, providing for us, and protecting us, *thine will be the glory for ever and ever.*”

The divine and excellent prayer is the model and standard of all true devotion, and on which we are to form and regulate all our prayers. In the first book of Edward VI the Liturgy began with it, but in the review in that prince’s reign, all that now precedes the Lord’s Prayer were added, in order that before we presume to call God *Our Father*, we may repent of our disobedience towards Him, and receive sacerdotal absolution. After which, the Church has appointed some short and pious ejaculations, taken out of the Holy Scriptures, to follow. These are to be spoken alternately by priest and people, in order to quicken and inflame their devotion.

Versicles, Doxology. These short versicles are called *responses*, because the people respond to, or answer the priest. This was a very ancient practice among the Jews; and several of the fathers, as well as Pliny, record in their writings, that the primitive Christians used this method in their liturgies. The priest is directed to say, *O Lord, open thou our tips*. This is uttered by the minister, because he is the mouth of the congregation, to offer and present our petitions. The people answer, *And our mouth shall show forth thy praise*. By this answer, the people assent to what their guide has said, according to the Scripture; “The priest’s lips preserve knowledge, and the people seek the law at his mouth.” This versicle is taken out of the fifty-first psalm, and was very frequently used in ancient liturgies, especially in those of St. James and St. Chrysostom. This petition is very appropriately placed here after our confession of sins. But besides the practice of antiquity, the Church does not want sufficient reason for enjoining so pious

a practice. The people are as much concerned as the priest in the confession of sins, in petitions for mercy, and in expressing the praises of God, and therefore should not be prevented from bearing their share in the hallelujahs of the Church militant. Because Christians are made a royal *priesthood* – that is, every man has leave to join in this spiritual sacrifice. By joining our hearts and voices together in the public worship, we obey our Saviour’s words, and can plead his gracious promise, that where “two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.” It is also in conformity to St. Paul’s advice, “that we may with *one mind and one mouth glorify* God.” Hence the minister is so frequently ordered to call upon us to lay aside our wandering thoughts in these words, *Let us pray*. This is intended to quicken and stir up our devout affections, and also to remind us that we are not to be mere passive hearers of his prayers, but to join in them with fervent devotion, and to make them our own prayers as well as his. This versicle teaches us the necessity of God’s grace, to enable us to pray as we ought to do. It reminds us that none can perform good and acceptable service to Him, unless He is pleased to “give us grace to restrain our wandering and impure thoughts, and to open our lips” with an “Ephatha,” that we may have power to praise and glorify His holy name. The wisdom and piety of our Church is here very conspicuous, in the selection and insertion of this most appropriate and powerful petition, which we should constantly offer with a zealous and true affection. If we repeat this with true devotion, we need not fear but that the God of all power and might will so mercifully open all our hearts, our ears, and our mouths, as that they may become the instruments of His praise. And he will graciously render both the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts, acceptable in His sight, who is our strength and our Redeemer.

The Psalms are the sacred storehouse of devotion, and the next versicle is taken from the first verse of the seventieth psalm: *O God, make speed to save us; O Lord, make haste to help us*. This pious petition is divided into two. The first is uttered by the priest, as leading the way, and the second by the people. This is not a vain repetition, but an earnest supplication from the hearts of both priest and people. Such brief ejaculations, like the humble publican’s, oftener find acceptance than longer and more pompous declamation. This may also be understood as a supplication by the priest for deliverance from all spiritual and temporal

evils; and the people's answer, as a prayer for aid and assistance in all their good resolutions and intentions. In this joint prayer for help and succour we manifest a deep sense of our own weakness and inability to save or help ourselves. No man will ask assistance from another, who is able to help himself. And this earnest solicitude for it shows that we are sensible of the necessity of Divine assistance, and of our own weakness without it. Those who presume too much upon their own strength are frequently left to themselves, and so perish through their own self-sufficiency and folly. Whereas, those who are sensible of their own weakness, and take God for their help and defense, never fail of His favour and blessing.

After these pious ejaculations for Divine assistance, we are taught to break out into that seraphic hymn, – *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.* These words are not in the Scripture in the exact form here used. But in St. Luke's Gospel we read that the angels sung, *Glory to God in the highest.* St. John tells us that *There are three that bear record, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.* These three Divine persons being but one God, the same glory and adoration is due to each. The Father sent us into the world, preserves and provides for us in it. The Son lived with us, and died for us; and although he is returned to his glory, yet he is still mindful of us. The Holy Ghost comes to us, and stays with us as a guard, a guide, a comforter, and an advocate. He cheers our minds, cleanses our hearts, quickens our affections, and enforces our prayers. Shall we not therefore be ungrateful if we do not join with the heavenly host in singing, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts!* This was, and is, and ever will be done in all ages and generations – the patriarchs and prophets did it in the beginning of the Church – the apostles and martyrs in the first planting of the Gospel: and there will never want tongues to sing this gratulatory hymn for all generations. These few words comprehend all things, as well as extend to all times and persons. They present at once to our view all the mercies of God, past, present, and to come. They are an acknowledgment that all the good that ever was, or shall be done, or is now enjoyed is heaven or in earth, has ever proceeded from this all-sufficient and ever flowing fountain, to whom this tribute of praise is, and was, and ever will be due. The constant use of this sublime hymn was occasioned by the heresy of Arius. From a principle of ambition and discontent, he denied the divinity of Christ, and the equality of the three persons in the Godhead. This

pestilent heresy overspread the whole Church, till the pious zeal of the Emperor Constantine assembled the great Council of Nice, consisting of 318 bishops. These not only condemned those heresies, but composed the creed called the Nicene Creed, and also this hymn of *Gloria Patria*, to preserve the ancient Catholic faith of the Holy Trinity. And this hymn of glory has been handed down from that council, throughout the Christian Church as it is used in our own Church to this day. It is appointed to be repeated at the conclusion of every psalm, to declare and preserve our belief in the Holy Trinity. Its use is still farther beneficial, for by this practice the Jewish psalms are rendered Christian hymns. But the antiquity of this celestial hymn is supposed to be greater than even the Council of Nice, because the Arians themselves had altered it. Clemens of Alexandria mentions it above a hundred years before that council. As an antidote to the Arian heresy, its use was commanded in its present form, not as a new hymn then first composed, but as one which had been long before in existence, and well calculated to preserve the knowledge of the Trinity. This doxology is at the same time the Christian's hymn and his shorter creed. The sum of the Christian's faith is the mystery of the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Neither Jew nor Pagan, but the Christian alone believes this, and in this doxology professes against all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics. It is not only a brief creed, but a most excellent hymn. It is a most appropriate conclusion to our praises, prayers, thanksgivings, acknowledgments of sin, and confessions of faith. Whether we receive good or evil at the hand of God, we ought to sing this Divine hymn. We cannot, therefore, begin or conclude the day better, than with sincerity and true devotion singing, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*. It was sung in the beginning of the Reformation in Scotland, in Knox's time, but was discarded soon after his death, when extemporary prayers came into fashion. On one occasion, when the clerk was beginning to sing it as usual, the minister called out to him from the pulpit, "No more glory to the Father, the Assembly has forbidden it." But let us continue the devout use of this heavenly doxology. Let us forever give glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Let us never withhold our worship from either of the Persons, but jointly adore them all. This is the constant song of the Seraphim in heaven, who cease not day and night to cry, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts*. It was the song of the angels at our Saviour's birth, who, in proclaiming goodwill to men, sang,

Glory be to God in the highest. We can never devise a better form for praising God on earth, than glorified spirits exercise in heaven. Let us, therefore, constantly use and believe it as the Church directs, with pious and devout affections. And when the *Gloria Patri* is in our mouths, let the praises of God be in our hearts. We stand up when the doxology is repeated, because that is the posture of giving honour, and glory, and thanks, and praise. Like David, having now turned our petitions into praises, we stand up to denote the elevation of our hearts and minds, in giving glory to the Holy Trinity.

After our penitential services, the priest exhorts us to *praise the Lord*, and the people readily answer, *The Lord's name be praised*. Mr. Wheatly says that this response was first added to the Scotch Liturgy, and from it adopted into the present one in the last review under Charles II. The words which the priest utters are the English translation of the word Hallelujah. St. John says that this song of Hallelujah is the voice of heaven, where it is continually sung by angels and glorified spirits: And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, ALLELUIA." It is therefore made a part of our Liturgy that, having devoutly sung it on earth, we may be the better fitted to sing it in glory. In this we imitate the piety of the primitive Church; for it is found in all the ancient liturgies. In these it is inserted in the Hebrew word *Hallelujah*, but in ours it is in our own language, *Praise ye the Lord*. It is placed immediately after the Doxology. Because, in the *Gloria*, we worship the Trinity, and in this hallelujah we now adore the Unity of God. In these words the priest invites the holy angels to join the praises of the congregation with their hallelujahs above. Although this ejaculation be pronounced by two parties, yet it is but one prayer. Both the priest and the people ought therefore to repeat *mentally* what the other offers up *vocally* to God. When the people respond aloud to the priest, *The Lord's name be praised*, they give their full assent and consent to this reasonable service. They declare their willingness and desire to observe it, as if they said with the Church triumphant, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour, and praise, and glory: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* This *Hallelujah*, or *Praise ye the Lord*, is continually sounding in heaven, and which we, in some measure, faintly echo back by

saying, *The Lord's name be praised.*" [Dr. Comber's Companion to the Temple. Dr. Hole's Lectures on the Liturgy. Bishop Sparrow's *Rationale*. Wheatly on the Common Prayer. Dr. Lightfoot's Works, vol. ii. Whitby's Commentary on the Gospels. Mede's Works. Barrow's Works.]

Chapter 7.

The Rubric – Invitatory Psalm – Second Rubric – Psalms – Used in the Temple – Adopted into the Christian Church – Musical Instruments – Third Rubric – Reading the Holy Scriptures – Recommended and Proved – Why the Priest stands, *etc.* – Rubric – Te Deum – A Confession – Who makes it – General Supplications – Benedicite – Explained – Magnificat, what – Benedictus – Jubilate – Nunc Dimittis – The 68th Psalm.

The Rubrics. – That which immediately follows the versicles already noticed directs that *Then shall be said or sung this psalm following; except on Easter day, upon which another anthem is appointed: and on the nineteenth day of every month it is not to be read here, but in the ordinary course of the Psalms.* The 95th is called the *invitatory* psalm. It is placed here as a preparation for the psalms, lessons, and prayers that follow. Our way for praising God having been prepared by pious ejaculations, hymns, and hallelujahs, both minister and people mutually invite and call on each other to sing the praises, and hear the voice of the Lord. We are invited *to worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker*, not only with joy and cheerfulness, but also with lowliness and reverence. It is not used at all on Easter day, because there is an anthem particularly appropriated for that day. In primitive times the Christians saluted each other, at first meeting in the morning of Easter Day, with *Christ is risen*, to which was answered, *Christ is risen indeed*. This custom is still retained in the Greek Church. And ours, supposing us to be equally eager for the joyful news, begins her office of praise on that day with anthems proper for the day, as soon as the absolution has fitted us for rejoicing. We therefore call on each other *to keep the feast*, because *Christ our passover is sacrificed for us*. The 95th being one of the psalms for the nineteenth day of the month, it is therefore not used in this place. It contains directions and exhortations to praises, from the first to the sixth verse, – to prayers, from the sixth to the eighth verse, – and to the hearing of God's Word, from the eighth verse to the end. It bears every mark of having been designed for the public service.

Grotius thinks it was composed for the Feast of Tabernacles; Calvin and some others, that it was designed for the Jewish Sabbath; but St. Paul thinks it suitable for every day; “*Today*, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.” He cautions us against hardness of heart, and contempt of God’s holy Word, lest He should swear in His wrath that we also should not enter into His rest. Our Church, following the example of David and St. Paul, daily warns us in our public devotions against treading in the steps of the unbelieving Jews, lest we partake in their miserable end also.

After the foregoing solemn invitation, the alternate reading by priest and people of the Psalms follows in the order of the morning service. The Rubric which follows this psalm directs, *Then shall follow the Psalms in order as they are appointed. And at the end of every psalm throughout the year, and likewise at the end of Benedicite, Benedictus, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis, shall be repeated the Gloria Patri.* The Psalms have been so divided that the whole are read through in the course of each month. “They are,” says Comber, “the instrument of virtue, the marrow of divinity, the storehouse of devotion, the epitome of all holy Scripture. They contain excellent forms to bless the people, to praise God, to rejoice in His favour, to bewail His absence, to confess our faith, to crave pardon of our sins, deliverance from our enemies, and all blessings for the Church of God. In the use of them we ought to exercise all graces; repentance and faith, love to God, and fear of Him, charity to men, and compassion to the miserable, with all the rest of those Christian qualifications that our souls must be endued with. The composure of them declares them to be fitted for men of all ages and degrees, in all estates and conditions, young and old, kings, priests, and people, in prosperity and adversity; here they may find that which so exactly suits them all, as if their condition had been foreseen and particularly provided for.” Every man can without much difficulty apply this variety of devotions to his own case. For which cause the Church uses them oftener than any other part of Scripture, agreeable to the example of holy David, [1 Chron. 16:1–37.] and the precept of St. Paul, – “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” [Col. 3:16.] The Temple service consisted chiefly of these Psalms. In using them, therefore, we have the comfort now, of joining in the same public service that our Saviour and his holy apostles used daily

in the Temple. The Liturgy of the Jews at this day is chiefly gathered from the Psalms. In them they read, in stolid obstinacy and hardness of heart, those many prophecies of their Redeemer, which were completed by their ancestors, when they imprecated his blood on their children's heads. The Christians undoubtedly used them in their public service during the apostles' age. In the primitive times they were so frequently repeated in the Church, that the meanest Christians could rehearse them from memory at their ordinary work. "In the church's vigils," says St. Chrysostom, cited by Bishop Sparrow, "the first, the midst, and the last, are David's Psalms; in the morning David's Psalms are sought for, and the first, the midst, and the last is David. And in funeral solemnities, the first, the midst, and the last is David. In private houses, where the virgins spin, the first, the midst, and the last is David. Many that know not a letter can say David's Psalms by heart. In the monasteries, the choirs of heavenly hosts, the first, the midst, and the last is David. In the deserts, where men have crucified the world to themselves, and converse with God, the first, the midst, and the last is David. In the night when men are asleep, David awakes them up to sing, and gathering the servants of God into angelical truths, turns earth into heaven, and makes angels of men singing David's Psalms." In our service, we repeat these Psalms by course, the priest says one verse and the people another. This is agreeable to the pattern set us by the angels in heaven; "when one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." [Isa. 5:1-3.] In reading by course, we enter into a holy emulation, who shall serve God most affectionately. We relieve each other in this way, that we may not grow weary of our holy and reasonable service. At the same time, we always stand up when reading the Psalms, to express by the erection of our bodies the elevation of our souls in his service. In this way also we obey the priest's exhortation to "praise the Lord," and fulfill our own promise, that "our mouths shall show forth his praise." At the end of every psalm and hymn, except the *Te Deum*, which is itself a doxology, we add, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.* This turns the Jewish psalms into Christian hymns, and fits them for the church, as they had before been for the synagogue. Musical instruments are more ancient in public worship than the Psalms themselves. Miriam and all the women took *timbrels*, and accompanied them with dancing. [Exod. 15:20.] "David, and all the house of Israel, played

before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir-wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.” [2 Sam. 6:5, 16.] – “David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.” [1 Chron. 13:8.] Again, “David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of music, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals.” [1 Chron. 15:16.] It is not very well known when organs were first introduced, but it is recorded that the Emperor Constantine presented one to King Pepin of France, in the year 766. At the Reformation in Scotland we hear no complaints made against them. It is, therefore, probable that there were no organs in our churches at that period. They have been used in England for many hundred years. In the villages and country parishes, violins, flutes, and “all manner of instruments” are used instead of organs. In the 150th psalm, there is an enumeration of several instruments, and in conjunction with them, “all that vital breath enjoy,” are called on to praise the Lord.

Let the shrill *trumpet's* warlike voice
Make rocks and hills his praise rebound;
Praise him with *harp's* melodious noise,
And gentle *psaltery's* silver sound.

Let Virgin troops soft *timbrels* bring,
And some with graceful motion *dance*.
Let *instruments* of various string,
With ORGANS joined, his praise advance.

Let them who joyful hymns compose,
To *cymbals* set their songs of praise,
Cymbals of common use, and those

That loudly sound on solemn days.

The next Rubric says, *Then shall be read distinctly, with an audible voice, the first lesson, taken out of the Old Testament, as is appointed in the Calendar, except there be proper lessons assigned for that day: he that readeth so turning himself, as he may best be heard of all such as are present.* In that part of the service which we have just considered, we have “set forth God’s most worthy praise,” we now proceed “to hear his most holy word.” After the psalms follow two chapters or lessons, one from the Old, and the second from the New Testament. Bishop Sparrow cites Cassian, who says that “it was the custom of all the churches in Egypt, and that it was not taught by men, but from heaven, by the ministry of angels.” The Church here exhibits the harmony of the Old and New Testament, the Law foreshowing the Gospel, and the Gospel fulfilling the Law. By reading first one chapter out of the Old Testament, and then one out of the New, the Church follows the method of the Holy Spirit. He first published the precepts of the Law, and then those of the Gospel. “Which method,” says Hooker, “of their reading either purposely did tend, or at the leastwise doth fitly serve, that from smaller things the minds of the hearers may go forward to the knowledge of greater, and by degrees climb up from the lowest to the highest things.”

For the first lessons on ordinary days, the minister is directed to begin on the second of January, with the first chapter of Genesis, and so continues on, day after day, till the whole of the Old Testament is read over within the year. The first of January being the Circumcision, has proper lessons appropriate for itself. In this arrangement the Chronicles, which are chiefly repetitions of the Books of Samuel and Kings, and some particular chapter in other books, are excepted. These are passed over either for the same reason, or because they contain genealogies, or names of persons or places. The Song of Solomon is wholly omitted, because very few in a mixed congregations are capable of understanding it in a spiritual sense. Some chapters in the prophecy of Ezekiel are also omitted. Isaiah is not read in the same order as the rest. He is the most evangelical prophet, and gives the clearest predictions of Christ; his book is, therefore, reserved to be read in Advent and a little before, because it prepares our minds for a true faith in the mystery of Christ’s incarnation and birth, previous to their commemoration at Christmas. To supply the remaining part of the year

some parts of the Apocrypha are read, but only on weekdays, and never on Sundays. Our Church does not admit the Apocrypha to be canonical Scripture. Yet the Council of Carthage recommended the Books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, and the Maccabees, to be publicly read in the Church, as being ecclesiastical and good, and approaching nearest to the Divine Writings of any in the world. In conformity to the general practice of the whole Church, the Church of England orders the Apocrypha to be read in her public service, not to lessen the authority of canonical Scripture, “but for example of life, and instruction of manners, but yet doth not apply them to establish any doctrine.” She expressly affirms *the holy Scripture* to be the ONLY RULE OF OUR FAITH. The course of the first Lessons appointed for Sundays is different from that which is ordained for the week days. From Advent to Septuagesima Sunday, some chapters in Isaiah are appointed, because that prophet treats more especially of Christ. But on Septuagesima Sunday, which properly begins Lent, the season of penance and mortification, Genesis is begun, because it treats of our misery by the fall of Adam, and the severe judgments on the world for sin. And because there is a fuller attendance on Sundays than on weekdays, such particular chapters are selected for them, as are judged to be more edifying for the people. The same method is observed in reading the second lessons on Sundays as on weekdays. The Gospel and Acts of the Apostles are read in the morning and the Epistles in the afternoon, in the same order as they stand in the New Testament. But on particular holidays, such lessons are appointed either to explain the mystery, relate the history, or apply the example to us. The first and last chapters of the Revelations are read on St. John’s Day, and part of the nineteenth on the festival of All Saints. The rest of the book is entirely omitted.

One great design of Christian assemblies is to hear the Word of God. “The Liturgy consists of Scripture, partly arranged for instruction, and partly for devotion. It consists, moreover, of forms agreeable to Scripture truth, and conformable to Scripture authority, adapted to Christian devotion, and to that important and interesting intercourse of the pious soul with God, both in public and private. The Old Testament is directed to be read, in great part, once every year; and the New Testament, except the Apocalypse, three times; *so that in effect the LITURGY includes the WHOLE sacred volume*, the perusal of which is thus mixed up with piety and prayer. Consider, moreover, the selection of Scripture and the collects, as they are adapted to

the course of the sacred year. All the fundamental facts, all the essential doctrines, and all the necessary duties of the Gospel, are thus exhibited in an interesting order, and are pressed on our attention by occasions of peculiar solemnity, which are calculated directly to increase their practical influence. No man can make this book his companion, as the pious men of old did, in the church and in the closet, and give to all its arrangements their full practical efficiency, without being sound in all the essential doctrines, and attentive to all the necessary duties of the gospel.” [Bishop Walker’s Charge, 1833, p. 28.] God has positively commanded us to read his law in our public assemblies. [Deut. 31:10–11.] Paul and Barnabus sat down and read the law and the prophets in the synagogue. [Acts 13:14–15.] St. Paul and St. James both inform us that Moses and the prophets were read every Sabbath day. [Acts 13:27, 15:21.] This practice was the great means under God of preserving the Jews from idolatry. Whenever they omitted it, they sank into all the abominations of their besetting sin. It is remarkable that after the captivity, they never fell into idolatry. The reason, which they themselves assign, is the constant reading of the holy Scriptures in their public meetings. Under the Divine blessing, the constant reading of the Scriptures in our churches has preserved the faith pure of the Protestant Episcopal Church throughout the world. Whereas in other communions, where the public reading of the Scripture has been either laid aside or neglected, the greatest departure from the faith has taken place.

When the priest reads the Scripture, he is directed to *stand and turn himself, as he may be best heard of all that are present*; because standing is a posture of reverence, and a token of assent and adhesion. In this significant gesture, the priest follows the example of his blessed Master, who “went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and *stood up for to read.*” Besides, the Scriptures being the Word of God, and a declaration of his will, his ambassador *stands* to show his authority. Formerly when the priest read prayers, his face was turned towards the east, but when he addressed the people, he was directed to turn himself towards them, so that they might distinctly hear that he said. In turning to the east he looked toward the altar. It is set apart for the highest act of religious service, the consecration and distribution of the holy eucharist. In it the most gracious and mysterious presence of God is exhibited that in this life we are capable of enjoying, – the presence of his most holy Body and Blood. “And therefore,” says Thorndyke, “the altar was usually called the Tabernacle of

God's glory, – his chair of state, – the throne of God, – the type of heaven, – heaven itself. As therefore the Jews in their prayers looked towards the principal part of the temple, the mercy seat, so the Christians in their prayers turned towards the principal part of the church, the altar, of which the mercy seat was but a type. And as our Lord has taught us in his Prayer to look up towards heaven when we pray, saying, *Our Father which art in heaven* (not as if God were there confined, for he is everywhere, in earth as well as in heaven, but because *heaven is his throne*, whereas *earth is but his footstool*); so our holy Church by her practice teaches us in our public and solemn prayers to turn and look, not towards the inferior and lower parts of the footstool, but towards that part of the church which most nearly resembles heaven, the holy Table or Altar. Correspondent to this practice was the manner of the Jews of old; for at the reading of the law and other scriptures, he that did minister turned his face to the people, but he who read the prayers turned his back to the people, and his face to the ark."

