Both Kinds of Confession relative to Penance.

The first and antientest that mentioneth this confession is Origen, by whom it may seem that men, being loth to present rashly themselves and their faults unto the view of the whole Church, thought it best to unfold first their minds to some one special man of the clergy, which might either help them himself, or refer them to an higher court, if need were. "Be therefore circumspect," saith Origen, "in making choice of the party to whom thou meanest to confess thy sin; know thy physician before thou use him: if he find thy malady such as needeth to be made public, that others may be the better by it, and thyself sooner helpt, his counsel must be obeyed and followed."

That which moved sinners thus voluntarily to detect themselves both in private and in public, was fear to receive with other Christian men the mysteries of heavenly grace, till God's appointed stewards and ministers did judge them worthy. It is in this respect that St. Ambrose findeth fault with certain men which sought imposition of penance, and were not willing to wait their time, but would be presently admitted communicants. "Such people," saith he, "do seek, by so rash and preposterous desires, rather to bring the priest into bonds than to lose themselves. In this respect it is that St. Augustine hath likewise said, "When

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1 Origen, in Psal. xxxvii. [Hom. ii. § 6. "Circumspice diligentius cui debras contereri peccatum tuum. Proba prius medicum, cui debes causas languoris expose, ut ha demum si quid illa dixerit, quia se prius et eruditum medicum ostenderit et misericordem, si quid consili dederit, facias, et sequearis, si intellexerit, et praedixerit tali esse languorem tuum qui in conventu totius Ecclesia."

2 Ambros. de Poenitentia, lib. ii. cap. 9. "Hi non tam se solvere, quam Sacerdotem ligare."

3 Aug. in Hom. de Poenit. [Serm. 351. c. 4. "Ab ipso mente talis sen-
Sympathy of the Church with penitent Offenders.

"change his life of his own accord; and when this is resolved upon, let him from the disposers of the holy sacraments learn in what manner he is to pacify God's displeasure."

But the greatest thing which made men forward and willing upon their knees to confess whatsoever they had committed against God, and in no wise to be withheld from the same with any fear of disgrace, contempt, or obloquy, which might ensue, was their fervent desire to be helped and assisted with the prayers of God's saints. Wherein as St. James doth exhort unto mutual confession, alleging this only for a reason, that just men's devout prayers are of great avail with God; so it hath been heretofore the use of penitents for that intent to unburthen their minds, even to private persons, and to crave their prayers. Whereunto Cassianus alluding, counselleth, "That if men possess with dulness of spirit be themselves unapt to do that which is required, they should in meek affection seek health at the least by good and virtuous men's prayers unto God for them." And to the same effect Gregory, Bishop of Nyss: "Humble thyself, and take unto thee such of thy brethren as are of one mind, and do bear kind affection towards thee, that they may together mourn and labour for thy deliverance. Show me thy bitter and abundant tears, that I may blend mine own with them." But because all of men is there or should be none in that respect more fit for troubled and distressed minds to repair unto than God's ministers, he proceeded further: "Make the priest, as a father, partaker of thy affection and grief; be bold to impart unto him the things that are most secret, he will have care both of thy safety and of thy credit."

How Private Confession superseded Public.

"Confession," saith Leo, "is first to be offered to God, and then to the priest, as to one which maketh supplication for the sins of penitent offenders." Suppose we, that men would ever have been easily drawn, much less of their own accord have come unto public confession, whereby they knew they should sound the trumpet of their own disgrace; would they willingly have done this, which naturally all men are loth to do, but for the singular trust and confidence which they had in the public prayers of God's Church? "Let thy mother the Church weep for thee," saith St. Ambrose, "let her was a bathe thy faults with her tears: our Lord doth love that many should become suppliants for one." In like sort long before him, Tertullian, "Some few assembled make a Church, and the Church is as Christ himself; when thou dost therefore put forth thy hands to the knees of thy brethren, thou touchest Christ; it is Christ unto whom thou art a suppliant; so when they pour out their tears over them, it is even Christ that taketh compassion; Christ which prayeth when they pray: neither can that be easily denied, for which the Son is himself contented to become a suitor."

