The Collect for the Third Sunday in Advent (5th S. X. 431.)—Why does your correspondent, writing about the Collect for the Third Sunday in Advent, say, "In all the old Prayer Books ever one God" is connected, and rightly, with 'reignest,' thus 'livest and reignest ever one God,' &c."

In Archibald John Stephens's edition of the Sealed Book of Common Prayer, edited for the Ecclesiastical History Society, the clause stands, "who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end."

In the Fac-simile of the Black-letter Prayer Book containing Manuscript Alterations and Additions made in the Year 1661, which was annexed to the Act of Uniformity, and which is, of course, of the highest authority, the Collect is in manuscript, and reads thus, "who livest, & reignest with ye Father, & ye Holy Spirit ever one God world without end."

In the reprint of the edition of 1662 "according to the Sealed Copy in the Tower of London" published by Joseph Masters in 1853, and in the magnificent reprint by Pickering, the punctuation agrees with that given by Stephens; and so does that found in my own copy of the edition of 1662.

In the face of these facts, the punctuation given by the original manuscript, by the sealed books, and by the small folio edition of 1662, it cannot be said that "in all the old Prayer Books" the reading, "ever one God," is not found. I am not justifying the reading, but simply dealing with the facts of the case.

The Collect for the Third Sunday in Advent did not appear till the revision of 1661, so that there are no older Prayer Books to refer to, so far as this Collect is concerned.

Nor is the statement accurate as regards all other repetitions of the phrase. I turn again to Stephens's edition of the Sealed Book, and there I find, in the Collect for Christmas Day—Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

S. after Christmas—Spirit ever one God, world &c.
6th S. after Epiphany—reigneth ever one God world &c.
Septuagesima—Ghost ever one God, world &c.
the punctuation varying, as in old books it does vary.

The ordinary ending in the Missale Romanum is "Qui Tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum." I take the first missal that comes to hand (Svo., Mechlin, 1850), Dominica prima Adventus.

W. Sparrow Simpson.

Mr. Blenkinsopp, in reference to the end of this Collect says that all the old Prayer Books read, "Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit ever, one God," thereby avoiding the absurdity of writing "ever one God." For my part I fail to see the objection to the ordinary punctuation; and to the statement that all the old books have the comma after "ever" I will with your permission give a few exceptions. In the first place, until 1661 this Collect was not in existence, but was substituted in that year by its author, Bishop Cosin, who (as may be seen in the photo-zincographic copy of his own writing in the Book of Common Prayer attached to Car. II.'s Act of Uniformity) used no stop at all. In the Book of 1662, printed from the above, and in the octavo of the same date, as well as in the versions of 1704, '10, '12, '17 (Sturt's engraved book), and '55, I find without exception the comma in the ordinary place.

Mr. Blenkinsopp quotes the Latin rendering as in favour of connecting "ever" with "reignest"; but in the version of 1681 (when the collect was only twenty years old) the words are, "qui vivis et regnas cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto semper unus Deus," where the position of "semper" is conclusive against his theory. Again, the only Greek version to which I have had access is even clearer, being... πεντηκοστε ταύτων ἕν θεός.

I may add that Blunt in his valuable work makes no mention of any alternative punctuation, so that I am interested to know on what editions your correspondent relies.

It is worthy of remark that the only other Collects, viz. those for Christmas, Septuagesima, Good Friday, and Easter, in which this precise phrase occurs, owe it to an alteration by Bishop Cosin.

Vicary Gibbs.

St. Dunstan's, Regent's Park.

Mr. Blenkinsopp will, I think, find few to agree with him in his condemnation of the punctuation of the clause, "Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God." In his amended reading he omits several words. Had he retained them he would at once have been struck by the forced and unrhythmical form into which he had thrown a beautifully balanced clause. Let any one contrast the condemned sentence with the amended one, "Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit ever, one God," and he will not hesitate as to accepting the former as the correct form. Mr. Blenkinsopp claims "all the old Prayer Books" as being on his side. Will he specify some one edition which places the comma as he would argue it should be placed? The phrase "ever one God" is not absurd; it simply reasserts the truth declared in the Athanasian Creed in such words as "the Majesty co-eternal," "the whole three Persons are co-eternal," &c.

Johnson Baily.

Pallion Vicarage.

May I ask for further information with regard to Mr. E. L. Blenkinsopp's remark on the punctuation of the Collects in our Book of Common Prayer? I have only the reprint of the Sealed...