The second Rubric directs *that before every lesson the minister shall say, Here beginneth such a chapter, or verse of such a chapter, of such a book; and after every lesson, Here endeth the first, or the second lesson.* This enables such as have bibles to turn up the place, and be more attentive. The first Rubric concludes: *And after that shall be said or sung, in English, the hymn called Te Deum laudamus, daily throughout the year.*

The Te Deum has been in high esteem in the whole Christian Church. It is at the same time both a creed containing all the mysteries of our faith, and a most solemn form of thanksgiving, praise, and adoration. It exactly corresponds with what St. John relates of the angelic host, "who rest not day and night saying, Holy,. holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." It was composed by St. Ambrose, and sung at the baptism of St. Augustin. Since which time, it has ever been used in the daily service of the Church. It is both rational and majestic, and every way worthy of the spouse of Christ, and is above every other human composition fittest for the tongues of men and of angels. It consists of three parts. I. From the first to the ninth versicle is a profession or publication of the praises of God. *We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.* II. From the tenth to the nineteenth is a confession of our faith in the Holy Trinity. III. From the twentieth versicle to the end is a general supplication for all the people of God, and more particularly for ourselves.

I. After acknowledging God to be the Lord, we rehearse the company that join with us in giving him the glory due unto his holy name: ALL *the EARTH doth worship thee the Father everlasting*. Agreeable to Isaiah, *the whole earth is full of thy glory*. Although man only has the glorious privilege of yielding vocal praise, yet all His other creatures are silent orators, and show forth His glory. To these are joined the whole host of heaven, and all the powers therein. The Cherubim and Seraphim are continually resounding their hallelujahs like the sound of many waters; *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth*. This means the armies and powers of heaven and earth. The treble repetition of *holy*, in this Trisagium, applies it to each of the persons in the ever-blessed Trinity. Each is pronounced and worshipped as holy, and yet they are but one Lord of Hosts, *who fills heaven and earth with the majesty of His glory*. After which follows the whole train of glorified spirits. *The glorious company of the apostles* lead the van. They were the first preachers and publishers of the Gospel here on earth. Next *the goodly fellowship of the prophets* since the world began, who foretold the coming of our Lord, and now join in blessing and praising God for him. *The noble army of martyrs*, of whom the world was not worthy, bring up the rear. They sacrificed their lives for Christ, but now live in joy and felicity, to glorify him for whom they died. This is that blessed society, with whom we hope to join in the heavenly choir; “the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly of the church of the firstborn, that are written in heaven.” Here God the judge of all is attended by “the spirits of just men made perfect.” Here also is “Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant,” continually offering up “the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

II. This confession specifies who it is that make it, *viz. The holy Church throughout the world*. She has ever in all ages acknowledged her belief in this holy mystery, and defended it against all heresies. The whole Church Catholic, in this confession, acknowledges her belief of the Trinity in general, and of each person in particular. *God the Father of an infinite majesty*, the maker, governor, and preserver of the world. *His honourable, true, and only Son*, who redeemed and ransomed mankind with his own most precious blood. *Also the Holy Ghost, the comforter*, “who sanctifieth us, and all the elect people of God.” In this hymn, and in all her creeds, the Church has been most particular in expressing her faith in the second person of the adorable Trinity. Because in all ages heretics have most

doubted and denied his Divinity, and also because the work of our redemption was chiefly effected by what He did and suffered for us. Six versicles are accordingly occupied in acknowledging the glory of his Godhead. *Thou art the king of glory, O Christ.* By giving Him the title of the *king of glory*, we own Him to be truly God. When the Psalmist asks, “Who is the *king of glory*?” He himself replies, “It is the Lord strong and mighty.” He then calls prophetically upon the heavens to open their everlasting doors, to admit of his triumphant ascension into heaven. Again he repeats the question, “Who is the king of glory? It is the Lord of Hosts, he is the king of glory.” He is also called the king of glory, because he has been received up into glory, has purchased glory for us, and will at last receive his faithful servants into glory. The near relation to the Father, and its everlasting continuance, is next acknowledged – *Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.* This sonship is not by creation as the angels, nor by adoption as we are, but by eternal generation, coeternal with the Father, and coequal. After this beautiful hymn has described, in the loftiest terms which words can express, the transcendent greatness of the person of Christ, it next exhibits his great humility and condescension in submitting to be born of a woman. *When he took upon him to deliver man*, he was content to take our nature upon him, that he might take away our sins. The meanness of his birth was succeeded by a life of sorrow and a bitter and ignominious death, that he might lead us to life everlasting. Sin shut the gates of heaven against us, for the sting of death is sin. But Christ, *when he had overcome the sharpness of death*, and by his resurrection pulled out this sting, *did open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.* He did not indeed open it to all men, but only to all believers, who by a firm, lively, and active faith, accept of, and adhere to him till the end. His glorious ascension is noticed after these acts of humiliation and condescension. *Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father.* Whence we are taught to expect his second coming to judgment; *we believe that thou shalt be our judge.* He who is now our Redeemer and Advocate will at last be our judge. If we have done justice, loved mercy, and walked humbly before him in this vale of tears, we have his infallible assurance, that he will salute us with that blessed sentence of absolution, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” But on the contrary, “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; he shall pour down rain upon the sinners, snares, fire and brimstone, storm and tempest; this shall be their portion to drink.”

III. The third part of this sublime hymn consists of supplications for the whole Church in general, and for ourselves in particular. We supplicate in general – *We therefore pray thee, help thy servants, whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.* When we consider the near approach of the day of judgment, we pray God to help and prepare all His people for it. We pray that those who have been redeemed with Christ’s precious blood, may be saved through his merits. We pray also *that He would make them to be numbered with His saints in glory everlasting.* To attain to these high and noble ends, and to be set on his right hand in his eternal kingdom, we are farther taught to pray with the Psalmist: *O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine heritage.* We pray to be delivered from all temporal evils here, and to be crowned with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus hereafter. We next pray God *to govern them, and lift them up for ever.* That is, to rule His people by His Holy Spirit, to advance them above the reach of all temptations, to guide them by His counsel here, and at last to bring them to glory. To qualify us for this exaltation, the Church in the next words acknowledges both her duty and her practice, saying, *Day by day we magnify thee, and worship thy name, ever, world without end.* He bestows on us day by day “our daily bread,” and “His mercy endureth forever.” We are therefore taught to pay our daily tribute of thanks and praise, and to declare our willingness to worship Him, ever, world without end. Having prayed for grace for all the members of the Church in general, we are next taught to supplicate more particularly for ourselves. We pray for protection from sin and danger, in words which might be added with great propriety to our daily prayers in private: *Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.* It is certain that we cannot continue in safety without the constant protection of God’s providential care, but are in constant danger. And the man that thinketh he standeth is in the greatest danger of falling. Therefore, surely trusting in his defense, we ought daily to implore him to defend us with his mighty power, that we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger. That he would be graciously pleased *to preserve us from temptation,* and to keep us constantly under the protection of his good providence. Although our frailty be such as to make us stand in continual need of Divine grace and succour, yet our sins are likewise so many and great, as may justly deprive us of both. We therefore earnestly beg for mercy and forgiveness, in the words of the blind men that sat by the way side: *O Lord have mercy upon us: have mercy upon us.* Here we double the petition, to

show our earnestness and importunity. So did the blind men, and when rebuked by the multitude, they cried the more to the Son of David. Seeing their faith, he stood still and called them, and had compassion on them, and touched their eyes, and they received their sight. St. James tells us that such fervent prayer availeth much. The Church therefore teaches us to make the same prayer, and to double our request, which, when offered up with earnestness, faith, and true affection, is *not* a vain repetition. The blind men's success is a proof that it is both effectual and acceptable, especially when it is considered that the one cry may be for mercy for sins past, and the repetition for grace to prevent them in future. This being of such vital importance, the Church teaches us to urge this request with vehemence, adding, *O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in thee.* We desire his mercy to lighten upon us, to relieve us from the burthen of our sins, and to cheer our hearts under the weight of our sorrows. We do not plead any worth or merit of our own, but place our whole trust and confidence in his mercy and goodness. The whole of this pious hymn is summed up, by saying with holy David, *O Lord, in thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded.* This is the most sublime hymn in the English language. What heart is so cold that cannot be warmed with the simple eloquence of words amounting almost to inspiration! Ever since the days of St. Ambrose it has been held in the highest esteem in the Christian Church. In its admirable composition it is at once a creed, containing all the mysteries of our faith, and a most solemn form of thanksgiving, praise, and adoration.

Benedicite— The second hymn or canticle, after the first lesson at morning prayer, is the *Benedicite omnia opera: O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord: praise him and magnify him forever.* It is taken out of the 148th psalm, and is to be found in the most ancient liturgies. It contains a command or summons, issued out to the whole creation, to do their homage, and pay their service to their great Creator. It calls first on the chief of created beings, the angels, *to bless the Lord.* This they are continually doing in hallelujahs. Both animate and inanimate creatures are next called upon to show forth their Maker's praise. But the last and highest summons is to *the children of men,* for whom all animate and inanimate beings were made, and to whom they are all subservient. Man was, above all creatures, made and designed for the setting forth his Creator's glory. He was therefore furnished with noble and high faculties for that purpose, and

endowed with reason and understanding to know and consider the works of his hands. Whereas the rest are led on merely by natural instinct, without any knowledge or consideration. While others only silently furnish matter and occasion, man is the herald to publish and proclaim His glory. He is ordained and qualified above all other creatures to show forth his Maker's glory, and is therefore obliged, far above all others, to promote it. For God has subjected all creatures under His feet. He has given him the dominion over all the works of his hands, and invested him with power to govern and direct all things in it, to their proper ends. The right of creation entitles God to the honour and service of all His creatures, "Hath not the potter power over the clay?" The *spirits and souls of the righteous* are called on to magnify and adore the great Maker and Father of spirits. To which are added *all holy and humble men of heart*. These are all called upon to exalt the Lord in their thoughts, and to praise and magnify Him forever. *Ananias, Azarias, and Misael*, whom Nehemiah mentions as zealous in the building of the second temple, are particularly called upon to promote the honour and service of God. Some, however, think that *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, are here meant. The design of this Divine hymn is to summon all creatures, but especially MAN, the masterpiece of all, to bless the Lord, by giving thanks, and making a right use of all His blessings. We are here taught, as everywhere else in the Liturgy, to give glory to God by concluding with the doxology. This hymn is seldom used, but is generally sung whenever the first chapter of Genesis is read, because it relates to the creation of all things.

Magnificat – After the first lesson at evening Prayer, there are two hymns taken out of the New Testament. One is called the *Magnificat*, or the Song of the Blessed Virgin. It was used constantly by the primitive Christians; and Darrell, in his *View of the Reformed Churches*, says that it is used in all the Protestant Churches on the Continent. In this beautiful hymn the blessed Virgin shows her faith, humility, and thanksgiving. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." In the spirit of prophecy she calls on all the spiritual seed of Abraham to join with her in praising God our Saviour. The Church accordingly has ever since magnified the Lord in her inspired words. All generations have also called her blessed, as she herself prophesied. Mary was of the tribe of Judah, and a descendant of King David, a princess by blood and progeny, but reduced to a low estate. But she "was most

excellently disposed to receive the greatest honour that ever was done to the daughters of men; her employment being holy and pious, her body chaste, and her soul adorned with all virtues, particularly with humility, which is, in the sight of God, of great price; for though she was the mother of an universal and everlasting blessing, which all former ages had desired, and all future ages should rejoice in; yet she resigns all this glory to him that gave it her, and declares whence she receive. it, that no other name but his might have the glory.” [Nelson’s Festivals – on the Annunciation.] – “Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.” As the judge of all the earth thought her worthy of so high an honour, let us give her just praise and honour, and call her name blessed: *Blessed art thou among women*. Yet she is still but our fellow servant. She is not to be worshipped. The Church of Rome give her Divine honours. They address more prayers to her than they do to “God her Saviour.” They solicit her mediation, and they recommend their souls to her custody at the hour of their death. Against this idolatry the New Testament seems to have peculiarly guarded us. When preaching in the Temple, being informed that his mother and his brethren, desired to speak with him; he answered, “Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold my mother, and my brethren. For *whosoever shall do the will of my Father, which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.*” [St. Matt. 12:46–50.] To the woman enraptured with his inimitable preaching, he said, “Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” [St. Luke 11:27–28.] The blessed virgin is nevertheless fitly and truly called the Mother of God. “Because,” says Bishop Jolly, “as he was God while he hung upon the cross, so he was God while he lay in the womb of the blessed Virgin, and was born of her.” [Sunday Services, p. 83.] The 98th psalm is also appointed to be used at the option of the minister. It is a song of joy, used by David for some of his victories. As we are God’s children by adoption and grace, the *spiritual Israel*, we have therefore equal cause to rejoice and give thanks for victory over our spiritual enemies. In these hymns, we express our thanks and praise to God for the light and instruction we have received from the Old Testament. The prophets and holy men of old saw Christ’s day afar off, through a glass of prophecy, darkly, and veiled under types and shadows. With what fervour of rejoicing should we sing a new song that see the accomplishment of the prophecies, as it were face to face, in the full

sunshine of the Gospel! This will prepare us for heaven, where the spirits of just men made perfect sing incessant hallelujahs. These hymns are succeeded, in the morning and evening service, by the second lessons, which are taken out of the New Testament. After which, in the morning, either the *Benedictus* or the *Jubilate Deo* are sung. They are so called from the first words of each.

The *Benedictus* is the song of Zacharias, who was the first New Testament prophet. For want of faith, and doubting the message of the angel, he was struck dumb, and continued so till the birth of John the Baptist. His speech was then restored, and he prophetically gave utterance to this sacred hymn of joy and thanksgiving for the mercy vouchsafed to him. This beautiful hymn instructs us to bless God, not only for working out our salvation, but likewise for revealing and applying it to us. This was first done by John the Baptist, who was an extraordinary and inspired messenger. He was the forerunner of the Messiah, sent to alarm the world with the news of his approach, – to declare the end of his coming, and to make ready the way before him, whose shoes latchet he declared himself unworthy to unloose. His office is still continued by the ministers and stewards of Christ’s mysteries. They prepare and make ready his way, and turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, by preaching peace and redemption for the remission of sins.

The *Jubilate*, or, *O be joyful in the Lord*, is sometimes sung instead of the former. It is a psalm of praise, and shows that both the Old and the New Testaments concur in stimulating us to the praise of God. It consists of a double exhortation, first, to joy and rejoicing, and, secondly, to thanksgiving and praise. From which we may learn that the service of God is not to be performed with pensive looks, dejected countenances, and mournful accents. We are to rejoice in God our Saviour with cheerfulness, agreeable to his sacred commands, “When thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face.” For we dishonour God by coming into his presence with morose countenances, as if he was a hard matter that imposed heavy and burthensome services on us. Whereas he has expressly said, that his “yoke is easy, and his burthen light.” And in this psalm we are especially entreated “to serve the Lord with *gladness*, and to come before his presence with a *song*.”

Nunc Dimittis. – After the second lesson in the evening service, the song of Simeon is said or sung. This song was occasioned by the

presentation of our Saviour in the Temple. It was revealed unto Simeon by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. Being a just and devout man, he waited to see the consolation of Israel. The Spirit led him into the Temple at the time of Christ's presentation. He then took him up in his arms and blessed him, and saying, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," willing now to die, having seen the GLORY of Israel. Although we cannot see Christ with our bodily eyes, yet he is daily presented to the eye of our faith, in the writings of his apostles, and by the ministry of his ambassadors. We should therefore follow good old Simeon's example, and place our affections more on the blessings of eternity than on the pursuits of time. This hymn has been taken into the liturgies of all the Churches in the world, Greek, Roman, and Reformed. Instead of this hymn, the 68th psalm is sometimes sung, unless it be the twelfth day of the month, when the latter is read in the psalms for that day. It is a prayer of David for the propagation of the Gospel throughout the world. It was used in the Temple service, from which it was transferred to all Christian liturgies. This hymn contains a pious prayer or desire that "God's way may be known upon earth, his saving health among all nations." We here desire that the Sun of Righteousness may arise and enlighten all the benighted corners of the earth. We pray that those who now sit in darkness and in the shadow of spiritual death, may have life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel, – that so the earth may be filled with the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea.

The Apostles' Creed follows the lessons from the Old and New Testaments and these hymns, both in the morning and evening services. This is never omitted except where the Creed of St. Athanasius is appointed to be said. [Bishop Sparrow's *Rationale*. Dr. Hole's Lectures on the Liturgy. Dr. Comber's Companion to the Temple. Wheatly on the Common Prayer. Thorndyke on Religious Assemblies. Barrow's Works.]

Chapter 8.

The Apostles' Creed – Rubric before it – Traditions respecting the Creed – Opinions for and against its Apostolical Origin – Rule of Faith – Form of Sound Words – Not in the Westminster Confession – Necessity for repeating the Creed – A Symbol of Unity – Creed received on the Evidence, but not on the Authority of the Church – Tridentine Creed – First Article of the Creed – Belief of Christ – Pontius Pilate – Descent into Hell – Resurrection – Ascension – Judgment – Bowing at the Name of

Jesus – The Holy Spirit – Catholic Church – Communion of Saints – Forgiveness of Sins – Resurrection of the Dead – The Life Everlasting – Athanasian Creed – Opinions respecting its Author – Its Object – Objections to it – Arguments for it – Explanatory of Scripture – Doctrines – Union of the Divine Offices – Creed opposed to ancient Heresies – Morbid Sensibility censured.

Rubric – The Creed follows next in order. The Rubric directs: *Then shall be said or sung the Apostles' Creed by the minister and the people, standing: except only on such days as the Creed of St. Athanasius is appointed to be read.* Learned men of the Church of England do not generally maintain that the apostles actually composed this creed. But, at all events, the doctrines which the apostles taught are embodied in it. Many great names can be produced, however, to assert that the apostles did actually compose it in a full meeting. Among these is the justly-esteemed name of Dr Comber. He asserts, in his Companion to the Temple, that abundant proof can be produced that the apostles were its authors. “We have no better medium,” says he, “to prove the books were written by those authors whose names they bear, than the unanimous testimony of antiquity; and by the same medium we can prove that the apostles were the authors of the Creed.” Ruffinus, according to Mr. Bingham, says there was an ancient tradition which affirmed that before departing from Jerusalem, the apostles settled a rule for their future preaching, lest, after their separation, they might teach different doctrines. Being all assembled and filled with the Holy Ghost, they composed this short rule of faith to be given to all believers. St. Austin goes a little farther, and particularizes the very article contributed by each apostle. “*Peter* said, I believe in God the Father Almighty. *John*, Maker of heaven and earth. *James*, And in Jesus Christ his only son, our Lord. *Andrew* added, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. *Philip* said, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. *Thomas*, He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead. *Bartholomew*, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. *Matthew*, From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. *James the son of Alphaeus* added, I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church. *Simon Zelotes*, The communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins. *Jude*, The resurrection of the body. *Matthias*, Life everlasting.” One of the reasons asserted for thinking that the apostles were not its authors is that several of

the articles have been added at later periods, as Bishop Pearson admits. Besides, the total silence in the Acts of the Apostles regarding any such composition. Nevertheless, many are disposed to be of Dr. Comber's opinion. This creed has ever been of the greatest esteem and authority in the Church, from the very earliest antiquity. The cavils of heretics rendered it necessary to explain some articles more minutely, and occasioned the composition of new creeds. Yet the Nicene Creed was never intended to weaken the authority of the apostles.

This ancient confession of our faith is placed after the reading of the Holy Scriptures, out of which it sprang, and immediately before the prayers which are grounded on the faith which we have here avouched. By repeating our Creed at this part of the service, we set our seals to the truth of God's word and revelations. This public profession of our faith is the foundation of the prayers that follow. We believe in an invisible God, who is an omnipotent Creator; – in a most merciful Redeemer; – and in a most gracious Comforter. We pray to the Father in the name of the Son, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, and in fellowship with the saints, for the forgiveness of sins and for a joyful resurrection. The Holy Scripture is a perfect revelation of all Divine truth, and is the only *rule of faith* in the Protestant Episcopal Church. “It containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.” [39 Articles, art. 6.] But the truths of Scripture are dispersed throughout the whole Bible, therefore a brief summary of them became necessary. “A form of sound words, in other words, a creed, seems to have existed in St. Paul's time. He exhorted Timothy to hold this form fast which he had heard of, or been taught by St. Paul. He repeatedly exhorts him to hold this form committed to him, concerning which others, it seems, had erred. He is not only exhorted to keep this form of sound words himself, but to commit it to other faithful men, who should teach others, and they others to the end of time. [2 Timothy 1:13–14, 2:2.] He lays the same charge on Titus also. [Titus 1:9.] They faithfully kept this form of sound words, and committed it to others, who have handed it down to us in faithful succession. “It is a remarkable fact,” says Bishop Walker, “and a very singular providence, that the Apostles' or Roman Creed, is the *only faith*, or formula of faith, *professed at baptism* in the Church of Rome.” That church is justly charged with many and gross

errors, both of faith said doctrine; but she has been the vehicle for conveying this form of sound words to us. St. Paul's words imply that this creed existed, not only from what he says to Timothy and Titus, cited above, but also to the churches of Philippi and Galatia. He exhorts the former to "*walk by the same rule.*" [Phil. 3:16.] To the latter he says, As many as *walk according to this rule*, peace be on them, said mercy, and upon the Israel of God." [Gal. 6:11.] The Presbyterians have rejected this form of sound words. It was rejected by the compliers of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and is not in it. It has been since added to the end of the Shorter Catechism, with an apology, by authority of the General Assembly. But the blessing pronounced by St. Paul is attached to those who reverently use it, and walk accordingly. It is not improbable that St. Paul means the Creed when he thanks God that the Romans "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered" to them. [Rom. 6:17.] The good profession which Timothy made before many witnesses was his public assent to the articles of the Creed at his baptism. [1 Tim. 6:12.] Jude also alludes to the same formulary, when he exhorts us to contend earnestly "for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." [St. Jude, verse 3.]

The necessity for its frequent repetition will appear from these reasons, that it may be fixed and rooted in memories as our countersign, and the sum of those principles by which we are bound to serve God acceptably. It is a test by which we may discern and avoid all false doctrine, heresy, and schism. In it the Church daily reminds us of our engagements, lest, if left to our private attention, we might forget them. By repeating the Creed, we daily renew our oath of allegiance. By keeping this symbol, we acknowledge that Almighty General whose soldiers and servants we became at baptism. When we were regenerated in baptism, and made the sons of God by adoption and grace, we took this symbol by our sureties as the badge and cognizance of our relation to God and dependence on him. Whenever, therefore, we are called upon to fight for him, or publicly to approach his footstool, we must exhibit this badge, and repeat the articles of our allegiance. We thus declare that as for us and our house, we will serve the Lord, and show that we hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. He has promised that whosoever shall confess Him before men, that He will confess him before his Father in heaven. We repeat the Creed standing, to signify our resolution to adhere, and stand up boldly in its defense. It is not said by the priest alone, but by both priest and people.