Whereas in these considerations therefore, voluntary penitents had been long accustomed, for great and grievous crimes, though secret, yet openly both to repent and confess, as the canons of ancient discipline required: the Greek church first, and in process of time the Latin altered this order, judging it sufficient and more convenient that such offenders should do penance and make confession in private only. The cause why the Latins did, Leo declareth, saying,

2 Tertull. de Pass. [c. 10. "In eor et aliorum Ecclesiast, eccles. praepos. amat ut pro uno multi rogent."
3 Tertull. de Pass. [c. 10. "In eor et aliorum Ecclesiast, eccles. praepos. amat ut pro uno multi rogent."
4 Ambros. lib. ii. de Pass. c. 10. "Fleet pro te Maior Ecclesia, et fratribus tuos lacermiis laet et pro te praepos. amat ut pro uno multi rogent."
5 "Fleet pro te Maior Ecclesia, et fratribus tuos lacermiis laet et pro te praepos. amat ut pro uno multi rogent."
6 "Fleet pro te Maior Ecclesia, et fratribus tuos lacermiis laet et pro te praepos. amat ut pro uno multi rogent."
Penitentiaries, appointed to deal with secret Offenders.

Although that ripeness of faith be commendable, which "for the fear of God doth not fear to incur shame before all men; yet because every one's crimes are not such, that it "can be free and safe for them to make publication of all "things wherein repentance is necessary; let a custom so "unfit be kept be abrogated, lest many forbear to use the "remedies of penitency, whilst they either blush or are "afraid to acquaint their enemies with those acts for which "the laws may take hold upon them. Besides, it shall win "the more to repentance, if the consciences of sinners be "not emptied into the people's ears." And to this only cause doth Sozomen\(^2\) impute the change which the Grecians made, by ordaining throughout all churches certain penitentiaries to take the confessions, and appoint the penances of secret offenders. Socrates\(^3\) (for this also may be true, that moe\(^b\) inducements than one did set forward an alteration so generally made) affirmed the Grecians (and not unlikely) to have especially\(^c\) respected therein the occasion, which the Novatianists took at the multitude of public penitents, to insist over the discipline of the Church, against which they still cried out whereasover they had time and place. "But that sheweth sinners favour, doth but teach the innocent to

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\(^1\) Leo i. Ep. 7, 8. ["Quamvis plenitudo fidei videatur esse laudabilis, que propter Dei timorem apud homines erubescere non veretur: tamen quia non omnium huiusmodi sunt peccata ut ea quae penitentiam poscunt non timeant publicare, removetam tam improbabilia consuetudo, ne multi a penitentia remissis accurat, dum aut erubescent aut mutuaverint immicias suis sua facia reserari, quibus possint legum constitutione percelfi. . . . Tunc enim demum adplures ad penitentiam poterunt provocari, si populi aurbus non publicer consuetudine confinentis." Ep. 136, t. i. 719].

\(^2\) E. H. vii. 16. En τῇ παρατεταθῇ συμφωνίᾳ τῆς ἀμαρτίας χωρὶς φαύλωσις, διὰ εἰς ἑαυτὸ τοὺς ἁμαρτών ἐλέησαι, ὅτι ἐν ἑαυτῷ ὑπὸ μάρτυρον τῇ πλήθῳ τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἀμαρτίας ἐξαγγέλλων προσβεβηκὼν δὲ τῶν ἀμαρτίας πολεμευτέον. [from D.]

\(^3\) specially E. ἐχειμέον τοι καὶ ἐχειμίζων, ἐπὶ τοῦτο τετᾶσθαι, ὅδε προποίουσε τά ἁμαρτήματα, τά βεβαιῶσε ὀρθολογίας, ὅ δέ πρὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἀμαρτίας, ὅτι καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἀμαρτίας ἐπίσκεψις ἡ ἐκκλησίας ἔχειμέοντες, μικρόφων. [from B.]