Every man must make his own confession *I believe*. Every man will be saved by his own faith alone, and not by another's. Every man must believe the Lord Jesus in his heart, as well as confess him with his mouth. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." [Rom. 10:9–10.] By the daily repetition of the Creed, we display unity among ourselves, and agreement and consent with the Church Catholic. That as we have *one* Lord, we have also but *one* faith. That as we are children of the same Father, servants of the same household, and soldiers under the same invincible Prince, we "may with one mind and one mouth glorify God." To have our prayers accepted, we must *agree* together beforehand, as well as meet together in person. The Church triumphant, and the Church militant, are but one family. In repeating this Creed, therefore, we own the same faith, we "agree together" with all those who have finished their course in faith, and now rest from their labours, and with all holy Christians throughout the world.

We receive the Creed on the *evidence* of the Church, but not on her authority. Who can determine by authority that there is a God? Were any one to judge by authority whether there be a God or not, he would be superior to God, and make His being depend on private judgment, which is blasphemy. The articles of faith are of too transcendent a nature to be subjected to human authority. And as no human authority can determine the first article of the Creed, so all the rest are equally above its reach. We could not know God but by revelation. We could not believe in Christ without a previous belief in God; nor believe in a Christian Church without first believing in Christ. Therefore the Church teaches us to believe in God, and in his Son Jesus Christ, upon the *evidence* of that revelation which she received from God himself, and which has been handed down "by all the holy prophets since the world began." Our Saviour told the apostles that they were *witnesses* both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. The apostles accordingly only made themselves witnesses of what Christ did and taught. This is evidence and not authority. We receive the belief of a God, therefore, on the *evidence* of the Church built by the apostles, but not on her *authority*. The Church of Rome claims authority in matters of faith. She added, at the Council of Trent, twelve new articles, to which she demands the belief of her people,

on her own infallible authority. On her own authority alone, also, she has added to the canon of Scripture. She has determined that the Apocrypha is canonical and inspired Scripture. By her own authority she has added five sacraments as necessary to salvation, two of which cannot be partaken of by every man. Their sacrament of holy orders excludes all the laity; and from that of marriage the clergy are rigorously debarred. No other church, ancient or modern, has ever presumed to exercise this species of authority. This entirely undermines it, renders the faith precarious, and invalidates the Church's testimony. St. Paul told the Galatian Church, "Though we or as angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." The authority of the Church is of a different nature altogether. She is called the pillar and ground of the truth, because the sacred oracles of the Scriptures were deposited with her, to be preserved, preached, and propagated. The Gospel is the revelation which Christ gave to his Church. He is its author, and we receive it upon his authority and on the evidence of the Church. He appointed the Church to keep this Gospel. The Church is therefore to teach and preach the truth, and to watch against and confute errors and heresies, by that authority with which Christ has invested her. The apostle therefore directs all bishops to "speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority, and to let no man despise than." [Titus 2:15.] By faith in Christ we stand. It is blasphemy to say that the Church is the *object* of that faith. It is not the Church but Christ that is the object of that faith by which we stand.

The Creed. – In this universal Creed we profess our faith in the three persons of the Holy Trinity, – the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance." Our belief of God is an assent on the testimony of the Church which has taught it. Human faith rests on the evidence of men, but a Divine faith on the testimony of God himself. We declare our belief that there is one supreme, spiritual, and independent Being, infinitely perfect in wisdom, power, justice, and holiness. We believe that He is the creator, preserver, and governor of all things, both in heaven and earth. The works of creation and providence, – the universal consent of all mankind, – the miracles and wonders wrought by Him, above the powers of nature or art, – the prophecies of future events, and their fulfilment, – all demonstrate a God. We believe God to be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; – also of all men by creation, adoption, and regeneration. We believe that he is Almighty. That his power and might

are boundless and uncontrollable. That with Him nothing is impossible. That He has dominion, and power, and authority, over all things, and doeth whatsoever he pleaseth with the children of men; and that all power and authority proceeds from Him. We believe that He made the heavens and the earth, the whole world, and all that therein is. This the Church teaches us to believe of the first person in the Holy Trinity, to whom creation is peculiarly ascribed. The words *I believe* are only inserted at the commencement, nevertheless they are to be understood before each article.

Our faith in the second person, to whom redemption is especially attributed, is contained in the five following articles: – We believe the man Jesus to be our Saviour. “Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.” We believe him to be the Christ, the *anointed* of God. The words *Messiah* in Hebrew, and *Christ* in Greek, both signify *anointed*. He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. He was anointed a king to rule and govern his Church; a priest to offer sacrifice for it; and a prophet to teach and instruct it. “The Spirit of the Lord,” said he himself, “is upon me, and hath anointed me to preach the gospel.” This was after his baptism in Jordan. The heavens were opened, the Father himself being the anointer, the spiritual oil descended in the likeness of a dove, sat on his head, and anointed him. He was called Christ, as being thus anointed by the Father. Therefore we may confidently take him for our Saviour, and cast ourselves entirely upon his merits and satisfaction. We believe him to be *the only Son of God*. “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.” Here God is, at the same time, both agent and patient. He reconciles the world in the person of the Son, to himself in the person of the Father. We believe Him to be *our Lord*. That He has full power and dominion over us as God, not only by right of creation, but also by right of redemption. He is our Mediator and Redeemer, having bought us with a price. “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ.” In the next article, we declare our belief of the miraculous conception and birth of the blessed Redeemer. We believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, agreeable to the prophecy of Isaiah. In the ancient Creed of Tertullian, this article is thus expressed: “This Word was called his Son, who at sundry times appeared to the patriarchs, and always spake by the prophets, and at last descended into the Virgin Mary by the power and Spirit of God the Father, and was made flesh in her womb, and born of her s man, Jesus Christ.” [Prescriptions against

Heretics, cited by Bingham.] We believe that he *suffered under Pontius Pilate*, the Roman governor of Judea. These words have a double sense: first, as marking the time of our Saviour's passion; secondly, the judge by whom he was unjustly condemned to suffer. He had no sins of his own to expiate, for he was holy, shameless, undefiled. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. He could never have made satisfaction for our sins if he had had any of his own. When he undertook to be our surety and Saviour, he assumed the whole burthen of our sins. We believe that he was *crucified, dead and buried, and that he descended into hell*. He was nailed to the cross by the hands and feet, which being nervous and sensible parts, inflicted most acute and exquisite pain. He hung in this manner for six hours, and suffered the most acute and lingering pain. Stretched, racked, and pierced with large nails in the most acute parts. "The iron entered into his soul." His torments were not transient and stupefying, so as to deprive him of the use of his senses. For three long hours he had strength and presence of mind to discourse with these about him. All the while his agonizing pain was aggravated by the scorching sun and the beating weather. "He died for our sins, according to the Scripture." He underwent a proper death by the separation of his soul and body. His body was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. His death was typified and foreshadowed by many prophecies, from righteous Abel downwards throughout the whole of the Old Testament. Abel's blood cried for vengeance; but Christ's spake better things than that of Abel. It entreats and intercedes for mercy and pardon. The high priest's solemn entrance annually with blood into the Holy of Holies, was typical of our Great High Priest's atonement. He passed through the veil of mortality and entered once for all into the true Holy of Holies, the presence of God. His soul went into Hades, the prison where the souls of the just wait for the final judgment; into Paradise, where he assured the penitent thief that he should accompany him. [St. Luke 23:43.] He himself also called this prison "Abraham's bosom," where the souls of the faithful departed wait in joy and felicity. In this place St. Peter tells us that he preached to the imprisoned spirits [1 Peter 3:19-20.]; and also, quoting the Psalmist, that his soul was not left in this prison, neither did his body see corruption. [Acts 2:27.] We profess also to believe in our hearts, and we confess with our mouths, that *the third day He rose again from the dead*. Abraham's righteousness is imputed to us, his spiritual seed, if "we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for

our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” [Rom. 4:24–25.] – “And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.” [1 Cor. 15:4.] An old author has said, “His death and burial signified his being arrested and held a while a prisoner for our debts; but his resurrection showed his release, that our debt was paid, and full satisfaction made to Divine justice.” When he had paid the full price for the sins of the whole world, death could no longer hold him. “Death had no more dominion over him.” He arose from the dead by his infinite power, giving us assurance that God’s justice was satisfied, and that our enemies were conquered. He “became the first fruits of them that slept,” and thus confirmed the truth of our resurrection. “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not?” [1 Cor. 15:29, 32.] He conversed forty days with his apostles. He satisfied them of the certainty of his resurrection “by many infallible truths, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining unto God.” [Acts 1:3.] Having finished the work of our redemption, settled and established his Church in the world, we believe that *he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty*. The everlasting doors and gates lifted up their heads, and received the KING OF GLORY. God is gone up with a merry noise; he ascended up on high, and led captivity captive. There he reassumed the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. There, in his own person, he continually offers up the sacrifice of himself once made, in the presence of God the Father. There he interposes between the wrath of God and our sins. He intercedes for us and pleads his own merits. And there he prepares mansions for all his faithful followers. As we believe that he “ascended into the heavens, so we pray that we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell.” [Collect for Ascension Day.] The heavens must receive Him till His second coming in glory *to judge both the quick and the dead*. The duration of this world is appointed, though unknown to angels and men. It is finished to us at least, when we shall rest from our labours said be gathered to our fathers. May we; at that dread hour, have our loins girt and lamps trimmed! O, may that “worthy judge eternal suffer us not at our last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from him!” May we then be enabled to say with faith and assurance, “Lord Jesus receive our spirits!” At the last day Christ will return from heaven to judge all men, both quick

and dead. “The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.” [2 Peter 3:10.] At which time he will come with power and great glory. He will then summon all men, the quick which shall then be found alive, and the dead, which have departed this life since the creation of the world. Every one shall then receive judgment according to the works done in the body, whether good or evil. We earnestly pray to be delivered “in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment.” We have a merciful high priest, who, though He shall be our judge, yet He is also our Saviour. Let us beseech Him, therefore, that He will forgive us and all our “enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and turn our hearts” in this world – that he will fit and prepare us for that day by His grace, and that He will acquit us in it by his infinite mercy – that He will set us on his right hand, and give us the gracious benediction of his Father, commanding us to take possession of his glorious kingdom.” At the second article, where we profess our belief in Jesus Christ, the Church of England has directed that the whole congregation shall make an obeisance. “That when in time of Divine service the Lord JESUS shall be mentioned, due and lowly reverence shall be done by all persons present, as it has been accustomed; testifying by their outward ceremonies and gestures their inward humility, Christian resolution, and due acknowledgment, that the Lord Jesus Christ, the true eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour of the world, in whom alone all the mercies, graces, and promises of God to mankind, for this life, and the life to come, are fully and wholly comprised.” St. Paul says, “that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.” Jesus is our Saviour’s personal name. It was given him by the angel at the annunciation. Christ denotes his office, as he was the anointed of God. The heretics, in the times of the apostles, denied that the man Jesus was the Christ. They asserted that Christ or the Holy Spirit dwelt in Jesus as in other holy men. That He descended on him at his baptism, but left him on the cross, which made him cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” St. John opposed this heresy in his epistles. It is not at the name of Christ that we bow, but at that of Jesus. By this action we acknowledge the *man* Jesus to be the Christ, the Saviour of the world. We hereby bear our testimony against the heresy of Cerinthus, and the modern Socinians. To bow at the great name of God would not distinguish us from Jews or Mohammedans, or even heathens, for they all acknowledge a God. Nor at the name of Christ, for the Jews *expect* the

Messiah to come. They deny the *man* Jesus to be the Messiah. The Quakers also deny that Jesus is the Christ. They have adopted the heresy of Cerinthus, and say that the *light* dwelt in Jesus; they also assert that Christ and Jesus are two distinct persons. Therefore, to bow at the name of Jesus, is to acknowledge the man Jesus to be the Christ, the Saviour of the world, which is a complete demonstration that we hold the Christian faith. It is besides a public attestation of our faith in the crucified Jesus, and is no ways superstitious. It is an obedient observance of St. Paul's words, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." [Phil. 2:10.] And those who willfully refrain from it, in effect deny our Saviour's Divinity.

In the two former parts we have confessed our faith in God the Father, and God the Son. In the following articles we profess our belief in *God the Holy Ghost*, together with the blessings and benefits we receive by him. It is his peculiar office to sanctify and work holiness in the hearts and lives of the people of God. This he does when we are dedicated to him in baptism, "by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." In baptism we are "born again of water and the Holy Spirit." He implants his grace in our hearts. He imparts those spiritual aids and assistances that help to illuminate our minds, rectify our wills, renew our affections, and purify our hearts. He was given and sent to be a comforter in all states and conditions of men. He strengthens and supports us under all those difficulties and distresses which it may not please God wholly to remove from us. He is our advocate and intercessor. He teaches us to pray, by inspiring us with holy and devout affections. He enables us to cry, Abba, Father. He pleads our cause, and makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." He was given to be a witness, not only to testify of Christ, that he is the Son of God; but to bear witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God. Our mortal bodies are quickened by the Holy Spirit, who dwelleth in us. And as many as are led by him are the sons of God. [Rom. 8:14.] We are "born of the Spirit." [St. John 3:6.] – "He dwelleth in us." [St. John 14:17.] Our bodies are his temples. [1 Cor. 6:19.] All Scripture was given by inspiration of God, for holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. [2 Peter 1:21. 2 Tim. 3:16.] He sendeth forth labourers into his harvest. [St. Matt. 9:36.] He separates the clergy for the work whereunto they are called [Acts 13:2.]; for no man taketh the honour of his service upon himself, but he that is called of God. [Heb. 5:4.]

After we have professed our belief in the Holy Trinity, the Church teaches us to acknowledge *the holy Catholic Church*. The Church is the company or society of the faithful throughout the world. It signifies *the called ones* – those who are called by the Gospel from the rest of the world to faith and repentance. All such called *ones* are incorporated by baptism into a holy society. This Divine covenant unites them to God, and to each other, making them a peculiar people unto God. A body composed of *many* parts, yet but *one* body. A family both a in heaven and earth, yet but one family. The unity of a body supposes the union of all its parts and members; which unity is an union of that people unto God, making them the Church (*the called ones*) of God. God only can establish a covenant for founding His Church. Accordingly He entered into covenant with Abraham. He established His Church in him and his posterity, and made them His *called ones*, a peculiar people to Himself, under the Old Testament. God made a new covenant with *all* mankind, which He ratified through the blood of Jesus Christ. He is therefore said to be “a mediator of a *better* covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if the *first* covenant had been faultless, there should no place have been sought for the second.” [Heb. 7:6–7.] This new covenant is called the Christian Church. This society is also called a body, of which Christ is the head, and those admitted into it by baptism are its members. The members of this society form a household, a kingdom, a fold, a family. But its most appropriate denomination is that of – *a Church*. Christ himself gave it this title when he first particularly alluded to it: “Upon this rock I will build my Church.” St. Paul tells the Ephesians, *there is one body*, meaning the Church, *and one Spirit* to animate and enliven it; “*One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*” [Eph. 4:4–6.] Therefore the apostle recommends them “to keep the *unity* of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” This *one* Church we believe to be holy, because our baptismal calling and profession is holy. Because its duties and offices are holy. Because its members are obliged to observe a holy life; for “without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” Because we are called upon to be holy in all manner of conversation and holiness, as he that hath called us is holy. And because the nature, end, and design of the Church is to produce holiness in all her members. But besides believing in the Church itself, we are taught to consider it as *catholic*. Catholic means universal, entire, the whole, that which includes all particulars. It also means *true*. The Church of

the Jews was not catholic; it was particular, and confined to one nation. All particular or national Churches, such as those of England, France, Spain, Asia,, Russia, Rome, etc., are parts or members only of the one great family, the Church universal. Not any one national or particular church can call itself *the* Catholic Church. But every one of these can with justice call itself a Catholic Church; that is, one of the members of *the* Catholic Church. *The Church* is not now confined to any one place or people, as heretofore, when in Jewry God only was known. The middle wall of partition is broken down. There is therefore no longer any respect of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him. Jew and Gentile throughout the whole earth, are become one mystical body in Christ. [Acts 10:34–35. Ephes. 2:14, 16.] In short, the congregation of all the faithful, in all kindreds, and tongues, and people, and nations throughout the whole earth, that profess faith in, and obedience to, Christ and His Gospel, and who have been baptized, *are the one body* – the Church Catholic. It is called *apostolic*, because it was planted by the apostles in subordination to our blessed Saviour. The word apostolic was added by the council of Nice, to distinguish the true Christian Church from the Arian heretics. Every church that professes the true faith, and preserves die apostolic doctrines and government, accomplished with fervent charity, is a part or member of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. I have met with many well-meaning Presbyterians who objected to the term “Catholic Church” here. They imagine it to be applicable to the Church of Rome. This is a great mistake. This article gives no countenance whatever to the vain and uncharitable pretensions of that apostate church. She has no right to the title of Catholic, because she is but a *particular* church. She neither is nor ever was the Catholic or entire church. So far is she from admitting all nations to the benefits of Catholicity, that she allows none to be even Christians who are without her own pale. The Romish Bishop Hay says, “All the marks and characters of the true Church of Christ are to be found in the Roman Catholic Church, and in her *alone*: therefore, we justly conclude, that *she alone* is the *true* Church of Christ, the house of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, *out of whose communion there is no possibility of salvation.*” [The Sincere Christian Instructed, vol. i. p. 182.] Were that indeed true, how few, alas! would be saved. Although she speaks great swelling words of vanity, yet in reality she is but a small church. All the northern parts of Africa were once Christian; but these famous churches never acknowledged

the supremacy of the Roman pontiff. The Greek Church, which comprehends the greater part of Asia and all Russia, never submitted to Roman domination. It has not been even in communion with the Roman Church for more than twelve centuries. The Syrian Church, and that of St. Thomas in the East Indies, never so much as heard of the Pope till the Portuguese invaded their country. The greater part of Europe has broken her chains, and refuses to communicate with her. So that in fact she has only Italy, Spain, and Portugal entire. All other countries which once acknowledged her supremacy are divided and partially Protestant. Were no one to be saved out of this small section of the Christian Church, how few, alas! would be saved. But, thanks be to God, He has confined salvation to no particular church. “But in *every nation* he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.”

“The church,” says Bishop Pearson, “has been called Catholic, in reference to the *universal* obedience which it prescribes. It has been yet farther called or reputed Catholic, by reason of all graces given in it, whereby all diseases of the soul are healed, and spiritual virtues are disseminated, all the words, and works, and thoughts of men are regulated, till we become perfect men in Christ Jesus. Wherefore I conclude that this Catholicism of the Church consists generally in *universality*, as embracing all sorts of persons, as to be disseminated through all nations, as comprehending all ages, as containing all necessary and saving truths, as obliging all conditions of men to all kind of obedience, as curing all diseases, and planting all graces in the souls of men. The necessity of believing the holy Catholic Church appears first in this, that Christ has appointed it as the only way unto eternal life. We read at the first, that ‘the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved;’ [Acts 2:47.] and what was then daily done, has been done since continually. Christ never appointed two ways to heaven, nor did he build a church to save some, and make another institution for other men’s salvation. ‘There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,’ [Acts 4:12.] and that name is no otherwise given under heaven than in the Church. As none were saved from the deluge but such as were within the ark of Noah, framed for their reception by the command of God; as none of the firstborn of Egypt lived, but such as were within those habitations whose door-posts were sprinkled with blood by the appointment of God for their preservation; as none of the inhabitants of Jericho could escape the fire or

sword, but such as were within the house of Rahab, for whose protection a covenant was made; so none shall ever escape the eternal wrath of God, which belong not to the Church of God. Secondly, It is necessary to believe the Church of Christ, which is but *one*, that being in it we may take care never to cast ourselves, or be ejected out of it. There is a power within the Church to test out those which belong to it; for if any ‘neglect to hear the Church,’ saith our Saviour, ‘let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.’ By great and scandalous offences, by incorrigible misdemeanours, we may incur the censure of the Church of God; and while we are shut out by them, we stand excluded out of heaven. For our Saviour said to his apostles upon whom he built his church, ‘Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.’ Again, a man may not only passively and involuntarily be rejected, but also may, by an act of his own, cast out or eject himself, not only by plain and complete apostasy, but by a defection from the unity of truth, falling into some damnable heresy, or by an active separation, deserting all which are in the Catholic Church, and falling into an irrecoverable sin. There is a necessity of believing the Catholic Church, because except a man be of that, he can be of none. For being the Church which is truly Catholic, containeth within it all that are truly churches; whosoever is not of the Catholic Church, cannot be of the true Church. That Church alone, which first began at Jerusalem on earth, will bring us to the Jerusalem in heaven; and them began there, which always embraceth ‘the faith once delivered to the saints’; *whatsoever church pretendeth to a new beginning, pretendeth at same time to a new churchdom, and whatsoever is so new is none.*”

We profess our belief in *the communion of saints*. The word *saints* means all that have been admitted into the Church catholic by baptism. By the charity of the Church they are called saints, because their profession being holy, their lives ought to be holy also. By the communion of saints is understood their joining together in all the common offices of our holy religion. “Continuing steadfast in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, like the first Christians.” They continued steadfast in *communion with the apostles*. This consisted in, “1. Conformity to the same doctrine – the apostles’ doctrine; 2. Submission to the Church government prescribed by the authority of the same apostles, who acted under the guidance a the Holy Ghost; 3. The regular

administration of the same sacraments; 4. The use of the same forms of prayer.” In the communion of that portion of the Church of which we are members, the example of these primitive Christians has been followed. “In the authorized confessional of our Church,” says a late prelate, “contained in the thirty-nine articles, the apostolic doctrine is exhibited. It is the doctrine extracted with the most pious diligence, by learned and godly men, from the Holy Scriptures, ‘built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.’ Without appeal to any human authority, or calling himself by the name of any of the leaders among the sects of men, our Church hath been described to be Scriptural. – Our Church continues likewise in ‘the fellowship of the apostles.’ Without uncharitable censure of those who differ from us in their notions of church government and of the qualifications necessary to the right administration of the holy sacraments, we faithfully and conscientiously abide by that form of ecclesiastical polity, which we verily believe to have been established by the first inspired rulers of the Christian Church. The communion of saints is to keep that unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,” which St. Paul urged on the Ephesians. It unites all the members of Christ’s Church throughout the world into one body, and animates them with one spirit. Whereas schism and separation in these holy offices divides the unity of Christ’s Church. It makes many bodies actuated by different spirits, and following “the works of the flesh”. Those continuing steadfastly in a communion of saints ought to maintain brotherly love and affection for all men, but especially towards those who have been born again by the same spiritual birth, live the same spiritual life, and are endued with the gracious influences of the same Holy Spirit. Or, as the apostle recommends, to “do good unto all men, but especially unto those of the household of faith.”

We are taught also to believe in *the forgiveness of sins*. This is an infinite consolation to us, sinful men. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But our sins are forgiven through the merits and satisfaction of Christ. His blood was shed for the remission of sins. The promise of pardon and forgiveness is made to all true penitents, without any limitation of time. Whoever believes in Christ, and repents of his sins, shall be saved. While we live in this world, the door of grace and mercy is never shut against true penitents. Therefore it is our duty to continue steadfastly in the communion of saints, to which this privilege is annexed; to repent of, and forsake all our sins and transgressions, and in an honest and good heart to

serve God without fear, neither doubting the truth of his promises, nor the sufficiency of Christ's merits.

The 11th article is the profession of our belief in *the resurrection of the dead*. We firmly believe that the soul survives the death of the body. Our whole man shall be raised at the sound of the last trumpet, and our souls and bodies shall be reunited. Of this there can be no doubt. Christ called himself the Resurrection and the Life, and he declared that all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth; – that the sea shall give up her dead; – that death and hell shall give up the dead that are in them. “Behold he cometh with clouds, and *every eye* shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” [Rev. 1:7.] – “If we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ *shall rise first*. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” [1 Thess. 4:14-17.] The dead in Christ are those who have died in his faith and fear. If we believe not in the resurrection of the body, St. Paul assures us that our faith and his preaching are both in vain. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. But we read that our vile bodies shall be changed, that they may be like his glorious body. Our defects, infirmities, and imperfections, shall be removed, and our bodies endowed with all those qualities and perfections that belong to heavenly and glorious bodies.

In the last article, we profess our belief in *the life everlasting*. *Amen*. We believe that there shall be a future state of happiness or misery, agreeable to our Saviour's words, – “And these (the wicked) shall go away into *everlasting* punishment; but the righteous into life *eternal*.” [St. Matt. 25:46.] St. John informs us repeatedly, in the Revelations, that Christ liveth *forever and ever*. St. Paul assures us that the righteous “shall ever be with the Lord.” [1 Thess. 4:17.] Our Saviour went to prepare a place for the righteous, that where he is, they may be also. [St. John 14:3, 17:24.] As he liveth *forever and ever*, therefore, those who are to be with him must also live forever and ever. For this corruptible body shall put on incorruption, and this mortal, immortality. [1 Cor. 11:53.] The state of the wicked is represented by going into everlasting punishment. “Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” [Matt.

25:41.] This punishment is double. We are, first, deprived of all the joys and happiness of heaven, and, secondly, conscious that our misery and torment shall never cease. That very being, also, who tempted us to sin against God in this world, and for whose service we incurred this punishment, will be our never-ceasing tormentor. The whole of these articles we seal with Amen, which in this place is an affirmation of what has preceded it.

Athanasian Creed. – Although this creed does not follow in the order of the Liturgy, yet I place it here because it is sometimes read instead of the Apostles' Creed. It is appointed to be read on Christmas Day, the Epiphany, St. Matthias, Easter Day, Ascension Day, Whitsunday, St. John Baptist, St. James, St. Bartholomew, St. Matthew, St. Simon and St. Jude, St. Andrew, and upon Trinity Sunday. The Rubric calls it a “Confession of our Christian faith.” It is likewise to be said “by the minister and people standing.”

It has been doubted whether Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, was the author of this creed. Voscius, Ussher, Quesnel, Pearson, Cave, Schelstrate, Pagi, Dupin, and Fleury, are of opinion that Vigilius, bishop of Thapsa in Africa, was its author. He lived subsequent to Athanasius. Dr. Waterland, however, asserts that it was composed by Hilary, bishop of Arles, in France, about the year 450. It has been received as a treasure of inestimable value, by both the Greek and Latin Churches, for upwards of a thousand years. The Roman Church adopted it about the year 930, and it was inserted into our Liturgy at the Reformation. Its object is to preserve and explain our faith in the Holy Trinity. It is opposed to the heresy of Arius and the modern Socinians, who deny the divinity of Christ our Redeemer. It is a defense against the heresy of Sabellius, who confounded the three Persons; and of Macedonius, who denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit. It is designed as a preservative against such heretics as subvert the faith by disputing other articles of the Christian faith. Athanasius was the great champion of the orthodox faith against the Arians. He was persecuted by them, and was repeatedly driven from his see. But whether he composed it or not, its doctrines are all to be found in his writings; and what is of much greater importance, they are the doctrines of Scripture.

It has been objected to this creed that it pronounces a condemnation on those who do not hold these doctrines. Many are therefore indisposed to repeat it, lest they should condemn themselves. It may be replied that this arises from morbid sensibility. On the same plea we ought to lay aside the Scriptures, for they pronounce the strongest condemnation on infidelity.

The apostle assures us, that “whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father.” – “Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? he is *antichrist* that denieth the Father and the Son.” [1 John 2:22–24.] If we hold the Catholic faith, we shall continue in the Son and in the Father. “Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his *Spirit*. And we have seen and do testify that the *Father* sent the *Son* to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever will confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.” [1 John 4:14–16.] – “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.” – “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST: and these three are ONE.” – “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God, which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son”. [1 John 5:1, 7–10.] St. Peter also assures us, that to deny the divinity of Christ is a *damnable heresy*. [2 Peter 2:1.] But above all, Christ himself commanded his apostles to baptize in the name of the Holy Trinity, and at the same time denounced damnation on unbelievers. “He that believeth,” says he, and is baptized, *shall, be saved*; but he that believeth *not shall be damned*.” [St. Mark 16:16.] The Creed says nothing more. “Whosoever will be saved: (says the Creed) before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith.” No Christian man will dispute that position. It then adds, “which faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled; without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.” This is only a softer manner of repeating the above words of our Saviour. In the third and fourth verses, it explains what the Catholic faith is. That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance.” All that follows, to the twenty seventh verse, is explanatory of this doctrine. To this, therefore, our assent is no farther required than to a sermon which explains any text of Scripture. The text itself is absolutely to be believed; but we are not obliged to believe every position in the sermon. A sermon is at best but man’s wisdom, and therefore fallible; and we may search and see whether what is asserted in it be true or not. But the word of God is infallible, and therefore to be most surely believed. The Holy Scriptures reveal to us our creation, redemption, sanctification, and glorification, by the power of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Every name, act, and attribute of the Godhead are ascribed in common to

each Person of the Trinity. Those prayers which we offer to Christ and the Holy Spirit are offered to God in the unity of the Father. There is a natural or essential unity in the Persons of the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*. The poverty of our language obliges us to call them Persons. Each Person is clothed with an official character in the merciful scheme of our redemption, in which they were pleased to assign to themselves different parts. These Persons have the same names, the same attributes, and the same council or will. They all concur in a manner beyond our comprehension in the same Divine acts. These three Persons are but one God. In this belief there is neither absurdity nor contradiction. We do not say that they are three and one in the same respect, or that they are three persons and yet but one person. They are three distinct agents, yet but one and the same Divine agency. Whatever is ascribed in Scripture to God in one Person, is ascribed also to God in three Persons. We read that “one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.” [Isa. 6:3.]— “That the seraphim,” says Mr. Jones, “did really celebrate all the three Persons of the Godhead on this occasion, is no conjecture; but a point capable of the clearest demonstration. The prophet tells us that he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne; and that his eyes had seen the King, the Lord of Hosts. Now if there be any phrase in the Bible to distinguish the true God, it is this of the Lord of Hosts. I never saw it disputed by any Arian writer. The author of an Essay on Spirit, confesses it: and Dr. Clarke supposes the name, *Lord of Sabaoth*, proper to the Father only. So that in this Lord of Hosts, sitting upon his throne, there was the presence of *God the Father*. That there was also the presence of God the Son, appears from St. John 12:41. *These things said Esaias when he saw his (Christ’s) glory, and spake of him*. And that there was the presence of God the Holy Ghost is determined by Acts 28:25. *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, etc.*; then follow the words which the prophet affirms to have been spoken by the Lord of Hosts.”

This creed explains the orthodox doctrines delivered in Scripture, taught by the apostles and early fathers, and decreed in councils. In the explanatory part it ascribes some of the incommunicable properties of the Godhead to all the three Persons. They are all represented as self-existent, incomprehensible, eternal, almighty, and each to be both God and Lord. But, “like as we are compelled by the Christian verity, to acknowledge every person by himself to be God and Lord; so are we forbidden by the

Catholic religion, to say there be three Gods or three Lords.” This creed states that neither of the Divine Persons in the Godhead were created, nor had any beginning of being. It humbly acknowledges that the Divine nature is above our comprehension. So is the union between our own souls and bodies incomprehensible to us. So is the combination of *fire, light, and heat*, in the flame of a candle. It asserts that they are coequal and coeternal. It bars the idea of a plurality of Gods, by asserting that there is but ONE GOD revealed in three Persons or characters. It represents *one* as our Creator, who sustains the majesty of Deity in accepting the work of our redemption. In order to accomplish this redemption, *another* took our nature, and, as man, died on the cross. The *third* enables us, by His Divine grace, to work out our salvation, and to fulfill all our religious duties. It next points out the order of the Divine Persons. We acknowledge that “in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another; but the whole three Persons are coeternal together; and coequal. We understand that the Father is the first Person in order, “being neither created nor begotten.” The Son is reckoned the second person, as of the Father alone, “not made, nor created, but begotten.” The Holy Ghost is the third Person in the Holy Trinity, proceeding from both, not by creation or generation, but by an eternal and unaccountable procession. Although, for the accomplishment of our redemption, the Son and Holy Ghost have condescended to inferior offices; yet in all the Divine attributes, they are coequal and coeternal with the Father. Although these things are above the reach of human imagination, yet they are to be received upon the strength of Divine revelation.

“Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation: that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.” We are taught to believe that Jew Christ is both God and man. A denial of this was part of the heresy of Arius. He asserted that he was only titular God, as magistrates in Scripture are called gods. Valentinus, another heretic, affirmed him not to have been really a man, but only an apparition. Whereas our Saviour himself said to His terrified disciples, “Handle me and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.” [St. Luke 24:39.] Against the first, the Creed teaches that He is “God of the substance of the Father”; or, as the Nicene Creed expresses it, “being of one substance with the Father”. Against the second, the Creed asserts: “and man, of the substance of His mother, born in the world,” This is agreeable to the words

of St. John, who asserted that “the *Word was made flesh*, and dwelt among us.” [St. John 1:14.] Some heretics denied this fundamental doctrine, and alleged that He merely passed through the Virgin’s body, as water through a pipe, without receiving any thing of her substance. But the true faith is, that “He is perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting.” – “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. [Col. 2:9.] On account of the conjunction, therefore, of these two natures, he is “equal to the Father as touching his Godhead.” But as he himself acknowledged the Father to be greater than him as man, [St. John 14:28.] therefore the Creed says: “and inferior to the Father as touching his manhood.” Some ancient heretics alleged from this that there were two Christs, one Divine and another human. Against them the Creed alleges that although he be God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ.” And this “not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God.” In this incarnation there is no “confusion of substance,” but unity of Person: “for as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.” It asserts Christ’s sufferings for our salvation, his descent into hell, his resurrection and ascension, his sitting at the right hand of the Father, and his coming to be our judge. It says farther, that at his “coming all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire.” We acknowledge our belief in all these positions in the Apostles’ Creed. Why, then, should we be offended when the same truths are related more largely. The Creed concludes as it began with asserting what everyone must acknowledge to be true, that “except a man believe (the Catholic faith) faithfully, he cannot be saved.” That awful truth, our Saviour told us in more terrific language in St. Mark’s Gospel. “He that *believeth* and is *baptized* shall be saved; but he that *believeth not* shall be *damned*.” That is, shall be condemned.

Let us not be terrified with the apprehensions of modern refinement. Without the *external symbols* of religion, we are as liable to error as the Arians and other heretics of former days; against which this creed is a great preservative. It is only those who do not hold the Catholic faith, and live accordingly, that are in danger of our Saviour’s denunciation in St. Mark. What the Catholic faith is, this creed explains; therefore it ought never to be omitted on such days as the Church has appointed it to be read. The learned may be improved by it, and the ignorant will be taught. Its use will be an

important advantage as it regards the unlearned; for as it is previously made a test of the faith of their appointed teacher, so, by its stated repetition, it becomes a test of his perseverance in that faith. They are, consequently, rendered as secure as human provisions can render them, of the justness and consistency of their priests' doctrinal instructions. It was these ancient heresies that caused this bulwark of the Christian faith to be drawn up. Where there is any life in the Church, it is still ordered to be read, as a defense not only against ancient but modern heresies also. And pity it is when the morbid sensibility of clergymen forbids them to read what, at the peril of their salvation, they are not only bound to believe, but to teach. By such dereliction of duty, they gain no friends to the Church. They break down her fences, and run the risk of admitting Arian heresies into the Church.

Comber's Companion to the Temple. Hole's Lectures on the Liturgy. Wheatly on the Common Prayer. Sparrow's *Rationale*. Jones on the Trinity. Bishop Skinner's Lectures in Lent. Dr. Waterland's History of the Athanasian Creed. Barrow's Works, Hughs' edition. Lesslie's Theological Works. Gingham's *Origines Ecclesiasticae*. Bishop Sandford's Sermon on Church Communion. Pearson on the Creed.

Chapter 9.

Kyrie Eleison – Rubric – Mutual Salutations – Reasons – Admonition – Versicles – Rubrics – Why the Priest stands – Versicles and Responses – Correspond with the subsequent Collects – For the King – For the Clergy – For the People – For His inheritance – For Peace and Defence – For Purity of Heart – For the Graces of the Holy Spirit – Rubric – Collects – Why so called – The Second for Peace – For Grace – Rubric – The same for the Afternoon – Collect for the King – Reasons for praying for him – For the Royal Family – For the Clergy and People – Prayer of St. Chrysostom – Apostolic Blessing.

Kyrie Eleison. – We have in the preceding part of the service acknowledged our manifold offences, and received the sacerdotal absolution. Our hearts have been warmed with praise, our understandings enlightened by the Word of God, and we have made a public profession of our faith. We now proceed to the last part of Divine worship, *viz.* “to ask those things that are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul.” The Rubric directs to be read *these prayer following, all devoutly*

kneeling; the minister first pronouncing with a loud voice – The Lord be with you. To which the people are directed to answer; *And with thy spirit.* St. John forbids us to say “God speed” to an unbeliever. But as we have satisfied the minister, by standing up and confessing with an audible voice the faith of Christ crucified, he can now bid us God speed, and salute us as brethren and members of the Church. St. Paul uses these words, “The Lord be with you all.” [2 Thess. 3:16. 2 Tim. 4:22. Gal. 6:18. St. John 19–21.] Our blessed Lord himself saluted his disciples with “Peace be unto you.” He commanded his disciples, when they entered into any house, to salute it with “Peace be to this house.” This holy wish was frequently used in the ancient liturgies, and it was affirmed in the Council of Braccara that it was so appointed by direction of the Apostles. It implies that the Lord may be with us to assist us in our devotions – to accept our prayers – and to crown and reward our services, imperfect though they be. The priest salutes us as brethren and heirs of immortality, and we, in the language of St. Paul, return his blessing as God’s ambassador: *And with thy spirit.* This is a wish on our part for the Divine presence and assistance in the discharge of his holy office. Thus the priest wishes well to the people, and they return his good wishes and prayers. The people pray that the Spirit of God, without whom nothing is good, nothing is holy, would vouchsafe to be with the priest’s spirit, when he offers up prayers and spiritual sacrifices for them. While pronouncing these words, both priest and people should continue standing, because these mutual good wishes are not addressed to God, but to each other. And, therefore, some distinction both in voice and manner should be made. Let the spiritual man pronounce his short benediction earnestly and in sincerity; that hardness of heart, and contempt of God’s holy Word, or vain imaginations, may not render his prayers ineffectual, for his people. And let the people, in returning his benediction, remember how much for their advantage it will be, that he who is their mouth unto God should have a pure heart and a fervent spirit. And, therefore, let them most heartily requite their pastor’s prayer, by affectionately desiring *the Lord to be with his spirit.*

The minister is next directed to say, *Let us pray.* This is a warning to lay aside all wandering and impure thoughts, and to attend to the important work before us. This admonition was often repeated in all the ancient liturgies, and is the signal for the congregation to besiege even heaven itself with a holy importunity. It is chiefly intended to stir up our minds, and

collect our scattered thoughts, so that we may approach the throne of grace with earnestness and true devotion, and that our prayers may be *effectual* and *fervent*. After the priest has invited us to pray, he immediately says, *Lord have mercy upon us*. This he addresses to God the Father. The people add, *Christ have mercy upon us*. This supplication to our Redeemer was added to the Jewish Litany by the Christian Church. It is the only part that here falls to the people, the priest alone being in this place to invoke the Father and the Holy Spirit. The priest then says again, *Lord have mercy upon us*. This is addressed to the Holy Ghost. It is the *Kyrie Eleison* of the Greek Church, from which the Latin Church borrowed it. The Christian Church has such an awful reverence for the Lord's Prayer, that she seldom suffers it to be used without some preparation. In the beginning of the service it is preceded by the confession and absolution. Here, and in some other places, by the *Kyrie Eleison*, or short litany. By it we are first taught to bewail our unworthiness and pray for mercy, afterwards with humble boldness to call God *our Father*. In setting this earnest and humble supplication before the Lord's Prayer, we have followed the example of almost all the old liturgies. A more suitable preparation for prayer cannot be devised than this earnest petition for mercy, and humble acknowledgment of our own misery. There is no prayer to which greater preparation is required than that Divine prayer sanctified by our Lord's sacred lips. The invocation of each person in the Holy Trinity is *not a vain repetition*. We have the example of David, of the lepers, of the blind men, and of the Canaanitish mother, for doubling and trebling our petitions. She not only repeated her earnest supplications, but she ventured even to argue with our Lord. She pleaded so earnestly that the disciples, unable to perceive their Divine Master's intentions, bid him send her away, "for she crieth after us." But, well pleased with her importunity, and above all with her active faith, he compassionately said, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Though last, yet not the least, is our Saviour's own example, who prayed *three* times saying the *same words*. Earnest and repeated supplications for mercy, when done in faith, are therefore not *vain repetitions*. This short litany is a particular address to each person in the Trinity, the reason and propriety of which is obvious. We owe a particular homage and service to each of the Divine persons, both for our being and well-being. From God the Father, we have received the mercy of Creation – from God the Son, that of Redemption – and from God the Holy Ghost, that

of Sanctification. We therefore ask mercy of each person, because we have offended each in particular. We have offended God the Father, by transgressing His holy laws; – and God the Son, by refusing the terms of peace and reconciliation which he has so dearly purchased for us. And we have not only offended but *grieved* God the Holy Ghost, by resisting him, by misemploying his gifts, suppressing his motions, and rejecting his holy comforts. We require the help of all the three persons in the Trinity to guard us here, and to reward us hereafter. We need the favour of God the Father to overlook our many breaches of His laws; and the merits of God the Son to make an atonement and intercession for us. We want the comforts of God the Holy Ghost, “to be a spirit of sanctification to purify our corrupt nature; a spirit of council in all our difficulties; of direction in all our doubts, fears, and scruples; of courage in all our dangers; of constancy and consolation in all our persecutions and sufferings, especially in the time of sickness and at the hour of death.” [Prayer on Whitsunday, Companion to the Altar.] Too many people, alas! are apt to take this solemn litany *in vain*, by using it rashly and unadvisedly on any sudden excitement.

The Rubric next directs that *the minister, clerks, and people, shall say the Lord’s Prayer with a loud voice*. It consecrates all the prayers that follow. It is therefore again repeated when we enter more solemnly on the duty of prayer; lest if we should have repeated it carelessly before, we may now join in it with more fervency and devotion. Let it never be forgotten that it is the best and most acceptable of all prayers – that the Divine Head of the Church is himself the author – and that it is his legacy, the rule of our desires. There is another Rubric after the Lord’s Prayer, which says, *then the priest standing up shall say*. The priest, being a man of like passions, and a sinner like ourselves, requires grace and pardon as well as we do. In all confessions of sins and penitential prayers, therefore, he is directed to beg pardon and grace on his knees for himself, as well as for his people. But as he is the priest of the most high God, and holding from Him an office and authority, he *stands*, in some cases, to denote that what he then does is by virtue of that office and authority. His office relates both to God and the people. In relation to God, he is his ambassador, to whom is committed the ministry of reconciliation, which authorizes him “to teach, baptize, consecrate the holy Eucharist, bless and absolve the penitent.” In all these acts of *authority*, he is to *stand*, because he then acts in the *name of*, and *represents*, Christ. In relation to the people, he offers in their stead both

gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is appointed by Christ to stand betwixt God and the people. And, therefore, that they may see and understand the high honour of his office, his dignity, and authority, the Church directs him to “stand”. But the people are bound to receive the law at his mouth, and, being subject to his discipline and instruction, show their humility and obedience by humbly kneeling on their knees.