\(^4\) Rather Nicophon, referring apparently to Socrates. His words are, (lib. xii. c. 28). "Nuncupatio odiosa per toútò ἐστὶν ἀσθενής, λόγοι γα μὴ ἔχει καὶ δὲν αὐτές μᾶλλον τούτο ἐπικρίνεται τὸ ἔργον, μὴ δὲν αὐτὸ ἀποκλίνεται τούτο ἐν τῇ διαγωγῇ δικεῖν ἀψυχάκοις, ἐπιστήθησθαι δὲν ῥήμα συνιστάται τῷ Νικηναίῳ ἀντιποίμνῳ ἐπὶ τούτῳ τῶν μετανοιῶν προσβεβηκόντων δὲ ἑκατέροι ἡ ἐκκλησία κατέστησε τὸ ἔκκλησιαν καὶ ἀμαρτίας." [from C.]

\(^5\) Facinorius viam monstrat innoxios, qui necessest post scelebra blanditur. [from D.]

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1 [From the schism of Novatian, circ. A.D. 253, to the episcopate of Novatus, circ. 301.]
2 [Soc. v. 19. Γενήσεται τῷ ἑκεντρικῷ προσβεβιώντος καὶ κατὰ μέρος ἐξομολογεῖται τὰς ἁμαρτίας, διὰ ἐπιτρέπει μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα. 'Ο δὲ προσβεβηκὼς παραγγέλει τῇ γυναικεῖς νυφέοις καὶ συνήκοντος ἐγκαθεστώτατος, κατὰ τὸν κοιμητήριον ἐξομολογήσεται τὰς ἁμαρτίας. 'Η δὲ γυνὴ προσβεβείται καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίας καταλήκτης ἐλευθερίαν, ἐστῶσαν πάντως χρὴ ἡ ἐκκλησία προσβεβηκόντων, ἱθοδοσίας δικαίωμα δίκαιος."
3 [as also by Valesius in his note on the place of Socrates.]
4 E. H. v. 19. ἄγανίακον γὰρ εἰς μόνον εἰς τὴν ἔγκρισιν ἀλλ᾽ εἰς τὴν δικαιοσύνην διακοσμήσεσθαι τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ καθαρίσθαι. Διασωρυμένοις δὲ ἐκ τοῦτο ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίας ἄνδρας, ἡμῖν τὶς τῆς ἐκκλησίας προσβεβηκόντων, ἵπποι τῆς ἐκκλησίας τε καὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ διακοσμάσθαι, ἐκπαραπληρώσατε τῷ ἐκκλησίαν ἅγιον κατάμορφον."
5 By this latter account it appears not only that the exposure gave offence, but also that the method of penance prescribed in the case led to a new crime. Such is the construction put on the words of Sozomen by Nicophon, E. H. xii. 28, and in Hist. Tripart. i. 35, iv. 9. 10. 11. 12.
but much more, because the Church should thereby endure open infamy and scorn. The clergy perplexed and altogether doubtful what way to take, till one Eudæmon, born in Alexandria, but at that time a priest in the church of Constantinople, considering that the cause of voluntary confession, whether public or private, was especially to seek the Church's aid, as hath been before declared, lest men should either not communicate with others, or witfully hazard their souls, so he be they did communicare, and that the inconvenience which grew to the whole Church was otherwise exceeding great, but especially grievous by means of so manifold offensive detections, which must needs be continually more, as the world did itself wax continually worse (for antiquity together with the gravity and severity thereof (saith Sozomen) had already begun by little and little to degenerate into loose and careless living, whereas before offences were less, partly through bashfulness in them which opened* their own faults, and partly by means of their great austerity which sake† as judges in this business): these things Eudæmon having weighed with himself, resolved easily the mind of Nectarius, that the penitentiary's office must be taken away, and for participation in God's holy mysteries every man be left to his own conscience; which was, as he thought, the only mean to free the Church from danger of obloquy and disgrace. "Thus much," saith Socrates, "I am the bolder to relate, because I received from Eudæmon's own mouth, to whom my* answer was at that time; Whether your counsel, sir, have been for "the Church's good, or otherwise, God knoweth: but I see

cause of the abolition of the office of penitentiary in the time of Nectarius, Hooker seems to have referred to its establishment in the third century.] 1