Versicles and Responses. – From the recital of the sacred prayer – the gift of Christ – we pass to some interlocutory petitions. These give variety, take off the tediousness, add to the pleasure of the duty, quicken the attention, and unite the hearts of the congregation. These are an epitome of the following Collects for grace and peace, for kings, priests, and people, that they may be replenished with all sorts of blessings. The commissioned ambassador of Heaven begins by saying, out of the sacred storehouse of the Psalms, *O Lord, show thy mercy upon us*. Then the people bear their part, saying, *And grant us thy salvation*. [Psalm 85:7.] In this versicle the priest intercedes for the people. The people respond by praying for salvation. Salvation now may be threefold: Temporal, or a deliverance from all corporeal evils; spiritual, or a preservation from the power of our ghostly enemies; eternal, or a perfect freedom from both in heaven. Here we are taught, before we presume to ask for salvation, to beg for mercy, through the merits of Christ. The priest next ejaculates, *O Lord, save the king*; to which, the people respond, *And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee*. [Psalm 20:9.] This versicle is taken out of the twentieth psalm, the whole of which is a prayer for the king, which concludes with this short and devout prayer, “Save, Lord, and hear us, O King of heaven, when we call upon thee.” This versicle answers to the prayers for the king and royal family. It corresponds with the popular ejaculation of *God save the king*. This salutation has the authority of Scripture; “And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.” Nehemiah said to Artaxerxes, and Daniel (one of the three righteous men) to Darius, *O king, live forever*. The Psalmist frequently prayed God *to grant the king long life*. The Apostles and primitive Christians prayed for heathen emperors and governors; and, therefore, it is much more applicable to Christian kings, that we may live godly and peaceable lives under them. We pray for temporal as well as spiritual blessings for the king: for health, wealth, power, and might – for victory over his enemies both at home and abroad, and success in all his laudable undertakings – for the assistance of God’s Holy Spirit to inspire

him with courage and wisdom, with the counsel and fear of the Lord, and to fill him with peace and tranquility of mind; for “uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.” To add force to the priest’s petition, the people add, *And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee*. These words may be extended to all our petitions, but they seem more particularly in this place to be applied to the sovereign, that we may be blessed through his public virtue; the prince being the father of his people, his personal character always affects the prosperity or adversity of the people committed to his charge. This is palpable even in profane history, but particularly in the Holy Scriptures. I shall only mention one remarkable case. David’s individual sin, in numbering the people, caused the death of seventy thousand men, “from Dan even to Beersheba”. Again, on the other hand, Solomon’s public virtues, “made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones.” The prosperity of the prince is bound up in that of his people. In his safety and prosperity we enjoy tranquility; but in his adversity, when he is resisted and disobeyed, we suffer along with him. All good subjects, therefore, will dutifully pray to God to save and defend him from all his enemies; “for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.” It is the express command of St. Paul to Timothy, and through him to all bishops and pastors, that “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” Our Liturgy therefore abounds more with prayers for the royal family than that of any other church. Because the public welfare depends so much upon their safety. After this short prayer for the king, two pious petitions for the clergy and people follow. *Endue thy ministers with righteousness*; to which the people add, *And make thy chosen people joyful*. [Psalm 123:9.] Solomon used similar prayers at the dedication of the Temple: “Let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness,” [2 Chron. 6:41.] which afterwards formed part of the Jewish Liturgy, and with great propriety was adopted into ours. The happiness of every nation chiefly consists in the safety of the prince, the piety of the priest, and the joy of the people. The persons for whom this prayer is offered are here styled *ministers*. By which expression we are to understand that the clergy receive their commission from God, and are properly *His* ministers or servants. St. Paul says, “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.” [1 Cor. 4:1.] They are the pastors or

shepherds of Christ's flock, and the overseers of the Church by the appointment of the Holy Ghost. Their commission and authority is from God; they are therefore *His* ministers, and not public servants, as I have heard many ignorant people say. They are masters, guides, and instructors, and are therefore to be received and respected accordingly. They are appointed to bless the people, and doubtless he is greater that gives, than those who receive the blessing. They are to absolve the penitent, to counsel, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Not by the people's authority – that would indeed make them the people's servants, but by His whose commission they bear. We pray, therefore, that they may be clothed with righteousness as with a garment. This garment is to be constantly worn. The Apostle calls it "the breastplate of righteousness". It is not only clothing but armour. It not only adorns but defends, guards against the assaults of the enemy, and quenches the fiery darts of the wicked one. Holiness in the priest will have some effect in *making God's chosen people joyful*. By *chosen people* is not meant the *elect* in the Calvinistic sense, the chosen few which can neither be augmented nor diminished, but *all* the members of Christ's Church, who are said to be chosen out of the world to be a peculiar people to God. Not a few special individuals; but as Christ died for *all* men, so the Church here means *all* who name the name of Christ; "all who profess and call themselves Christians." We pray for joy and for happiness to these. "By sorrow of heart the spirit is broken." Grief and sadness depress the spirits, and unfit men for the service of God. They are a reflection on God, as if we served a hard master, who imposed severe and unreasonable tasks and burdens on His servants. They disparage religion as if it were sour, severe, and melancholy, and doomed us to sorrow and sadness. That they may not sink into melancholy, St. Paul exhorts Christians to "rejoice in the Lord always." [Phil 4:4.] Our Church, therefore, following such an eminent adviser, teaches her people to pray that God would "make His people joyful," and sensible that His service is perfect freedom. The following versicle is also taken from the Psalms, *O Lord, save thy people. Answer, and bless thine inheritance*. [Psalm 28:10.] Here the minister returns the people's affectionate prayer in the former versicle, by praying as earnestly for them. He prays that the people may be saved from the power, pollution, and punishment of their sins – and from all the evils and miseries that attend sin, both in this life and in that which is to come. The partition wall between the Jew and the Gentile being broken down, the latter are now

become God's people, for whom this prayer is offered. But although Christ is "able to save to the uttermost," yet it is only to those who come to him by faith, that the merits of his satisfaction will be effectual. The people pray for God's *inheritance*. The tribe of Levi was more especially the "lot of His inheritance". In an extended sense, the whole Jewish nation was His heritage also. This privilege was strictly confined to Jewry, where God was alone known. But now, thanks be to God, the heathen have become His heritage, and the uttermost parts of the earth His possession. The whole Christian world are therefore now as much the people of God as the Jews were of old. And all the ministers of Christ under the Gospel are now "the lot of His inheritance." This versicle, therefore, is an interchangeable prayer that God would bless both the *people*, whom Christ came to save, and the *clergy*, the lot of His inheritance – whom He appointed to offer the never-ceasing sacrifice of their prayers and thanksgivings. This and the former versicle answers to the Collect for the clergy and people in the morning and evening service. The priest next prays, *Give peace in our time, O Lord*. To which the people reply, *Because there is none other that fighteth for us but only thou, O God*. "Peace and quietness" was promised unto Israel in Solomon's days, that he might build the Temple. "Peace and truth" were promised also to Hezekiah. A promise was made to the good Josiah, that "he should be gathered to his fathers, and to his grave in *peace*," and that he should not see the evils which were to befall his kingdom. The promises made to these kings extended only to their own times. Their failings were frequently punished in their posterity by wars and captivity. Promises of peace are not absolute, but conditional. We must first make peace with God by holiness and obedience, before we can enjoy quietness with men. Peace is so comprehensive, that it includes all other blessings, and therefore we earnestly pray God to give peace in our days. Peace is the same thing to the body politic, as health is to the natural body. Hence pious princes and people have desired peace, and the suppression of rebellions and invasions in their days. In responding to the priest, the people are taught to put their trust in God, "because there is none other that fighteth for us." The Jews were a murmuring and discontented people. They complained of hunger with meat in their mouths, and apprehended want when quails and manna were rained down from heaven on them. They sank in despair, and their souls fainted within them on the least appearance of danger. To encourage and cheer them, Moses told them that "the Lord would fight for them."

God himself told Jehoshaphat that He Himself would fight for him, and that he “need only stand still and see the salvation of God.” He destroyed Sennacherib’s army, after he had subdued the kingdom. “I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake.” On another remarkable occasion, “the Lord made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host.” [2 Kings 7:6.] Here the Lord fought for Israel indeed, for the Syrians left their tents, threw away their arms, and fled when no man pursued. Again, when the Ethiopians came against Judah with an overwhelming army, “the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa.” David invariably ascribed all his victories to God alone. And our Church teaches us to put our whole trust in Him who covereth the soldier’s head in the day of battle. She also teaches us to acknowledge that it is to Him only that we owe all our victories by sea and land: “Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.” We are to understand by these words that the success of our arms depends wholly on His presence and blessing. Because the battle is neither to the strong, nor the race to the swift.

The former versicle corresponds with the daily Collect for peace, and the following to that for grace: *O God, make clean our hearts within us; To which the people reply, And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.* [Psalm 51:10–11.] These words are taken out of David’s famous penitential psalm. The heart here meant is that spiritual part called the soul with all its powers and faculties. Out of the heart are the issues of life; “from it,” says our Saviour, proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, false witness, blasphemies.” To make a clean heart, therefore, is to wash away our original corruption in the water of baptism, and our actual sins by the tears of repentance. “A right spirit” is a mind free from all disorder, and correct in all its faculties – an understanding, knowing, and judging of things aright – the will choosing and refusing as it ought – and the affections placed upon right objects, and kept within due bounds and measures, and in all things obedient to the will of God. This cleansing of the heart, and renewal of a right spirit, is not done instantaneously and by an irresistible power, but by the means of grace, and with the concurrence of our own desires and endeavours. The means are both external and internal. The outward means are His holy Word and sacraments. “Now are ye clean through the word that I have spoken unto you.” [St. John 15:3.] – “The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” [1 John 1:7.] The inward means are the

influences of His Holy Spirit by which He applies the efficacy of the word and sacraments, and makes them effectual to the cleaning and renewing of both. The petition of the people is inferred from that of the priest; for the withdrawal of God's Holy Spirit would leave us in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. In this petition, the Spirit does not mean the person of the Holy Ghost, but His blessed influences, offices, and operations. Take not from us the graces of thy Holy Spirit; that is, the graces of faith, hope, charity, humility, purity, repentance, *etc.* Since, therefore, God alone can change and cleanse the heart, we are taught to have recourse to Him. Since He works by means, our Church reads His holy Word in our ears, and exhorts us to a frequent participation of the sacrament. And because His Holy Spirit can alone apply the efficacy of the Word and Sacraments to the renewing of a right spirit within us, let us beseech God to continue these His gifts, graces, and comforts to us.

Collects. – After the Versicles, the Rubric directs to “*follow these Collects; the first of the day, which shall be the same that is appointed at the communion; the second for peace; the third for grace to live well. And the two last Collects shall never alter, but daily be said at morning prayer throughout all the year; all kneeling.*”

The prayers are generally called Collects, because they are made by the priest, over or in behalf of the people. Or rather because the priest collects the people's devotions, and offers them up to God. Another reason may be that they have all been *collected* out of the Holy Scriptures. They are all directed to God in the name of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Redeemer. Christ is the altar on which all our prayers are to be offered. Through him only will they find acceptance. “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.” Some of the collects are addressed to Christ. In the Litany, some supplications are offered to the Holy Ghost. Some of them are concluded with this acknowledgment – *that Christ, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth one God, world without end.* This is warranted by Scripture. Although in general it is more suitable to approach the Father by the Son, yet we may invoke both the Son and Holy Spirit; because, while we call on one, we equally worship and glorify the Trinity. Their brevity has many advantages. They follow the precept and example of our blessed Lord himself. The prayer which he left as his legacy to the whole Church throughout the world is short. And he blamed the Pharisees for making *long* prayers. The public prayers of the Jews were

short. So were those of the first Christians. Their brevity keeps the minds of both the priest and the people alive, close, and earnest. Every one of them begins with some of the attributes or perfections of God. These suggest right apprehensions of his goodness and majesty at first. It is therefore more easy to preserve them in our minds during a short prayer. Every prayer is concluded in the name of Jesus Christ; the everlasting truth is thereby preserved in our minds that he is our only Mediator and Redeemer, and that it is only by and through him that our prayers will be heard. The Collects generally consist of two parts. First, an humble acknowledgment of the adorable perfection and goodness of God; and, secondly, a suitable petition for some benefit from him.

The first Collect is that for the day, which are too numerous to be noticed in this place. The best explanation, and to which nothing can be added, will be found in Bishop Jolly's Sunday Services, and in Mr. James' Comment on the Collects. After the versicles, therefore, the Collect for the day is said, and which varies every Sunday throughout the year. After that, the Collect for Peace. In it we pray for peace in conformity with St. Paul's instructions to Timothy, that we may live "in all godliness and honesty". This Collect is literally translated out of St. Gregory's Sacramentary. It is a very suitable prayer for every day, especially in the morning, before engaging in the various affairs of life. In the Old Testament, our Creator is generally invoked as the *Lord of Hosts*, and the *God of battles*. But in the New Testament, which is a milder and more gentle dispensation, he is styled the *God of Peace and Love*. The promotion of these two being the design of the Gospel, Christ came into the world to reconcile us to God by his own blood. He is called the *Prince of Peace*. At his birth, angels proclaimed peace on earth, and good will toward men, after they had given glory to God. Hence, in this prayer, the Church addresses him as "the author of peace and lover of concord." He makes men to be of one mind. Our Saviour pronounced a blessing on the peacemakers, with a promise that they shall be called the sons of God. We pray that He will not only bless us in all our lawful affairs, but "defend us in all assaults of our enemies." This is an humble acknowledgment of our own inability to help and defend ourselves, and of our entire dependence on Him. There is no promise against assaults of the enemy, for in this world we shall have tribulation. But He has promised that with the temptation He will also make a way to escape. Therefore, we are here taught to trust in His defense. There are

many precepts and precedents in Holy Scripture for putting our whole trust and affiance in God. Nor can anything provoke Him more to leave us to ourselves than our distrusting and forsaking Him. We are taught also in this Collect not to fear the power of our adversaries, whether temporal or spiritual. What is the power of an adversary, compared with the might, majesty, and dominion of God? If He be for us, who can be against us? Therefore we are taught to trust in His defense, and that we may obtain it, we ask it through the might of Jesus Christ. Our whole strength and confidence lies in the might of our Redeemer, and the merits of our Saviour. Our own strength is at best but weakness. We are unable to defend ourselves, or resist the least assault of our enemies. Were we to depend solely on our own power, we should fear and be conquered by every adversary. All our hopes of safety and defense are founded on the strength of our Saviour. It would be folly and presumption to seek for, or expect it in any other way. His might is alone able to secure us. He hath all power with God, and can obtain for us what he pleases. He can blast all the designs of our enemies, which are frequently too deeply laid for our discovery, and too mighty for us to defeat by our own wisdom and power. His watchful and all-seeing eye can alone discover the snares that are laid for us. And his outstretched arm alone can help and defend us. We are therefore taught that our only safety and wisdom lies in seeking unto God for aid and protection in all dangers, ghostly and bodily. And to ask it of Him “through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The third Collect for morning prayer is *for Grace*. It opens with some of the mighty attributes of God. “O Lord, our Heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God.” In this sublime sentence, every word helps to produce and increase our faith and confidence. We style Him Lord, to signify His dominion and authority over us: – Father, to demonstrate His love and tender care over us: – Almighty, to denote His power and ability to help us: – and everlasting God, to acknowledge the never-failing duration of His power and goodness. We confess His good providence in protecting us from the dangers of the preceding night, and for his merciful goodness in bringing us to a new day. Our dependence on God is so entire and absolute that without Him we cannot be safe either night or day. Therefore we here pray for His defense and protection against both sin and danger. We pray that we may not fall into any sin through temptation or surprise, nor run into any danger through inadvertence or folly. But that all our actions, begun,

continued, and ended in Him, may be regulated by his guidance. We beg to be enabled to do what is righteous in His sight, and not what is right in our own eyes. And, finally, we pray that, being guided by His grace and Holy Spirit here, He will bring us to glory hereafter.

The Rubric next directs that, *in choirs and places where they sing, here followeth the anthem.* There is a natural break here in the service. The foregoing prayers were for ourselves. These occasional prayers that follow are for others. Therefore a psalm is here directed to be sung. It is generally done in cathedrals, but seldom or never in parish churches. Taking advantage of this division, therefore, I will now take the two Collects for the afternoon. The second Collect in the afternoon service is also for peace. Peace being so great a blessing, and our Lord's legacy, it cannot be too often nor too earnestly prayed for. We address "God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed." We here own Him to be the author of every good and perfect gift. We acknowledge, in the language of St. Paul, that it is Him that worketh in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. In the morning, we pray for external, in the evening, for internal, peace. In the beginning of the day, we desire to be preserved from the machinations of evil disposed men. This is a kind of peace which the best of men cannot always be assured of. In the evening, we desire that peace which passeth all understanding, and which the world cannot give. This peace is grounded on the evidence of faith in that reconciliation which the merits of Christ have procured. From its firm persuasion, therefore, we have well-grounded hopes of pardon, and a lively sense of God's love. This Collect names three motives for our desire of this heavenly peace. 1. "That our hearts may be set to obey God's commandments." We cannot obey His commands whilst we are under the dominion of our own lusts and passions, "which war in our members". This war and tumult must be subdued, and peace vouchsafed to us, before we can be firmly "set to obey his commandments." 2. "That we may be defended from the fear of our enemies." This corresponds with a similar petition in the morning Collect. We pray to be so fortified with innocence and a good conscience, that we need not fear the power and malice of our adversaries. By these here are meant our ghostly enemies, the devil, the world, and the flesh. From these we sustain continual assaults. 3. The 3d motive is, "that we may pass our time in rest and quietness." To live in rest and die in peace is a great blessing. Those who spend their time in luxury and sinful pursuits are liable

to troubles and diseases. Those who live in idleness, and the vanities and follies of life, draw down on themselves many temporal miseries. But those who spend their time diligently in their calling, and in the exercise of religion and virtue, pass their time comparatively in rest and quietness. And therefore we here earnestly pray for what the Apostle makes the sum of earthly felicity: “That we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty.”

The third Collect for the afternoon is “for aid against all perils”. In it we pray God to “lighten our darkness”. This darkness does not mean the absence of sunshine. To desire that darkness to be enlightened, would be to request that He would alter the course of nature. It is the spiritual darkness of ignorance, mental blindness, and hardness of heart. To lighten our darkness means to remove from us all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of God’s holy Word – to scatter the bright beams of knowledge and wisdom into our minds – and to dispel all the mists of error and ignorance from our souls, by the light of His glorious Gospel. This petition, therefore, is very suitable in the evening, when the natural darkness of night is approaching, that He would deliver us from the fears and dangers of the night, and bring us safely to the comforts of a new day. We are constantly surrounded by danger. At no time is it more dismal, sudden, and unavoidable, than when darkness adds to the terror, and sleep deprives us of defense. We here pray God to “lighten our darkness” by keeping the eyes of our mind open – by fixing them on Him who is the Father of lights – and by filling up the waking hours of the night by holy and pure meditations. We beg that He will defend us from the perils and dangers of the night – refresh our weary limbs with moderate rest and sleep – and raise us up the following day better fitted for His service.

The five following Collects are the same in the forenoon and afternoon service; and are only to be read when the Litany is not used. Hitherto the prayers have all been for ourselves. But St. Paul exhorts Timothy “that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for *kings*, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” In obedience to that command, we now proceed to pray for the whole Church. In the first place, for the king, whom under Christ we acknowledge to be its supreme civil governor. When St. Paul issued that command to Timothy, “kings and all in authority” were heathens, and were not only indifferent to

the Church, but its persecutors. But he made no distinction; the good as well as the froward were to be obeyed for conscience' sake. "Render to Caesar," says Christ himself of a heathen governor, "the things that be Caesar's." – "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," says St. Paul, "for there is no power but of God." The powers that be are ordained of God." [Rom. 13:1.] – "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates." [Titus 3:1.] – "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evildoers, and the praise of them that do well." [1 Peter 2:13.] Be it remembered that, when all these injunctions were imposed, kings and all in authority were heathens. How much more, therefore, should we obey Christian kings and magistrates. If we are so peremptorily commanded to obey kings and all in authority, it follows naturally that we should pray for them. This prayer commences with an acknowledgment of God's sovereign power over both prince and people. That He is not only our Lord and Heavenly Father, high and mighty, but that He is King of kings, Lord of lords, and the only ruler of princes. "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice." [Proverbs 8:15.] They receive their crowns, power, and authority from Him. But they are equally his creatures and servants, as the meanest of their subjects. Kings are therefore to pay Him the same submission and obedience. He has the hearts of kings and all in authority in His own rule and governance, and he disposes and turns them as it seemeth best to His godly wisdom. It is a wise maxim of our law that the king can do no wrong, – that is, he is not accountable to the people for any wrong he may do. But he must answer to God, who is his only superior, for the breach of any of His laws. God is the sole judge and avenger of the actions of princes. At His tribunal alone are they accountable. To think otherwise is literally to turn the world upside down. It is to put kings in the condition of subjects, and subjects in the place of kings. In this prayer we recognize God's omniscience as well as His omnipotence; "Who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth." His all-seeing eye reaches to all the corners of the world, and His overruling providence extends to all its creatures. He is the protector and governor of kings, lords, and commonalty, everyone in his own order and degree. From a general acknowledgment of His power and greatness over all princes and people, the Church teaches us to pray for the reigning sovereign in the following words; "Most heartily beseeching Thee with Thy

favour to behold our most gracious sovereign lord, King William.” Though His providence is over all His creatures, yet He has a more especial regard to sovereign princes. Because they are the ministers of His providence, by whom He conveys blessings on their subjects. He has called them gods in Scripture. They are called His deputies, lieutenants, and vicegerents. They are called in Scripture also nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers to the Church. Before which, however, they are to bow down with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of her feet. [Isa. 49:23.] We find that the people of all nations have made prayers for their kings and governors a part of their public devotion. It is not altogether neglected even in extemporary prayers, where it is left to individual discretion. And if the Apostles and primitive Christians prayed for *heathen* governors, who were their enemies and persecutors, how much more ought we to pray for him who is a member, a civil governor, and a defender of the Church of Christ! His duty is more difficult; he is exposed to more temptations and dangers than any of his people. He requires more wisdom to direct him, more power to protect him, and more care to preserve him, than other men. Therefore we pray that the King of kings will show him more especial favour, and give him a double portion of His Holy Spirit. They have few faithful friends, but many flatterers and timeservers. Having none on earth to control them, they are more apt to follow the devices of their own hearts; so that they require more than ordinary supplies of Divine grace. The Church, therefore, prays God to “endue him plenteously with heavenly gifts.” We read in Scripture, when God anointed any one to be king, that He endued him with His Holy Spirit, to qualify him for his exalted station. *The Spirit of the Lord came upon him.* But besides “heavenly gifts,” to enable him to govern the people committed to his charge with judgment and equity, we pray also for temporal blessings. That he may enjoy plenty and prosperity, “Grant him in health and wealth long to live.” We pray also to “strengthen him, that he may vanquish and overcome all his enemies.” Not only foreign enemies that may invade his dominions, or distress his subjects, but secret factions, rebellions, and treachery at home. We implore Him who is the giver of all victory, to abate the pride, assuage the malice, and confound the devices of all his enemies. And, lastly, we pray that in God’s good time he may exchange an earthly for a heavenly crown: “That, finally, after this life he may attain everlasting joy and felicity.” Although with God’s help he may conquer all his enemies, yet to this enemy he must yield. Though

princes are called earthly gods, yet they are mortal men like their subjects. The Church, therefore, carries her petitions beyond this life, and prays that he may be crowned with glory in the life to come.

The next prayer that follows is “for the royal family”. One of the attributes here given to God is, “the fountain of all goodness”. It is an acknowledgment that He is absolute and independent, and that His goodness is inexhaustible. The same blessings are desired for the royal family as in the former prayer for the king himself. To be endued with the Holy Spirit, enriched with heavenly grace, prospered with all happiness, and brought to his everlasting kingdom. The personal character of the sovereign and his family are of the utmost importance. The present generation have seen and felt the blessings conferred on the land by the good example of two queens. Charlette kept a pure court. Hence the nobility and gentry were obliged to preserve an outward appearance of morality. Their example had a beneficial effect on all classes beneath them. In the succeeding reign purity was banished from court. The ecclesiastical courts were crowded. On the accession of our present gracious sovereign, his amiable queen followed the excellent rule of Queen Charlotte. The change in public morals among the higher classes was instantaneous. The effects are felt. Morality is not now shocked with such open exhibitions of profligacy. Therefore with great reason should we in sincerity join in the prayer for the queen and royal family; that they may be endued with His Holy Spirit, and enriched with His heavenly grace.

The next prayer is “for the clergy and people”. After praying for our temporal rulers, we are taught to pray for our ecclesiastical governors. This is agreeable to Holy Scripture. “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account.” [Heb. 13:17.] This prayer begins with an acknowledgment that He *alone worketh great marvels*. It signifies that when all ordinary means have failed, then God has done some marvelous things for the Church’s preservation. An instance of which we have seen here in Scotland. The civil government, and the “inclinations of the people,” persecuted the Episcopal Church. Still it has been marvelously preserved, like Moses’ bush, burning but not consumed. The union of men into corporations and civil society is designed to secure our lives and properties. The union of Christians by one spirit into one faith, and to each other by the bonds of charity, is intended for the edification of our souls, and for securing our eternal inheritance. In

this sublime prayer we are reminded what noble works God did in the old times. He first gathered His Church out of obstinate Jews and ignorant heathens by His almighty power. He has since marvelously preserved it against the malice of Satan, the rage of persecution, the subtilty of heretics, and the blind zeal of factious schismatics. God “works great marvels” still, although not in such a magnificent way as in the beginning of Christianity. He converts sinners from the evil of their ways, and turns the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, by the ministry of His ambassadors. Let us, therefore, pray that He will assist His ministers, and bless the people committed to their charge. This prayer exactly describes a church, *the bishops and curates, and all congregations committed to their charge*. We first pray for the bishops, who are the chief pastors under Christ. Being the highest in dignity, they have the greatest charge, and have the oversight of both ministers and people. On them, as on the Apostles, lies the care of all the churches. They are to endeavour to preserve the Church in peace and prosperity, by electing fit persons into the ministry. They are to order the externals of Divine worship with decency and to edification, and to prevent heresies and schisms among the clergy. It is their province also to censure all public crimes both among their clergy and people. And to consult on the important affairs of the Church, and, in England, of the state also. Considering, therefore, the necessity and benefit of their office to us, and how impossible it is to perform it without an extraordinary measure of Divine grace, we should unite in earnestly begging grace for this sacred order throughout the world. But especially, and with peculiar affection, for the bishop under whom we may severally live. Throughout the whole Liturgy the word *curate* is used for the *whole body* of the inferior clergy. It never in any case means those stipendiary persons alone, who are generally known by that name. At first the sole charge of every city and surrounding country lay upon the bishop. His clergy lived with him, and were sent by him throughout his diocese to perform Divine offices. By the increase of the faithful it became necessary to station them permanently in different places, where churches were built and endowed. This was sometimes done by the care of the bishop himself, sometimes by the piety of the nobility and gentry. In these cases the manor became the parish. To the priest settled in these manors or parishes the bishop committed the care of the people. He still, however, reserved to himself the right of superiority and government. From having the *cure of souls* committed to them, they are called curates.

Their office is to catechize and instruct the ignorant, to exhort and encourage the good, to rebuke and convince sinners, to confirm the doubting, to vein gainsayers, to comfort the sad, to visit the sick, to preach righteousness, to pray with and for their people, to administer the sacraments, to take care of the souls of the living, and to bury the dead. None of all these can be done without Divine aid. We ought therefore fervently to pray that they may be endued with the healthful spirit of His grace. This prayer includes the people who are to hear and learn from their spiritual guides, that they may be open to instruction, easy to advise, gentle under reproofs, willing to learn and receive God's Word, diligent to practice it, and be replenished with the gifts of justice, charity, and devotion. The grace of God is necessary to fit all the members of Christ's Church for their several offices and duties. Paul soweth and Apostles watereth, but God only giveth the increase. We pray, therefore, that the ministers in their different stations *may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing*. That it may not be an occasional rain, but a *continual dew*, – an abundance of grace and knowledge, not only to qualify them for their several offices, but also to make their labours pleasing to God, and prosperous to his people. These prayers for the sovereign, the clergy, and the people, comprehend all ranks and degrees of men; that is, the whole Church. For the whole Church is composed of clergy and people.

The prayer that follows is taken from the offices of the Eastern Church. It was the composition of St. Chrysostom. It is placed at the conclusion of the morning and evening prayers to renew our desires that God would grant those necessary requests, and to stir up our hearts to hope that He will. It commences by acknowledging that it is His grace that disposes us to unite with one accord in our supplications. It impleads His gracious promise to be in the midst when two or three are gathered together in His name. It teaches us to pray that our petitions for temporal blessings may be granted, only in so far as He sees to be expedient for us. But it vehemently prays that He will grant us the knowledge of His truth in this world, and life everlasting in the world to come. For these we cannot be too importunate. This prayer is addressed to the second person of the Holy Trinity. This seems evident from its reminding Him of His gracious promise, and from its not concluding, as the other prayers all do, with the words, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*.

The prayers are concluded with the apostolic blessing. This form is used by St. Paul at the end of most of his epistles, but chiefly of the second to the Corinthians. It is a sort of prayer also, and is pronounced by the minister kneeling. He includes himself in it, and the people should repeat it along with him. Under the law, God himself appointed a particular form of blessing, and which is used by the Jews to this day. "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." The legal blessing evidently pointed to the Holy Trinity, by the word *Lord* or *Jehovah* being three times used in it. But the apostolic blessing contains the whole order of our salvation, and the several gifts of each person. It begins with the benefits purchased by the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, because that is the primary mover in our salvation, and which obtain both the love of God the Father, and the communication of the Holy Ghost. Here is the grace of the Son to pardon our sins, the love of the Father to supply our wants, and the fellowship of the blessed Spirit to strengthen our weakness. The first to redeem, the second to justify, and the third to sanctify us. These are all prayed for, not only at this present, but to be confirmed to us, and to remain with us in life, in death, and for evermore. [Comber's Companion to the Temple. Hole's Lectures. Bishop Sparrow's *Rationale*. Wheatley on the Common Prayer.]

Chapter 10.

Litany – What and where used – Antiquity – Invocation – A Confession of the Trinity in Unity – Addressed to the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and to the Unity – Deprecations – From what – Temporal and Eternal Evils – Prayer for Deliverance. – Intercessions. – For whom – For all Sorts and Conditions of Men – For Spiritual Gifts – For Protection – Help – And Deliverance from Evil – The Kyrie Eleison – Supplications – Lord's Prayer – Persecution – Doxology – Versicles – Prayer for the High Court of Parliament – For all Conditions of Men – An occasional Prayer – General Thanksgiving – Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings – For Rain – Fair Weather – Dearth and Famine – Wars and Tumults – Plague and Sickness – Ember Weeks.

Litany. – The next in order is the *Litany, or general confession to be sung or said after morning prayer upon Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and at other times when it shall be commanded by the Ordinary.*

A litany is a solemn form of supplication to God. It is derived from a Greek word which signifies a supplication. At first, litanies were not confined to any stated time, but were used on any period of public calamity. The fifty-first psalm is a litany. The short but emphatic prayer of the publican in the temple was a litany – “God be merciful to me a sinner.” God himself appointed a litany for the Jewish Church: – “Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach; that the heathen should rule over them: Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?” [Joel 2:17–18.] To this litany of His own appointing, he promised to give ear, and pity His people. Pity here undoubtedly implies forgiveness. In the primitive Church, litanies were used with ardent supplications and fastings, to avert threatened judgments. The days on which they were used were called Rogation days. The Council of Toledo decreed that litanies should be used every month. By degrees these solemn supplications were used weekly, on Wednesdays and Fridays, the ancient fasting days in all churches. The Bridegroom was taken from us and sold on Wednesday by the traitor Judas, and on Friday he suffered the cruel death of the cross. It is now used on Sundays, because on that day there is the greatest assemblage of people to join in it. The reviewers of the Liturgy, in 1552, ordered that it should be used on Sundays; and this order has never been altered.

Litanies have been used in the Church at least for fourteen hundred years. They first began to be used in processions, about the year 400. The people walked barefooted, and said them with great devotion. About the year 600, Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome, collected from all the litanies then extant his famous sevenfold litany, by which Rome was delivered from a great calamity. It was called sevenfold, because he ordered the Church in Rome to make their processions in seven classes: – 1. The clergy; 2. The laymen; 3. The monks; 4. The virgins; 5. The married women; 6. The widows; 7. All the poor, and the children. This litany has been ever since a pattern to all the western churches. The Roman missal was afterwards defiled with the invocation of saints, the worship of the Virgin Mary, and various superstitions. Our Reformers swept away all the rubbish, but retained the beautiful service which we now possess. Before the last review in the time of Charles II, the Litany was a distinct service, by itself, and was used sometimes after the morning prayer was ended. At present, it forms

one office with the morning service. It is ordained to be read after the third Collect for Grace, instead of the intercessional prayers in the daily service. The English Reformers extracted whatever was excellent out of all the ancient litanies, but resolutely rejected all the superstitious idolatry which the Roman Church had forced into theirs.

The Litany consists of four parts. I. The INVOCATION. II. DEPRECATIONS. III. INTERCESSIONS. IV. SUPPLICATIONS.

II. *Invocation.* – The humble publican’s litany in the temple is the sum of ours: *Lord have mercy upon us*, to which our Church has added, *miserable sinners*. Here the invocation is addressed to each person in the Holy Trinity separately, because we confess each person by himself to be both God and Lord. This is not only an invocation, but at the same time a confession of faith in the Trinity. We first invoke “God the Father of Heaven,” as our Creator, Preserver, and Governor, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. We constantly depend upon His bounty for the supply of all our wants. We have sinned by breaking His laws, and are miserable by the punishment incurred. We are, therefore, to approach His footstool with a deep sense of our necessities, and of our own inability to help ourselves. We are to put our whole trust and confidence in Him, and to acknowledge that, having sinned before Him, we are no more worthy to be called His sons. We therefore invoke His mercy and forgiveness, as the Litany directs – *O God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners*. The second invocation is addressed to God the Son, Redeemer of the world. We here acknowledge Christ to be the Lord – the honourable, true, and only Son – the King of Glory – the everlasting Son – that sittest at the right hand of God – in the glory of the Father. Here we confess, with St. Thomas, “My Lord mind my God.” We place full reliance in His sacred promise, that they which have not seen Him, but yet have believed, shall be blessed. [St John 20:29.] We hereby acknowledge, that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself” [2 Cor. 5:19]: – “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” [Phil. 2:6.] As miserable sinners, we invoke him as our Redeemer, not of us only, but of *all* the world. We abhor the Calvinistic position that he died *for the elect only*, as utterly uncharitable, and contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture. We believe that he had power on earth to forgive sins; we therefore cry to him for mercy. We daily crucify him afresh in our affections and lusts. We neglect his salvation, his holy sacraments, his word, and

sacred ordinances. We have not been sufficiently thankful for his death and sufferings, nor careful to follow his example. Therefore we invoke him to be merciful to us miserable sinners, who are dead in trespasses and sins. We ought to have the greater confidence in this invocation, when we call to remembrance his own words: "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." We must not, however, deceive ourselves. Neither asking, seeking, nor knocking, will be of any avail, unless they are done in faith. We next invoke God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth us, and all the elect people of God. To him we were dedicated in baptism. By him we were born again in that holy sacrament. By baptism we became his temples. He helpeth our infirmities. He maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. He dwelleth in us. We acknowledge him to be the Comforter; therefore we invoke his pardon, because we have in many ways offended him. We have grieved him, quenched his good motions, resisted his impulses, neglected his gifts, and despised his graces. In spite of his sanctifying graces, we have cherished evil thoughts and pursued bad designs, and are no more worthy to be called his sons. These three invocations are followed by a fourth, addressed to the "holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, THREE PERSONS and ONE GOD." In the three first petitions, we worship the Unity in Trinity. In the fourth, we adore the Trinity in Unity. This is agreeable to the ancient practice of the Church universal, in which it was always customary solemnly to invoke each person in the Godhead first, and then the whole in one, and the same request for mercy. Every sin against any one person is a sin against the whole. The mercy and pardon which we desire does not proceed from one person singly, but from the undivided concurrence of the whole Trinity. These are not vain repetitions, but earnest and faithful supplications. It is, in fact, a complete confession of our faith in the ever-blessed Trinity. It will be in vain, however, for us "miserable sinners" to ask, unless we join our own endeavours. God's graces are not miraculous changes of our habits. They are spiritual assistances to our natural powers. He graciously seconds our endeavours, and helps our infirmities, in the use of His own appointed means. The whole congregation unites with the priest in these invocations, because everyone must earnestly pray to God in his own words. After which they leave the priest to lead the way, uniting their suffrages to his

petitions. The Church of England thus holds fast the faith once delivered to the saints. And one great excellency of the Liturgy is that, in so many way, and in all its different offices, it exhibits to our faith the whole work of our creation, redemption, and sanctification. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto God.” The invocation contains a solemn acknowledgment of the Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity.” In imitation of the poor publican, both priest and people cry, “*God be merciful to us, sinners.*” This humble and heartfelt supplication justified him, and, we trust, will acquit us. Justified, here means acquitted or pardoned. When such fervent prayers are used in faith and sincerity, there can be no doubt of their being effectual. Because He is faithful and just who has promised to hear our prayers, and to forgive us our sins.

II. *Deprecations.* – From invocation we proceed to “ask those things that are necessary both for our souls and bodies.” We begin by earnestly praying Him “not to remember our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers; neither to take vengeance of our sins.” This corresponds with the second commandment. In it He threatens to “visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.” We should take warning by the misdeeds of our ancestors, and not follow their bad examples. As far as it is in our power, we ought to prevent the contagion of sin and iniquity from spreading. This is not a prayer for the dead. It is for ourselves, that He would not visit us for their sins, because subsequent generations are frequently punished in this life for the sins of their forefathers. The threat in the Second Commandment applies entirely to temporal, and not to eternal punishments. In the latter case, it is the soul that sinneth only that shall die. We use in this petition the very words cited above, which God himself put into the mouths of the Jewish priesthood. Not to remember our sins is to blot them out of the book of His remembrance. It is to acquit us through Christ’s merits, and remit the punishment due to them. We beseech our merciful Redeemer to spare us, and not to be angry with us forever. We thus acknowledge that his anger is just. Although he may not see fit wholly to remove his chastisement, yet we beseech him that he would sweeten and allay those evils which our sins have brought upon us. To this petition the people add, *Spare us, good Lord.* To make these short prayers complete, the people ought to join mentally with the priest. Their responses *Good Lord, deliver us,* repeated aloud,

concludes the sense as well as the sentence. From this general deprecation in God's own words, we next pray to be delivered from evil and mischief, and from all evil accidents and injuries. To be delivered from the power of sin, which is the foundation, so that we may not follow nor be led by it. From the crafts and assaults of the devil, who is constantly tempting us, and is always seeking occasion against us. Above all, to be delivered from God's wrath, which might consume us in a moment, and which will certainly overtake us in this world, and from everlasting damnation, which is the sure consequence in the next. Shut out from His presence, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. That "He will deliver us from the curse of the law, and from the extreme malediction which shall light upon them that shall be set on the left hand," – "depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." We next pray to be delivered from the dominion of sin. Out of the heart are the issues of life. Blindness of the heart – such a delusion as to believe a lie, to fancy peace and assurance when there is no peace – is perhaps the worst evil of all. Therefore we commence with a deprecation of this mental blindness. Then follow all those sins which our Saviour says proceed out of the heart. "From pride, vainglory, and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness; from fornication, and all other deadly sin; and from all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil, *good Lord, deliver us.*" The first in the list is pride – a sin detestable to God, who hateth even a proud look. Vainglory is a species of pride which courts the praise of men more than the glory of God. It is a doing good works to be seen of men, and not from the love of God. Christ himself assures us that the greatest of sinners shall enter the kingdom of heaven sooner than hypocrites, and that "they shall receive greater condemnation" than other sinners. Hypocrisy is the outward semblance of virtue without the reality. It is a *form* of godliness without feeling its power. Hypocrites not only deceive themselves and their neighbours, but they attempt an impossibility – to deceive God. This is the climax of their folly. It shows men's entire want of faith in his omniscience. Hypocrisy is a continual lie, and the devil is therefore its father. To envy a man, is, in fact, to murmur against God, and to condemn his justice and mercy. It was the devil's sin, and caused the fall of our first parents. It often precedes hatred, against which we next pray. Hatred is incipient murder. Hatred and malice are generally its forerunners. They are directly opposed to our Saviour's summary of the second table of the law – to love our

neighbour as ourselves. We also pray to be delivered from all uncharitableness, both in thought, word, and deed. Uncharitableness also implies, from breaking the unity of the church by factions and schisms. The Church of Rome classes fornication among the venial sins; but the Protestant Church includes it among “all other *deadly* sins”. So does our Saviour, and so does St. Paul. It has preceded and caused the destruction of many nations. The cities of the plain were destroyed by fire and brimstone. Three-and-twenty thousand of the Israelites fell in *one day*, as a punishment for this crime. St. Paul places it in the forefront of his list of deadly sins which disinherit us from the kingdom of heaven. [Gal. 5:19.] And our Saviour has commanded us to regulate both our thoughts and looks, assuring us that the will in this case is as sinful as the deed. The deceits of the world are its pomps and vanities, which we renounced in our baptism. The deceits of the flesh are our sensual lusts, appetites, and desires. From which St. Peter bids us abstain, because they war against the soul. The deceits of the devil are all those lies and false glosses by which he ever tempts us to break God’s holy laws. Against all which sins the Church teaches us to pray, *Good Lord, deliver us*. After having petitioned against all sins, we then pray for deliverance from the instruments of God’s wrath. “From lightning and tempest, from plague, pestilence, and famine.” Also from the machinations of evil-disposed men, as “battle and murder.” From the three great judgments with which incorrigible nations are generally punished – plague, pestilence, and famine. From individual evil, such as sudden and unprepared death; perhaps inflicted in the commission of sin, or at least before we have made our peace with God. After deprecating personal dangers, we next pray against such as would deprive us of peace in the state and truth in the Church. “From all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion,” which would wrap the kingdom in fire and blood; – from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism,” which would deprive us of the comforts of religion, and the unity of the Church Catholic. This petition concludes with the last and worst of God’s judgments – “from hardness of heart and contempt of his word and commandments.” We here beg that he would not deliver us over to a reprobate mind, but that he would keep us in an humble, lowly, and obedient heart. That he would give us grace “to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly” before Him all the days of our lives. Hardness of heart is a very grievous judgment. It is never inflicted till after men have withstood every means of reformation. The day of grace and

mercy lasts as long as this life does but men may shorten their own day of grace by outliving the possibility of repentance. When they are past repentance their day of grace is concluded. This may be much shorter than their actual lives. Men may so harden themselves in sin as to make repentance morally impossible. We may, in just and righteous judgment, be given up to a state of impenitence and hardness of heart, from which we are taught to pray, “Good Lord, deliver us.” – “Sedition and privy conspiracy endeavour to subvert the government, false doctrine and heresy attempt to destroy religion, to which (on occasion of our late accursed civil war), since his Majesty’s happy restoration, was added, from rebellion and schism: and good reason was there so to do, since that rebellion and schism did murder one of our best kings, and thousands of his loyal subjects, and also pull the Church to pieces: we have seen the sad effects, and therefore we pray against the causes.” Deliverance from all these sins and evils is so exceedingly desirable that we cannot beg with too earnest and vehement a supplication. Therefore, in the two next petitions, we lay before our Redeemer all that he has done and suffered for us. In an agony, as it were, of devotion, we beseech, him, “by the mystery of his holy incarnation, his holy nativity and circumcision, his baptism, fasting, and temptation; his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion, his precious death and burial, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost,” *to deliver us*. He accomplished our redemption by all these means. Therefore we pray that for their sake he would forgive our sins, and remove their evil consequences, both in this life and in that which is to come. These expressions are neither singular nor improper. St. Paul besought the Romans, “by the mercies of God,” [Rom. 12:1.] and the Corinthians “by the meekness and gentleness of Christ”. [2 Cor. 10:1.] And as all Scripture was written for our learning, we may, with great propriety, follow so great an example, especially as we have no merits of our own to plead. In this earnest supplication the Church exhibits the whole scheme of our redemption – Christ’s humiliation – sufferings in the flesh – and, finally, his exaltation. The deprecatory part is concluded with a short but most pathetic prayer for deliverance: “In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth; in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment.” We especially require Divine assistance in time of tribulation. We are then but too apt to follow the counsel of Job’s wife. [Job 2:9.] We are then tempted to be impatient, and murmur under the rod, and to despair of his mercy. We

therefore pray that, if it be possible, we may not suffer such tribulation. Nevertheless, not our will but His be done. If it is His pleasure to inflict it, that he will strengthen and support us under it. Wealth here means prosperity of every sort, both temporal riches and the graces of the heart. We are then most apt to be presumptuous, and to forget God. But whether we enjoy prosperity or suffer adversity, the hour of death and the day of judgment will overtake us. In that awful hour, and in that dreadful day, it is only in the robe of Christ's righteousness that we can stand. St. Paul prayed that the deceased Onesiphorus might find mercy in that great day of the Lord. [2 Tim. 1:18.] How much more, therefore, may we, who are alive, and liable to fall every hour, pray for our own deliverance, when our hour of need arrives! Let us, therefore, give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, by living such holy and innocent lives, that our consciences may not condemn us. We shall then have confidence towards God, and a lively hope to be received into the arms of his mercy.