[1] [UBi supr. "Hēc τῆς ἀρχαιότητος, οἷα, καὶ τῆς κατ' αὐτὸν συμποτήτος καὶ διαβείας, εἰς διάδοσιν καὶ ἡμείμενον ἐδώκα ταύτα καθα μὲνα διωλοθείαν ἀρχαίμενον ἰππτότερον, ὡς ἰτάμοια, μείον τὰ ἄρματα ἥν, ὅπε τ' ἅνεα τῶν ἀναγεννήσεων τῶν αὐτῶν πληρομελείας, καὶ ἐπὶ ἀρκείας τῶν ἔτοι ητοῖας ἐκεῖνων κραίνων."

[2] [Soci Hist. Eccles. lib. v. cap. 19. fin. Tota pars eis Eudæmonis accepta est ἐν τῇ γραφῇ τῆς ἠρμονίας άθροίζεται... Ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς τὸν Ἐυδαμόν πρὸς τὸν ἄρχατον λέγων ἡ συμβολὴ συ, ὡς προσαντίκου, ἐπεγενομεν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἡ ἡ μεθελεσθα τὸ θεός ἡ ἐκδέχηται. Ὅπω δὲ ὁ πρόσφωνος παραγένεται μὲν ἐρήμων ἀλλάξας τὰ ἄρματα, μηδὲ φωλάττεται τὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων παραγόμενα τὸ λέγον. Μηδὲ συγκευαστεί τοῖς ἐργαῖς τοῖς ἀκριβώς τῶν σχέσεως, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ λέγεται.]

"you have given occasion, whereby we shall not now any" 2 more reprehend another's faults, nor observe that apostolic precept, which saith, Have no fellowship with the "unfruitful works of darkness, but rather be ye also reprovers of them." With Socrates, Sozomen both agreeeth in the occasion of abolishing penitentiaries; and moreover testifieth also, that in his time, living with the younger Theodosius, the same abolition did still continue, and that the bishops had in a manner every where followed the example given them by Nectarius.

[10.] Wherefore to implead the truth of this history, Cardinal Baronius allegeth that Socrates, Sozomen and Eudæmon were all Novatianists; and that they falsify in saying (for so they report), that as many as held the consubstantial being of Christ, gave their assent to the abrogation of the forehearsed canon. The sum is, he would have it taken for a fable, and the world to be persuaded that Nectarius did never any such thing. Why then should Socrates first and afterwards Sozomen publish it? To please their pew-fellows, the disciples of Novatian. A poor gratification, and they very silly friends, that would take lies for good turns. For the more acceptable the matter was, being deemed true, the less they must needs (when they found the contrary) either credit or affect him, which had deceived them. Notwithstanding we know that joy and gladness rising from false information, do not only make men forward to believe that which they

1 x. D.
2 so forward E.

1 [Sozomen Hist. Eccles. l. vii. c. 16. ἐπηκολούθεσα δὲ σχεδόν οἱ πάντες ἂν ἐπέκακον... καὶ εἰς εὐφημον τοῦτο ἕχον οἴκον νεώμενον.]

2 "Tanta haec Socrati testantur præstanda est fides, quanta ceteris hereticis de suis dogmatibus tractantibus; quia Novatianus secta cum fuerit, quam vere ac sincere haec scripturæ adversus penitentiam in Ecclesia administrarit solutam, quenibet puto posse facile judicarie." Baron. tom. i. ann. Chr. 56. [c. 26.]

3 "Sacerdos ille merito a Nectario est gradu amotus officioque depressus, quo facto Novatiani ut "mos est hereticorum" quam unicum licet levem, ut sinceris "dogmatibus detrahant, accipere "ausi occasionem, non tantum "Presbyterum penitentiarum in ordinem redactum, sed et penitentiam ipsum una cum eo fusisse "proscriptam, caluminio admo "dum conclamatum, cum tamen "illa postea theatralis fieri interdum "solita confessio peccatorum fuerit "abrogata." Ibid. [c. 31.]