III. *Intercessions.* St. Paul commanded, "that first of all, supplications, prayers, *intercessions*, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." [1 Tim. 2:1-2.] This exhortation has been followed by the Universal Church in all ages. The intercessory prayers in our Liturgy have been collected from the best and oldest liturgies extant. In this division the order is exact and admirable. Every degree of men follow in their several stations. In humble acknowledgment of our own unworthiness, we first pray that he would hear us, *sinners*. We then pray that he would "rule and govern the holy Church universal in the right way." That sound doctrine may be preserved in it, and itself kept from heresies and schisms. Before his ascension, our Saviour revealed his will, and instructed his Apostles, in the mysteries of his kingdom. Afterwards he sent his Holy Spirit to lead them unto all truth. He left a form of sound words as the rule of our devotion. His sermon on the mount was a commentary on the decalogue, and the rule of our obedience; and his inspired Apostles left us the rule of faith in the creed. Whilst the Church holds these faithfully, she is governed in the right way; but as we can do no good thing of ourselves, we pray for the assistance of his Holy Spirit to rule and govern his holy Church universal in the right way of truth and sound doctrine. These intercessions are not complete till the people have added, *We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.* A long prayer is apt to tire the hearers and deaden their

devotion. The Litany is divided so as that the people may unite with the priest in earnest supplications. The people should utter their pious petition with pure hearts and humble but audible voices. As the Church is the common mother of all Christians, we pray for the whole Church everywhere. For “all who profess and call themselves Christians,” that they “may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit; in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.” We then pray for our own Church in particular, to which we owe the greatest love and duty. We begin accordingly with its chief members, “William, our king and governor”; and next all the royal family. That we may be quiet and peaceable, we pray that he may be orthodox, pious, and prosperous. Next follows a petition for the spiritual estate, “That it may please thee to illuminate all bishops, priests, and deacons, with true knowledge and understanding of thy word; and that both by their preaching and living they may set it forth and shew it accordingly.” This prayer will not be considered superfluous, when we call to remembrance St. Paul’s words: Lest, after they have preached salvation to others, they themselves may become castaways. We are to hold them very highly in love for their work’s sake, and obey them, that they may give their account for us at the last day with joy, and not with grief. To “illuminate” them, means that God would give them understanding hearts, rightly to divide the Word of Truth. That they may feed us with the wholesome fruit of God’s Word, and not fill us with the chaff of men’s conceits; for the priest’s lips are to preserve knowledge. And, besides, that they may illustrate their doctrines by the purity of their own lives and examples. We then pray that “the lords of the council and all the nobility may be endued with grace, wisdom, and understanding.” On their public and private virtue, wisdom in council, and valour in the field, depends, under God, the peace and safety of our sovereign and the people committed to his charge. We are therefore taught to pray, that they may be assisted with God’s grace, directed by his wisdom, and endued with humility, prudence, and understanding. After praying for all the nobility, we then remember all inferior magistrates, to whom are committed the preservation of the public peace, that they may “execute justice and maintain truth.” – “Justice and truth” establish the throne and exalt a nation, by advancing the honour, wealth, and strength of both. The whole duty of a man is to “love mercy, to do justice, and to walk humbly before God.” As these duties are equally imperative on magistrates as on individuals, we beseech God to give them

these graces, that we may lead peaceable and godly lives under them. St. Paul commands us to pray for all in authority; that God, who keeps the hearts of all in authority in his own hand, would dispose and turn them as seemeth best to his godly wisdom. God commanded Moses to speak unto Aaron, to bless the children of Israel. In obedience, therefore, the next petition is, “to bless and keep all thy people”; to bless them with the graces of obedience, humility, and devotion. To preserve them from political madness, and religious enthusiasm. To keep them from the snares of false teachers, heresies, and schisms in the Church; and sedition and rebellion in the state. No governors can be prosperous or happy while the people are turbulent and seditious. The diseases of the members always convey trouble to the head. The love of country requires us to pray for our own in the first place. In that we follow our Saviour’s example. But that charity which both he and his Apostles inculcated, enjoins us to beg also of him “to give to all nations unity, peace, and concord.” Wars and fightings arise from pride and ambition. This petition, therefore, is that all kings and governors may be endued with true humility and universal charity. The Church catholic is but one throughout the whole world; we pray that all its members may agree in the unity of its doctrine, discipline, and communion.

In the preceding intercessions, our prayers have all been directed for temporal blessings for ourselves and others. In those which follow, we intercede for spiritual gifts. First we pray for that gift of the Holy Spirit, which inspires us with the love and desire to serve and please God; that He would “give us an heart to love and dread him, and diligently to live after his commandments.” That He will enable us to add our own diligent or active endeavours to work out our own salvation, and assist us with His grace and Holy Spirit. In the next petition we beg for increase and growth in grace: “To lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word.” [James 1:21.] We beg that neither the cares of this world, nor the deceitfulness of riches, nor the lusts of other things entering into the heart, may choke the Word, and make it unfruitful. [Mark 4:12.] Grace is here those habits of piety and holiness that are wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. “To hear meekly the Word of God” is to hear it with humility and a teachable disposition, and to profit by it. Let us therefore pray that we may hear it in an honest and good heart, keep it, and bring forth its fruits with patience. [Luke 8:15.] To “receive it with pure affection” is to receive its light into the understanding, and its love into the

heart. We ask for grace to “bring forth the fruits of the Spirit”. The Apostle tells us, that the fruit of the Spirit is, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” After remembering ourselves and others within the Church, we next pray for those that are without. “To bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are *deceived*.” Erred willfully through the deceitfulness of sin; or who have been deceived by false teachers that have sewed pillows under their armholes, and made kerchiefs for their heads. [Ezek. 13:18.] Christ “is the way, the truth, and the life.” He is the way by his example, the truth by his doctrine, and the life by his purchasing it for us. [St. John 14:6.] Let us cleave therefore to him and to his Church, as the only safe and infallible way to salvation. Let us beware of the errors of the Romanists on the one hand, and the deceits of sectarians on the other; but adhere steadfastly to the doctrine, discipline, and communion of the Protestant Episcopal Church, which is free from the errors and corruptions of both. The Apostle warns those who think that they stand, to take heed lest they fall. And as the best Christians may and often do fall, the Church prays that they may be strengthened and comforted. We are assured that through Christ that strengthens us we can do all things. [Phil. 4:13.] Therefore we pray for a continual supply of spiritual strength, to establish and support those that do stand, lest they fall through presumption. We pray God to comfort feeble Christians, the weak hearted, with the joys of His Holy Spirit, lest they fall into despair of His mercy. We pray for the grace of repentance and strength for those who have actually fallen; that He would raise them up and restore them to faith and good works, and to His favour; “and finally to beat down Satan under our feet.” St. Paul assures the Romans, that “the God of peace shall bruise down Satan under your feet shortly.” Therefore we here pray that He will protect us from the power of this subtle adversary. In the next petition, we pray in general for all that are in affliction; that “He would succour, help, and comfort all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation.” That He would comfort and support them under their sorrows and necessities, and in His own good time give them a happy issue out of all their troubles. The next two petitions relate to those whose circumstances stand more peculiarly in need of our prayers. “To preserve all that travel by land or by water.” Especially those that are necessarily environed with dangers, “all women labouring of child.” Their great pain and peril excites the sympathy even of their enemies, their sorrows having been greatly multiplied, for the

transgression of our first mother. “All sick persons and young children,” who are peculiarly unable to help themselves: “and to show pity upon all prisoners and captives.” These may either be enemies taken in war, or those who are imprisoned for debt or crime. I remember when the words *and exiles* were added, in Scotland, to this petition. By exiles were meant the illustrious house of Stuart, our native and natural princes, and those who were expatriated on account of their attachment to them. Besides these, we beseech Him “to defend and provide for the fatherless children and widows.” This is a class of sufferers too frequently destitute of earthly friends. We therefore pray that He will be a father to the fatherless, and defend the cause of the widow; and that in time of trouble He will be a refuge for the oppressed. St. Paul particularly recommends this class of sufferers to kindness. “Honour widows that are widows indeed.” That is, who have no provision left for them, nor children to care for them. He forbids Timothy to provide publicly by the alms of the Church for any widow under the age of threescore. Younger widows, he presumes, will help themselves by labour, or gain relief by another marriage. Therefore the Church was not to be burdened with their support. We then beseech Him “to have mercy upon all men”. Not upon that precious few that can “neither be increased nor diminished,” [Confession of Faith, ch. iii. § 4.] but on every man, everywhere, Jew and Gentile, bond and free. In obedience to our Lord’s commends, to “love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.” [St. Matt. 5:44.] The next petition is, “to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts.” Here we follow his blessed example as well as precept. He prayed for his enemies and persecutors even while he was suffering the dreadful agonies of the cross. It is likewise a practical paraphrase of that petition in the Lord’s Prayer – “Forgive us as we forgive them that trespass against us.” After praying for ourselves and others, we then petition for the staff of life; “to give and preserve to our use the kindly fruits of the earth.” – “The eyes of all wait on thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and fillest all things living with plenteousness.” [Psalm 145:15–16.] – “He brings food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man; and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man’s heart.” [Psalm 104:15.] There can therefore be no prayer more appropriate. He has promised that seedtime and harvest shall never cease so

long as the earth remaineth. [Gen. 8:22.] But as a punishment for our sins, he may be provoked to send a famine on the land, as a general punishment. He may likewise make riches take wings, and deny the ability to procure “the kindly fruits of the earth” to particular individuals. This again is a paraphrase of our Lord’s Prayer: “Give us this day our daily bread.” By joining in this prayer with a lively faith and firm confidence in God’s good providence, we let our moderation be known unto all men. We fulfill St. Paul’s advice, to “be careful for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known unto God.” [Phil. 4:6.] Contentedness is great gain. It brings peace of mind, and is a prime instrument of temporal felicity. The intercessions conclude with a most sublime prayer, “to give us true repentance; to forgive us all our sins, negligences, and ignorances; and to endue us with the grace of His Holy Spirit; to amend our lives according to His Holy Word.” Repentance unto life is the gift of God. [Acts 11:18.] We therefore pray that He would bestow this grace upon us, and turn our hearts from disobedience to the wisdom of the just. It is His mercy in Christ Jesus that forgiveth all our iniquities, and healeth all our diseases. [Psalm 103:3.] Unless we amend our lives, our intercession will be mere hypocrisy; consequently will only add to our sins. “Sins” may be here understood as sins of commission; “negligences” as sins of omission. These are not so obvious as sins of commission, and therefore more likely to be neglected in self-examination. “Ignorances” are sinful when they proceed from our own neglect of procuring knowledge. When we sin from a voluntary mispersuasion, or from willful ignorance. When we willingly neglect our lighter sins, and do not seek to prevent them by a diligent and watchful spirit. Unavoidable ignorance is a misfortune, but not a sin. But to plead ignorance in ordinary cases is rather an aggravation than a palliation of our transgressions. Christ prayed for the guilty Jews, because “they knew not what they did.” St. Paul obtained mercy, because he persecuted the Church in ignorance. God winked at, that is, forgave, the times of ignorance. But now, when the full light of the Gospel has removed and left no excuse for ignorance, he commends all men everywhere to repent. Without the assistance of His Holy Spirit we can do no good thing, but with it, “we may arise again and amend our lives.” Therefore, we humbly beseech Him to give us the grace of repentance, that, as he which hath called us is holy, so we may be holy in all manner of conversation.

The Litany is not one long continued prayer, but is divided into many powerful and pathetic ejaculations. These increase in the fervour of devotion, the nearer we approach the conclusion. The united cry of priest and people seems now as if it would pierce the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. It is the most affecting part of the whole service. It strengthens our devotion, and excites a greater apprehension of our misery and distress. When ready to sink and perish, we cry out, “Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.” We again sum up the whole of the larger Litany in a shorter one – the *Kyrie eleison*. The greater part of the Litany is addressed to our Saviour. We now beseech him by his Divinity, as the Son of God, to help us. We next invoke him by his humanity, when he became “the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world,” to grant us his peace, which passeth all understanding; and, again, as the Lamb of God, to “have mercy upon us”. Finally, as we began with invoking each Person in the Godhead, so now we conclude with an earnest supplication to the Holy Trinity. We now cry out, like St. Peter in the storm, *Lord, save us, else we perish*. Have mercy on us, or we are undone forever. Have mercy upon us and pardon our sins, which shut us out from the favour of God the Father. Have mercy upon us, and entitle us to the atonement and reconciliation made by God the Son. Have mercy upon us, and help our infirmities by the comforting influences of the Holy Spirit. In the short Litany in the former part of the service, the people only repeated, *Christ, have mercy upon us*; but here they repeat all the versicles along with the minister. This produces a fire of devotion which must warm and affect the coldest heart.

IV. *Supplications*. This short Litany is useful and seasonable in all parts of our public worship. It is usually placed before that perfection of all prayer, the Lord’s Prayer, to usher it in, and prepare us for it. We ought not to presume to utter this Divine prayer with unsanctified lips; but earnestly desire that He will touch our lips with a coal from the altar, and so take away our iniquity. Then may we call God *our Father* when we have supplicated His grace and mercy. The supplications begin with the Lord’s Prayer, which gives life and value to our own meaner compositions. It is therefore inserted once at least into every office. After which the priest prays that God would not deal with us after our sins; and the people, neither reward us after our iniquities. [Psalm 103:10.] The word *after* here means *according to*, or as our sins deserve. The reward of iniquity is the wrath of God and its dreadful consequences. If He were strict to mark what we do

amiss, we could expect nothing but judgment. But His mercies are over all His works; and He is more, ready to hear than we are to pray. The priest then prompts the flagging attention of the people with, *Let us pray*. What follows are longer and more connected prayers. The prayer that follows commences with an address to our most merciful Father. It acknowledges, in the words of David, that He “despiseth not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrowful.” [Psalm 2:17.] And as we know not what to pray for as we ought, we beg of Him to assist our prayers, whensoever we are oppressed with troubles and adversities. [Rom. 8:26.] Sometimes our fellowmen oppress and injure us, but our spiritual enemy is ever seeking an occasion against us. Therefore we beg of Him mercifully to disperse these combinations. We next beg the grace of thankful hearts for all those blessings for which we have supplicated. We pray that He will keep us in the right way, and preserve us from schism. We petition for grace evermore to yield up our thanks within the sanctuary. That we may not seek strange fire, and heap up to ourselves false teachers, but worship Him always in His “holy church”. The people do not say Amen here. They reply, in the words of the Psalmist, “O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thy name’s sake.” [Psalm 44:26.] To which the minister immediately answers from the first verse of the same psalm. He commemorates the troubles, adversities, and persecutions which the Church in all ages has suffered. Of these we have read in both sacred and profane history, what were done in old times. Our fathers have declared to us the occurrences in their time; how He rescued our Church from Popery, superstition, and fanaticism. And the Episcopal Church of Scotland from persecution and penal statutes. “Our fathers have declared unto us,” how in Scotland five men dared not meet together to worship the God of their fathers. That a breach of this persecuting law subjected our spiritual fathers to transportation for life, and to be sold *for slaves* in the Colonies. He is still the same merciful and gracious God, ever ready to succour us now as He helped our fathers, and theirs “in the old time before them”. We therefore again cry for help for the “honour” of His name. “O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thine honour.” After this, in imitation of David, and in the words of the Seraphim, we give glory to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. But although we firmly trust that we shall be eventually delivered, yet our afflictions may be continued for a trial of our patience. We therefore alternately continue to pray for support. We beg of Christ to defend us from

our enemies, both ghostly and bodily. We beseech him to look graciously on our afflictions – to behold the sorrows of our hearts with pity and compassion – and mercifully to forgive those sins which are the causes of our sorrows and afflictions. This we are assured he will do, if we have prayed in true faith and contrition. Trusting, therefore, that our prayers are accepted, we beg of him favourably with mercy to hear us. We beseech him as the Son of David, as he assumed our nature, and became acquainted with our griefs and infirmities, to “have mercy upon us.” We redouble our cries. We cry more earnestly, and implore him, as our anointed Lord and Saviour, both now at this present, and ever afterwards, graciously to hear us. We conclude, by acknowledging that he only can deliver us from the body of our sins. That we place our whole trust and confidence in him; not only that he will pardon our past sins, but that he will protect us from all future sin and danger, and provide for our temporal wants and necessities. The priest again recalls our attention by repeating, *Let us pray*. The fervour of our interchangeable devotions must still continue, although we only join with him mentally. He now addresses the Father, beseeching Him mercifully to look upon our infirmities; and for the glory of His name, to turn from us all those evils which we most righteously have deserved. This most beautiful prayer was composed by Gregory, bishop of Rome, about the end of the sixth century. His successors afterwards idolaterized it, by the insertion of petitions to the Virgin and sundry saints. The English reformers expunged the idolatrical sentences. As a security, they added the words, “Grant that in all our troubles we may put our whole trust in thy mercy.” By this addition they bore their decided testimony against Popish corruptions and idolatry. We pray, although our sins have deserved punishment, yet if it is His good pleasure, that we may escape the afflictions of which we are apprehensive. In this we have our blessed Lord’s own example. He prayed that, if it were possible, the cup of his afflictions might ask from him. We beg His grace to assist us in “ever more serving Him in holiness and pureness of living.” We are conscious that of ourselves we are unable to help ourselves, or to attain to that holiness without which no man can see the Lord. We therefore beseech Him to give us the grace of His Holy Spirit to help our infirmities.

Parliament. The Litany is followed by some occasional prayers and thanksgivings. The first in common use is the prayer for the High Court of Parliament. It is only used during the session. It was added after the restoration. The “consultations” of the Long Parliament destroyed the

constitution and liberties of the empire. That such a grievous calamity may not befall us again, we pray that he would “be pleased to direct and prosper all their consultations to the advancement of God’s glory, the good of the Church, the safety, honour, and welfare of our sovereign, and his dominions.” The sovereign acts by the advice of his Parliament, which is the great council of the nation. Should their “consultations” be inimical to the Church or State, we are then visited with calamities. Since the fatal “breaking in upon the constitution” no prayer could be more appropriate. Socinians, Dissenters, and Papists now legislate for our Protestant Church. Men who are sworn to extirpate her. Cruel, indeed, will their tender mercies be. These are all banded together for its destruction; and, alas! its own members are lukewarm and indifferent to its interests. We ought, therefore, to cry earnestly for help and assistance. That our legislators may have the fear of God before their eyes. That they may endeavour “to settle all things upon the best and surest foundation. That peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations.” In this prayer we style the king most religious and gracious. He is the sovereign, Parliament are but subjects. The kingly office, being God’s ordinance, is sacred. The king is God’s minister, both for good and evil to his people. He is the Church’s nursing father, defender, and conservator. The Church is called holy with reference, and in connection with its head in heaven. So is the king religious and gracious in reference to his head and only ruler. God keeps the hearts of kings in His own hand, therefore he ought to be religious and holy. David is called the man after God’s own heart. His *private* life had many flaws in it. But it was his *public* conduct which entitled him to that distinction. The Psalmist gives the reason for it – because *he fed Israel with a faithful and true heart, and ruled them prudently with all his power*. We therefore in effect pray that our sovereign may feed our Israel with a faithful and true heart. To enable him to do so, we pray that wise counsellors may be placed round his throne, and that all their *good* “consultations” may be prospered for our advantage, and God’s glory.

All Conditions of Men. – Then follows in the afternoon service and in the morning service of such days as the Litany is not read, the Collect for all conditions of men. This is an epitome of the Litany, and is in accordance with St. Paul’s instructions: “Let prayers, and supplications, and intercessions be made for all men.” It recognizes His divine power and

providence as the Creator and Preserver of all men, in whose behalf we become humble suitors. “All sorts and conditions of men” includes those whom we pray for by name in the Litany. It also means, by “conditions,” “all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation,” whose particular evils we deprecate in the Litany. It intercedes for the spread and increase of the Gospel; that God’s ways may be known to all, men, and his saving health unto all nations. It remembers before God, in the most charitable sense, the Church catholic. And that we may not think that it is any one particular Church, it explains it to be “all who profess and call themselves Christians.” It thereby teaches us to pray for our enemies; for some particular Churches call us heretics, and others are sworn to extirpate us. On the contrary, we pray that our enemies and those who sit in darkness may be blessed with God’s “saving health,” and a more charitable disposition. We pray for all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics. That He would bring them and all other lost sheep home, that they may be saved with the remnant of the true Israelites. That they “may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.” Our Saviour prayed earnestly that his Church might be one. St. Paul recommended the Corinthians “to be all of one mind”. [1 Cor. 1:10.] He bids the Ephesians keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. [Eph. 4:3–6.] And the reason he assigns is, because there is but *one body*, and *one spirit* to animate it. The bond of peace means – one fellowship or communion of saints. We then beg that He will sweeten and allay the afflictions with which He is pleased to visit our fellow creatures. To give them patience under them, and, finally, a happy issue out of all their troubles.

There is another short occasional Collect for mercy. In this devout prayer, we beseech God, “whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, to receive our humble petitions.” In it we acknowledge our inability to help ourselves, and the misery of our natural state. “We are tied and bound with the chain of our sins.” We then pray for pity and liberty: “Let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose us.” We set all these petitions before Him in the name and mediation of our only Saviour and Redeemer.

Thanksgiving. – After so many full and comprehensive prayers for temporal and spiritual blessings, we now add the delightful duty of thanksgiving. The Hallelujah, the Gloria Patri, and the Psalms, are all acts of thanks giving. But the reviewers thought that a more particular form was necessary; and therefore the occasional thanksgivings were added in the

reign of James I. This general thanksgiving was added at the last review in the reign of Charles II. It is said to have been the composition of Bishop Sanderson. “A joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful.” [Psalm 147:1.] It commences, in the words of St. Paul, with acknowledging Him to be Almighty, and the Father of all mercies; and ourselves to be unworthy servants. It then gives thanks for our creation and redemption, preservation, and all the blessings of life. Besides returning thanks in general, there is an especial clause for those who have received some eminent personal mercy. It gives such an opportunity to offer up their public thanksgiving for the same. Those especially who have had the public prayers of the Church should never omit this duty after their recovery, lest they incur our Saviour’s rebuke to the nine ungrateful lepers. We bless His holy name, that “grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” [John 1:17.]; and that “of His abundant mercy He hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” [1 Peter 1:3.] We thank Him for all the blessings of this life; – for health, wealth, and comfort; for the means of grace here; and for the hope of glory hereafter. As the grace of thankfulness is the *gift of God*, we beseech Him to give us that grace, and to make *our hearts* unfeignedly thankful; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. We pray to be preserved from hypocrisy, by drawing near to Him with our lips, while our hearts are far from Him. We beseech Him that He will enable us to devote our lives entirely to His service, and walk before Him in holiness and righteousness all our days. To walk in the ways of His laws, and in the works of His commandments, is the surest sign of a thankful heart. Therefore, we beg of Him to direct, sanctify, and govern our hearts and bodies. It concludes with a Doxology, ascribing all honour and glory to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings. – The Litany is so complete and comprehensive that it includes all the evils of life. Nevertheless it was thought good to add special collects with corresponding thanksgivings for special calamities – *To be used before the two final prayers of the Litany, or of morning and evening prayer.* These are, I. For rain; II. For fair weather; III. In the time of dearth and famine; IV. In time of wars and tumults; V. In the time of any common plague or sickness; VI. For those that are to be admitted into holy orders.

The five Collects are only used when the calamities occur, against which they are deprecations. The first two were in the first prayer book of

Edward VI. The next three were added to the second book.

I. “In a dry and thirsty land where no water is” the kindly fruits of the earth are dried up, so that we cannot enjoy them in due season. This prayer, therefore, beseeches our Heavenly Father to send us such moderate rain and showers, that we may receive the fruits of the earth to our comfort and his honour. In the corresponding thanksgiving, the words of the Psalmist are most appropriately introduced. “Thou, O God, sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance, and refreshed it when it was weary.” [Psalm 68:9.]

II. This Collect commences by owning “that for the sin of man He did once drown the world,” – “and afterwards of his great mercy, did promise never to destroy it so again.” It then acknowledges that our sins have worthily deserved this judgment; “yet upon true repentance,” begging a change of weather, that we may learn from his mercy to amend our lives. In the thanksgiving, “we praise and glorify his holy name for his mercy.” And we farther promise, “always to declare his loving kindness from generation to generation.”

III. Here we beseech God to behold the afflictions of his people. At the dedication Solomon prayed, that, “if there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them,” He would hear and relieve them on their supplication in His house. [1 Kings 8:37.] Trusting to his mercy, and remembering his mighty works in the old time before us, we pray that “the scarcity and dearth may be mercifully turned into cheapness and plenty.” In that distressing famine in Samaria, when women ate their own children, He sent abundance in one night. [2 Kings 7:1.] So dreadful was the famine, and so incredible did its relief appear, that a lord of the court said, “Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?” His arm is not shortened now, that He cannot help when we are sore pressed. In the thanksgiving, we acknowledge that it is of His gracious goodness that He has heard the devout prayers of His Church, and turned our dearth and scarcity into cheapness and plenty.

IV. The prayer in time of war and tumults, commences with an acknowledgment of the irresistible power of the “King of all kings, and Governor of all things.” We then pray for deliverance from our enemies, to “abate their pride, assuage their malice, and to confound their devices.” We are deeply sensible that the battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift, but that it is God only that giveth the victory. Here we pray even for

our enemies; that their evil dispositions of pride and malice may be amended, and that their devices against us may be disappointed. In the thanksgiving, we own Him to be our strong tower of defense against our enemies; that He, having fought for us, has delivered us from being a prey to them. To this there is added a thanksgiving for having appeased seditious tumults. It beseeches him to grant to us all, the grace of obedience, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, and continually offer unto Him our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

V. The fifth occasional prayer begs pity upon us, being miserable sinners, when visited with sickness and mortality. And as He accepted an atonement for the plague in the wilderness in the time of Moses, and for the pestilence in King David's time; so now He would command the destroying angel to cease from punishing, and withdraw from us this plague and sickness. For this mercy there are two forms of thanksgiving. We thank Him that in the midst of judgment He remembered mercy; for which "we offer our souls and bodies, to be a living sacrifice unto Him."

VI. The sixth occasional prayer is, "in the Ember weeks, to be said every day, for those that are to be admitted into Holy Orders." Ember is derived from a Saxon word, signifying a *circuit* or *course*. It also signifies abstinence. Ember days are "certain days set apart for consecrating to God the four seasons of the year, and for imploring his blessing, by fasting and prayer, upon the *ordinations* performed in the Church at such times. This is in conformity with the practice of the Apostles. When they separated persons for the work of the ministry, they prayed and fasted before laying on their hands. It will become us, therefore, to address Heaven at this time after the same manner. Praying that God would be pleased so to govern the minds of the bishops, that they may admit none into *holy orders*, but such as are duly qualified for the discharge of that sacred function. Likewise beseeching Him that those who shall be ordained to serve at the altar may, by their exemplary lives and zealous labours, turn many unto righteousness. The ordination of fit persons to serve in the sacred ministry of God's Church is of vast importance to its welfare, as well as to the salvation of its members. It is therefore proper that all Christians, who are so much concerned in the consequences of it, should use their best endeavours to make it successful and efficacious. This cannot be better done than by their united prayers and fastings, which have always been esteemed an admirable method to procure God's favour and blessing on such occasions. Besides,

the time of *ordinations* being publicly stated, the people have the advantage and liberty of making their objections, if they have anything material to offer against the candidate for *holy orders*. This privilege, which the ancient Church always allowed, is very much encouraged by the Church of England. She gives free leave to every man to declare, if he knoweth any impediment or crime in any persons presented to be ordained, and calls upon them to come forth and show the crimes alleged.” [Nelson’s Festivals, 410, 412.] These prayers for Ember days were placed in the Liturgy prepared for the Church in Scotland in the time of Charles I, of which we were not worthy. In that Liturgy, all the occasional prayers, with their corresponding thanksgivings, make part of the Litany.

The morning and evening service throughout the year concludes with the prayer taken from the works of St. Chrysostom and the Apostolic blessing, which have been already noticed above. [Wheatley on the Common Prayer. Bishop Sparrow’s *Rationale*. Hole’s Lectures on the Liturgy, vol, ii.]

Chapter 11.

The Commandments – Collect for the King – Epistle. – Gospel – Nicene Creed – Offertory – Prayer for the Church militant – Exhortation – Invitation – Confession – Absolution – Sentences – Lauds and Anthems – Consecration – The Christian Sacrifice – The Benedictions – The Post-communion – The Invocation – The Gloria in Excelsis – The Blessing.

At the beginning of the Reformation in England, the Communion was celebrated every Sunday. The Church, hoping that her members will frequently communicate, has ordered all the communion service to be said every day short of the actual consecration. The Rubric says, “Upon Sundays and other holidays (if there be no communion), shall be said all that is appointed at the communion, until the end of the general prayer (for the whole state of Christ’s Church militant here in earth). And there shall be no celebration, except there be a convenient number to communicate with the priest, according to his discretion.”

Commandments. – The communion office is always read in the Altar. It commences, as all our prayers ought to do, with our Lord’s own Prayer, – the rule of our desires. To which is subjoined, a short but most sublime prayer for purity of heart. We pray that the thoughts of our hearts may be cleansed by the inspiration of His holy Spirit. That we may be enabled by

His assistance to love and serve Him, and keep His commandments. The priest, standing up and facing the people, immediately reads the commandments with an audible voice. While these are distinctly published, we ought every one to confess, in his heart, his own particular breaches of each. Of ourselves we are frail, and unable diligently to keep them. The Church, therefore, has enabled the people to beg forgiveness for past transgressions, and grace to keep each commandment for the time to come. “*Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.*” This public examination of ourselves is much more solemn than our private devotions at home can be. It is therefore peculiarly appropriate before the commemoration of the eucharistic sacrifice. After reading the law, there is a collect for the king, who is the keeper of the two tables of the law that we have just heard. That we and all his subjects, duly considering that he reigns by God’s authority, may faithfully obey him. Having prayed for the Church, which greatly depends on the king’s welfare, we then pray for ourselves in the collect for the day. After which some portion of one of the epistles is read. At the reading of the epistle, the people rise up from their knees and sit down. The epistle generally reminds us of some of those duties which we heard enjoined in the commandments. Then follows the Gospel. It is always taken out of one of the four Evangelists, or the Acts of the Apostles. In it we always hear something which Christ himself spoke for our instruction, or else what he did for the confirmation of our faith. Hence, the people stand to hear the Gospel read. This not only shows our alacrity in its defense, but our reverence and respect for Christ’s words and works. When it is announced, the people are enjoined to say audibly, *Glory be to thee, O Lord.* When the priest has concluded the Epistle, he says, “Here endeth the epistle.” He does not say, Here endeth the Gospel; but immediately repeats the Nicene Creed. It is the sum and substance of the Gospel, and is appointed to be repeated by all the people still *standing*. It comprehends all the leading doctrines which Christ revealed in the Gospel. In the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, we renew our baptismal vow. We ought publicly to own and confess our faith in the whole Gospel of Christ, before we be admitted to receive it. And, therefore, the Church has appointed this creed to be read here. It is the same in substance as the Apostles’ Creed, but more comprehensive and explanatory. The sermon follows immediately after the Nicene Creed, and which, with the blessing, concludes the ordinary daily services.

The Offertory, etc. – The Rubric directs the priest to return to the Lord’s table, and begin the offertory, saying one or more of the sentences. These are chosen out of various parts of Scripture, to excite the communicants to give something to pious and charitable uses. Without active charity, says St. James, our faith is dead. While these are reading, a deacon, if present, or churchwarden, gathers the alms of the people in a decent basin. He then reverently brings it to the priest, who humbly presents and places it upon the holy table. In the communion office for the Episcopal Church in Scotland, the priest is directed to say, “Blessed be thou, O Lord God, forever and ever; thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in heaven and in the earth is thine: thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as Head above all; both riches and honour come of thee, and of thine own do we give unto thee.” This is a more solemn acknowledgment of God’s bounty, and of our dependence on Him, than the silent oblation in the English office. The Rubric next directs the priest to place the bread and wine on the holy table. This is a solemn acknowledgment of God’s sovereignty over all His creatures. The custom of any lay person placing the elements on the altar, before the morning service commences, is inconsistent both with the Rubric and with decorum.

Church Militant, etc. – The alms and devotions for our poor brethren and the clergy, together with the oblation of bread and wine, being placed on the altar, we are now called to another branch of charity. Our alms are confined to a few indigent neighbours, but our prayers may extend to all mankind. The priest, therefore, bids us join with him in praying “for the whole state of Christ’s Church militant here in earth.” The primitive Church always used a form of intercession for the Church catholic. Most liturgies place this prayer after the consecration; but in the English office it follows the act of placing the elements on the altar. The Liturgy of Jerusalem says, “Let us pray for the gifts that are offered the Lord God: that the Lord our God, receiving them upon his heavenly altar for a sweet-smelling savour, would send down upon us the Divine grace, and the gift of His Holy Spirit. Let us pray for the peace and tranquility of the whole world, and of the holy Churches of God. Let us pray for those who have offered these gifts, and for whom everyone has offered, or has in his thoughts; and for all the people that stand about the altar, – for the remission of our sins, and the propitiation of our souls. Let us pray for every soul that is in affliction or

calamity, and stands in need of the mercy and help of God; and for the conversion of those that be in error; for health to the sick; for deliverance to the captives; and for rest to our fathers and brethren who have gone before us.” [Printed by James Bettenham, 1744.] It appears, therefore, that the primitive Church prayed for that part of the Church which had departed this life in His faith and fear. “They had a persuasion,” says Mr. Reeves, “that the interval between death and the end of the world is a state of expectation and imperfect bliss, in which the souls of the righteous wait for the completion and perfection of their happiness, at the consummation of all things; and, therefore, while they were praying for the Catholic Church, they thought it not improper to add a petition in behalf of that larger and better part of it, which had gone before them; that they might altogether obtain a blessed and glorious resurrection.” We do not here pray for the dead, but we praise God for their good examples, which we beg for grace to follow. We pray for all the different states and degrees of which the Church is composed. For kings and all in authority, for the clergy and the people, that they may all confess His holy name, agree in the truth of His holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Exhortation, Invitation. — Two exhortations follow, which are read to warn the people of the necessity of communicating. A third exhortation is read during the celebration. The former was to increase the communicants, this to improve their disposition. The minister excites the people to the duties of self-examination and thanksgiving. He reminds them of their great advantage, if, with “a true penitent heart and lively faith, they receive that holy sacrament.” And, at the same time, he warns them of the danger of receiving the same unworthily. He exhorts them to give most hearty thanks to the Holy Trinity. To God for creation and preservation; to Christ for redemption; and to the Holy Spirit for sanctification. But especially to Christ, who instituted these holy mysteries as pledges of his love. This is expressed in clear and affectionate language, and greatly assists in making up the deficiencies of our preparation. It also excites a holy and devout temper of mind, for the performance of this great duty, and for the reception of its benefits. At the conclusion of the exhortation, the minister invites all who are religiously and devoutly disposed “to draw near with *faith*, and take this holy sacrament to their comfort.” These words warn the people that they are invited into Christ’s more especial presence. The holy feast is now ready, and the guests prepared by due instruction. The priest, who is

the steward of these mysteries, invites them to draw near; but clothed in the wedding garment. The words “with fear” show that this drawing near, means spiritually, as St. Paul says, “Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.” So as to consider that Christ is there present with us, and ready to communicate to us his own most blessed body and blood, to preserve our souls and bodies unto everlasting life.

Confession, Absolution, etc. – We cannot show our faith in Christ as we ought until we have confessed those sins for which he died. Therefore the minister calls upon us to unite with him in making our humble confession, meekly kneeling on our knees. Both priest and people now fall low upon their knees. The priest is directed to kneel only three times in the whole office, and this is one of them. During the exhortation and invitation the people stood. As so many malefactors, we now prostrate ourselves before the Judge of all the earth. “We acknowledge and bewail the manifold sins and wickedness which we from time to time have committed, in thought, word, and deed, against his Divine majesty.” We profess most earnestly to repent of our sins. We beseech Him to pardon the past, and to give us grace “to serve and please Him in newness of life.” All which is done in such humble and pathetic language that, if our repentance is only as sincere as the form is excellent, we cannot be in a better frame of mind. The people continue in humble prostration, but the priest *stands up*, and, in his master’s name, assures all those who, with true faith, turn unto him, of forgiveness of sins. There cannot be a fitter opportunity for the priest to exercise the authority committed to him, as when so many penitent sinners are begging for mercy. It invigorates the dejected penitent, and comforts him with the assurance of pardon. We have now confidence towards God, that He will fulfill all His promises. Therefore, we steadfastly believe that, upon our sincere repentance, we are absolved from all our former offences, and that God will assist us with His grace to serve and please Him in newness of life. All the benefits of sacerdotal absolution depend entirely on our believing the Word and promises of God, which are its foundation.

The Sentences. – These contain the very promises on which the foregoing absolution is grounded. If duly weighed, they must satisfy the timorous, heal the broken hearted, and utterly banish the blackest clouds of sorrow and despair.

The Lauds and Anthems. – Having thus exercised our faith, and so, in heart and mind, risen above the world, we are now ready to join with angels

and glorified feints in praising and adoring the God of our salvation. For the better performance of which, the priest calls upon us to *lift up our hearts*. This is purely primitive, and as old as Christianity itself. [See St. James' Liturgy, ante, p. 60.] The priest then turns himself to the Lord's Table, and acknowledges, in the special presence of the Divine Majesty, *that it is very meet, and right, and our bounden duty, to give thanks to Him*. And now all present apprehend, by faith, that they are members of the Church triumphant, and as if they were in the midst of that blessed society. We then join with them in "singing the triumphal hymn to his exalted glory, shouting, glorifying, crying aloud, and saying," – *With angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, etc.* Although our bodies are on earth, yet, in this seraphic hymn, we adore and magnify our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, with the spirits of just men made perfect, and the whole host of heaven. This is called the *Trisagium*, from the word holy being thrice repeated, in imitation of the heavenly host. [Isa. 6:1–3.] When we celebrate the nativity, resurrection, ascension, and the mission of the Holy Ghost, there are proper prefaces for each occasion.

The Consecration. – If ever our hearts be duly prepared to receive the blessed body and blood of our Lord and Saviour, it must be now. The priest now acknowledges our unworthiness of so great a mercy. But lest the foregoing exultations might savour of presumption, he allays our confidence by an act of humility. He excuses his own and his people's unworthiness, by professing that "we do not presume to come to this holy table, trusting in our own righteousness, but in his manifold and great mercies." He then commemorates God's mercy in giving his Son to die for us – the all-sufficient merit of his death – and his command for doing this in remembrance of him. Whatever is now said or done reminds us of something on which to exercise our faith. The bread and wine set apart for consecration reminds us of God's eternal purpose and determinate counsel, to offer up his Son a *sacrifice* for the sins of the *whole* world. The priest reads the prayer of consecration, and officiates *alone*. None of the people either repeats with him, or in any way assists him. This reminds us that Christ trod the winepress *alone*. He *alone* accomplished the work of our salvation. No mere creature in anything contributed towards it. Therefore, we should believe him *alone* to be our Mediator and Advocate. When we hear these words – *who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread,*

– we are then by faith to behold the institution of the Last Supper by our Lord, and his distributing it with his own blessed hands to his Apostles. Breaking the bread should remind us of his grief and pain; his bitter agony and passion – his blessed body broken, his hands and feet pierced with nails – and all this for our sins and for our salvation. The priest’s taking the cup should remind us of the blood and water which issued from his sacred side, emblems of the two sacraments. This sacrament was ordained, not only to show forth the death of Christ, but also the *manner* of his death; that is, by the shedding of his blood. Because, “without shedding of blood, there is no remission.” By denying the cup to the laity, the Church of Rome does not show forth the manner of Christ’s death. When we hear the words of consecration, as pronounced by our Lord himself – *This is my body, this is my blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins* – we are then steadfastly to believe that these symbols represent or signify our Lord’s body and blood. That they are fit to be offered to God as the great Christian sacrifice. That, though the bread and the wine remain the same in nature, yet, in mystery and signification, they represent the body and blood of Christ. Although bread and wine of themselves, they are the body and blood of Christ to our understanding and faith, and in power and effect. It is the spirit of Christ descending upon the elements of bread and wine, and uniting with them, which makes them his body and blood. Without faith, the receiver of this sacrament cannot obtain any benefit. But faith cannot alter anything but ourselves. It was Christ who made the bread and the cup his body and blood at the institution, and not the faith of the Apostles. He still continues to make it so, when his priest does what he did and commanded to be done. And forasmuch as he is now in heaven, and operates here by his Holy Spirit, it is that Spirit, and not the faith of the receiver, which makes the elements Christ’s body and blood. In the communion office for the Episcopal Church in Scotland, there is an invocation, that God would “vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with His Word and Holy Spirit, these his gifts and creatures of bread and wine, that they may become the body and blood of his most dearly beloved Son.” This agrees with the Jerusalem Liturgy, already cited, which says – “Send down thy Holy Spirit upon us, and upon these gifts, which are here set before thee, that, by his descent upon them, he may make this bread the holy body of thy Christ, and this cup the precious blood of thy Christ; that they may be to all who partake of them, for remission of sins and for life everlasting.” The Church catechism

teaches that the benefit which communicants receive is – “The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ; as our bodies are by the bread and wine.” In this sacrament we receive spiritual food to nourish and preserve that new or spiritual life which we received in the sacrament of baptism. This Divine food is as necessary for our spiritual life as our daily bread is for our natural. This virtue proceeds wholly from the will and power of Christ. By his Holy Spirit, he sanctifies the natural elements, and makes them his body and blood to all spiritual intents and purposes. This sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving is called, by St. Paul, “the communion of the body and blood of Christ.” [1 Cor. 10:16.] Because it conveys all the benefits of Christ’s natural body and blood to those who worthily receive it – the pardon of their past sins on sincere repentance [St. Matt. 26:28.] – fresh supplies of Divine grace – and is a principle of immortal life to their souls and bodies. [St. John 6:53–54.] In this heavenly feast we renew our covenant with God. By these pledges we are assured of His reconciliation and favour, and of peace and friendship with our fellow communicants. By partaking of the sacrifice of Christ, we have secured a title to all the benefits purchased by it. By eating and drinking his body and blood, we are made one body and one spirit with him. Therefore, as our bodies are united to his body, and nourished by it, we have a title to a glorious resurrection, and shall be quickened by his spirit, which thus dwells in us. In offering to God the memorial of Christ’s sacrifice, we offer up ourselves likewise in union with him, which is what St. Paul calls offering up our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, and which, he says, is our reasonable service.

The Benedictions. – The officiating minister first receives himself the communion in both kinds. He then administers to such clergymen as are present. The lay communicants approach the altar, and kneel down; but they do not help themselves. God, as the master of the feast, has appointed stewards to give them their meat in due season. The steward of His mysteries, the priest, first applies the merits of Christ’s death to each person in particular. To each person, in particular, he says, singly, – *The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for THEE, preserve THY body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for THEE, and feed on him in thy heart, by faith, with thanksgiving.* This reminds the devout communicant that our Lord died for *him in particular*, as well as for *all men* in general. He is then taught to feed *by faith* on these

holy mysteries, as a feast upon this sacrifice, because they are not bodily but spiritual food. Thanksgiving is the natural consequence of faith. No man can be truly thankful unless he actually believes in Christ. Hence we are required to receive the sacred symbols on our knees. This is to remind us that Almighty God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, is the only object of religious worship. That our blessed Redeemer is especially present, and offering his own body and blood to us; that so we may exhibit our *faith*, express our sense of once his goodness and of our own unworthiness, in the most humble posture. There is no adoration of the symbols; we abhor such idolatry, it has no imaginable place in our hearts. By this bodily worship, we prove that we “discern the Lord’s body,” and that we believe that he is present with us in a sacramental sense. The devout communicant now believes that “Christ dwells in him, and mate he in Christ; that Christ is one with him, and he with Christ.” He now believes that God has sealed the pardon of our sins in his own blood.

The Post-Communion – Lord’s Prayer. – Our Saviour finished his Last Supper with a hymn. It is supposed to have been the Paschal hallelujah. In imitation of this Divine example, all Churches have finished this feast with solemn forms of prayer and thanksgiving. Having received Christ in our hearts, his own prayer seems the most appropriate commencement, as if he lived and spake in us. St. John says, “to as many as receive Christ he gives power to become sons of God.” We can therefore now with confidence call him, *Our Father*.

The Invocation. – *O Lord and Heavenly Father, etc.* This prayer was removed from its proper place, after the prayer of consecration, to the Post-communion. It still remains there in the Scottish office. The holy eucharist is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. It is called the *unbloody sacrifice* of Christ’s body and blood. St. James’ liturgy, so often quoted, says, – “We sinners offer to thee, O Lord, this tremendous *and unbloody sacrifice.*” [Bettenham’s edit. 1744.] Christ changed the kind of sacrifice. He instituted the pure offering of Malachi, the unbloody sacrifice of his own body and blood, in the place of the bloody sacrifices of the Jewish Church. These all pointed forward, as our memorial sacrifice points backward, to the sacrifice *once* for all offered on the cross. The Church of England, accordingly, in this prayer, desires God, “mercifully to accept this our *sacrifice* of praise and thanksgiving.” Under the law a sacrifice of thanksgiving required a material gift or oblation. This was “unleavened cakes mingled with oil.” [Lev. 7:11–

14.] In this our commemorative sacrifice, the Church regards the elements of bread and wine as the material part. The priest now does what Christ himself it did at the institution. He *offers* the memorial of Christ's body and blood, and shows forth his death, both to God and man, until his coming again at the last day. In this prayer also we obey the instructions of St. Paul: –“And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively this sacrifice unto thee [Rom. 12:1.]; humbly beseeching thee that all we, who are partakers of this holy communion, may be fulfilled with thy grace and heavenly benediction.” The other prayer is fuller of praises and acknowledgments, and very suitable to minds which are duly sensible of the great benefits of this sacrament. As the Church has provided two prayers of invocation, the clergy might use the first after the prayer of consecration. That is its most natural and proper place, and where it originally stood. The second prayer would be a more suitable thanksgiving, and might be used in the Post-communion instead of the former.

The Gloria In Excelsis. – After the foregoing invocation, the people, with an audible voice, join with the priest in saying – *Glory be to GOD on high, etc.* The first part of this sublime hymn was sung by the angels at our Saviour's birth. The latter part is ascribed to Telesphorus, who lived about the end of the first century. It is the most ancient hymn extant; and has been used by both the Greek and Latin Churches. In the first book of Edward VI, it stood after the collect for *purity*, but is now placed with greater propriety at the conclusion. Our hearts being strengthened and refreshed by the body and blood of Christ, we yield him most hearty praise in the most sublime manner that we can ever do it on earth. We beseech him, as the only-begotten Son of the Father – that takes away the sins of the world, to receive our prayer – and as sitting at the right hand of God, to have mercy upon us. We adore and magnify his Divine holiness, his absolute dominion over us; and acknowledge his, together with the Holy Spirit's, infinite height in the glory of God the Father.

The Blessing. – The priest then, at his discretion, reads one or more of the occasional collects at the end of the office. After which the communicants are dismissed with the sacerdotal blessing. He stands, and, in St. Paul's words, bids “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst us and remain with us always.” [Phil. 4:7.] The latter part is the

Christian paraphrase on the legal blessing. [Num. 6:24–26.] We were baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, and now, having addressed God by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, the priest blesses us in their name, and by their authority. [Beveridge's great Necessity and Advantage of frequent Communion. Reeves on the Common Prayer. Ancient Liturgy of the Church of Jerusalem, 1744. Comber's Companion to the Altar.]

THE END.