"fuisse credendum est." Ibid. [c. 27.]

"Nec Eudæmoœm illum alium "quam Novatianæ sectæ hominem
first hear, but also apt to scholie upon it, and to report as true whatsoever they wish were true. But so far is Socrates from any such purpose, that the fact of Nectarius, which others did both like and follow, he doth both disallow and reprove. His speech to Eudemus, before set down, is proof sufficient that he writeth nothing but what was famously known to all, and what himself did wish had been otherwise. As for Sozomen's correspondence\(^1\) with heretics, having shewed to what end the Church did first ordain penitentiaries, he addeth immediately, that Novatianists, which had no care of repentance, could have no need of this office\(^1\). Are these are words of a friend or an enemy? Besides, in the entrance of that whole narration\(^2\), "Not to sin," saith he, "at all, would require a 'nature more divine than ours is: but God hath commanded 'to pardon sinners: yea, although they transgress and offend 'often." Could there be any thing spoken more directly opposite to the doctrine of Novation? Eudemus was presbyter under Nectarius. To Novatianists the Emperor gave liberty of using their religion quietly by themselves, under a bishop of their own, even within the city, for that they stood with the Church in defence of the Catholic faith against all other heretics besides\(^3\). Had therefore Eudemus favoured their heresy, their camps were not pitched so far off, but he might at all times have found easy access unto them. Is there any man that lived with him, and hath touched him that way? if not, why suspect we him more than Nectarius? Their report touching Grecian catholic bishops, who gave approbation to that which was done, and did also the like themselves in their own churches, we have no reason to discredit, without some manifest and clear evidence brought against it. For of Catholic bishops, no likelihood but that their greatest respect to Nectarius, a man honoured in those parts no less than the Bishop of Rome himself in the western churches, brought them both easily and speedily unto conformity with him; Arians, Eunomians, Apollinarians, and the rest that stood divided from the Church, held their penitentiaries as before. Novatianists from the beginning had never any, because their opinion touching penitency was against the practice of the Church therein, and a cause why they severed themselves from the Church: so that the very state of things as they then stood, giveth great show of probability to his speech, who hath affirmed\(^1\), "That they only which held the "Son consubstantial with the Father, and Novatianists which "joined with them in the same opinion, had no penitentiaries "in their churches, the rest retained them."

By this it appeareth therefore how Baronius, finding the relation plain, that Nectarius did abolish even those private secret confessions, which the people had before been accustomed to make to him that was penitentiary, laboureth what he may to discredit the authors of the report, and to leave it imprinted in men's minds, that whereas Nectarius did but abrogate public confession, Novatianists have maliciously forged the abolition of private. As if the odds between these two were so great in the balance of their judgment, which equally hated and condemned both; or, as if it were not more clear than light, that the first alteration which established penitentiaries took away the burden of public confession in that kind of penitents, and therefore the second must either abrogate private, or nothing.

\[\text{[11.]}\] Cardinal Bellarmine therefore finding that against the writers of the history it is but in vain to stand upon so doubtful terms and exceptions, endeavoureth mightily to prove, even by their report, no other confession taken away than public, which penitentiaries used in private to impose upon public offenders\(^8\). "For why? It is," saith he, "very

\(^1\) both D. E. \(^2\) corresponding E.; correspondence E. 1648.

\(^1\) Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 10, \(^2\) Soph. v. 10, \(^3\) Theodosius \(^4\) Thamyris, \(^5\) ωμως εκλειπον τωι εισεχθηαν ευκρητας ανω, εκεινοι δε και προμηθης της εκθαμενης αιτημεν, \(^6\) εκεινοι δε και προμηθης της εκθαμενης αιτημεν, \(^7\) οι τωι εισεχθηαν ευκρητας ανω, \(^8\) οι τωι εισεχθηαν ευκρητας ανω. \(^9\) Bellarm. de Penit. lib. iii. c. 14. [p. 1399, 1400]. "Buvandi veteres nomine peneitium, soli publici penitentes, intelligi solebant."

\(^8\) Nullo modo fieri poteuit, ut unus

\(*\) This reference not in D.