

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. B V 600 Copyright No. ..

Shelf S 75 ..

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

—
—
—

#1163

THE LIVING TEMPLE,

OR

SCRIPTURAL VIEWS OF THE CHURCH.

BY
JOHN S. STONE, D. D.,

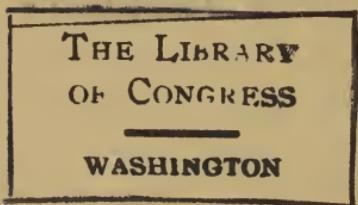
GRISWOLD LECTURE IN THE DIVINITY SCHOOL OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL
CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA.



NEW YORK:
ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH,
No. 770 BROADWAY.
1866.

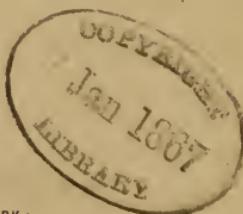
46 Spie 6.1866

BV600
S75



Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1865, by
THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF EVANGELICAL KNOWLEDGE,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the
Southern District of New York.

32047



NEW YORK:
EDWARD O. JENKINS, PRINTER,
20 NORTH WILLIAM ST.

P R E F A C E.

THE work here offered to the public embodies the substance, carefully revised, slightly enlarged and somewhat modified, of what was some years ago published under the title of "The Church Universal." No essential change has been made; but the author ventures to hope that sufficient improvement has been effected to render the work more worthy of the time and thought which may be given to its perusal.

The book aims, among other things, at two principal points: the Scriptural Idea of the Church; and the accord with this Idea of our own standards and of the best standard writers on the subject.

1. In his appeal to Scripture, the Author has been influenced by a conviction that there has been, and still is, among us, a tendency to leave the Bible too much out of view in our controversial and theological discussions; that unless this tendency can be brought within due bounds, we are in danger of reaching a state, in

which argument from the supreme, all-sufficient authority of the Word of God, in the style of the first Christian writers and apologists, will fall a virtually dead weight on the minds of both our clergy and our laity. He is sincerely desirous of doing what little he can towards lifting the Bible into that peerless honor which is its heaven-born right, as the only infallible rule of faith and practice in matters of religion. To the inspired Word nothing can give either a meaning, or a certainty, which lies not in its own sense ; and from that Word nothing but Inspiration can develop a meaning or a certainty, which the human mind, as addressed therein, and as guided by the ordinary teachings of the Holy Spirit, and by other accessible lights, is unable to discover. This is spoken of doctrines, or truths designed to govern moral and religious faith and practice. Testimony to facts, and determination of doctrines, are different things. So far as testimony may be needed in establishing such facts as the application of Baptism to infants, the change of the Day of Rest, the origin of Episcopacy with the Apostles, and the prevalence of the doctrine of the Trinity, or of any other doctrine, as a matter of history, we may receive that testimony, if good and sufficient in kind and amount, just as we receive any other good and sufficient human testimony ; regarding it as adequate to the reasonable proof of any fact possible under the govern-

ment of God. But we cannot receive any exterior documents, or authority, as necessary and sufficient to determine, with infallible certainty, what are the otherwise undiscoverable doctrines of the Bible, without thereby elevating those documents, or that authority, to a certainty and a value above those of the Bible itself. If, in matters of doctrinal truth, the Bible, under the ordinary teachings of the Holy Spirit and amid the light with which Divine Providence has surrounded it, cannot disclose its own sense to that mind of man which it addresses, then nothing lower than a new and clearer Revelation can be made an infallible interpreter of that sense. Such a revelation, if given, could never be safely received, unless accredited by miracles ; and, so accredited, that Revelation would at once take rank, for certainty of authority and for eminence of value, above the ancient Scriptures. Hence the peril of receiving Tradition in any form, as a necessary and infallible interpreter of the doctrinal sense of the Bible. To be of any higher authority than ordinary testimony, of any higher value to interpretation than ordinary human helps, Tradition must necessarily take rank with Revelation ; and when used to fix on the doctrinal sense of the Bible an infallible interpretation not otherwise discoverable, it must necessarily take rank above the Bible. And yet, the Tradition of which so much is made can show no

divinely-accrediting seals. The gravest suspicion may well be considered as resting on all pretensions to miracle since the Apostolic Age.

The tendency of the Doctrine of Tradition, as a necessary and infallible interpreter of the Bible, may be seen in the celebrated "Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine," and in the resulting movement of its Author. The starting point of that Doctrine of Tradition cannot be distinctly and intelligently assumed, and the line which flows from that point cannot be logically and honestly followed, without reaching an elevation of Authority and value above the Word of God. The Doctrine DEVELOPS itself into Romanism, and its advocates into Romanists. If either the Church or an individual start from the point of Tradition, as above defined, the line of development, flowing from that point, will certainly lead its follower into Rome. The individual, indeed, may die before reaching that result, or various strong influences may hold him back, or turn him aside, from the advance of rectilinear logic and sympathy; but nothing else can keep him from reaching and entering the gate that opens into the inclosure both of Romish theology and of Romish superstition.

2. In his appeal to Standard Writers, the Author feels a confidence inspired by facts too plain to be denied. Even the advocates of the ultra-Episcopal theory

of the Church admit that the testimony of the writers of the English Church in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries is decidedly in favor of the Definition of the Church given in the following pages. Indeed, that testimony is too explicit and harmonious to be disputed or set aside. The only way in which it can be met, is by ascribing that testimony to undue sympathy with the Continental Reformers, and to ignorance of the Value of certain Patristic testimony, the credit of which, it is said, has since been established. The plea, in substance, is, that the English and Continental Reformers were fellow-sufferers in the persecutions which Rome waged against her reforming opponents ; and that, therefore, it is no wonder if, in their strong feelings of affection for each other, and of dislike to the common persecutor, the English Writers were led too far in admitting the claims of the Non-Episcopal Reformed bodies on the Continent to the character of Churches, or parts of the one true Church of Christ ; especially since, at the time of the Reformation, and in the Seventeenth Century, the Epistles of Ignatius were not free from a suspicion of their authenticity. This suspicion has since been removed, and the Ignatian Epistles are now available to the Episcopal argument in all the explicitness and strength of their testimony. Had those Epistles been in credit at the Reformation, as they are now, the Eng-

lish Reformers and their immediate successors would not have admitted, as they did, the Church character of the Continental Reformed Christians. A few words on both parts of this plea.

(1.) As to the former part: If sympathy under common persecution can make Protestants recognize each other as fellow-members of the Church of Christ, and Protestant Communions acknowledge each others claims to, at least, the substance of Church character, there would be one blessing, if no more, in making such persecutions perpetual. That the English Reformers sympathized tenderly with the Continental Reformed Christians in their trials, there can be no doubt; but, that their sympathy blinded their judgments, or made them indifferent to the loss of the Episcopacy among their companions in suffering—this is a very slender pretense, opposed by abundant testimony to the contrary. The language of Bp. Hall expressed not his own sentiments alone, but those of others as well, when he thus wrote: “Oh! How oft, and with what deep sighs, hath this most flourishing and happy Church of England wished that she might, with some of her own blood, have purchased unto her dearest sisters abroad the retention of this most ancient and every way best of Governments;” that is, the retention of Church Government by the Episcopacy.

Again : “ It is not the variety of by-opinions that can exclude them from their part in the One Catholic Church and their just claim to the Communion of Saints. While they hold the solid and precious foundation, it is not the hay or stubble, which they lay upon it, that can set them off from God and His Church. But, in the meantime, it must be granted, that they have much to answer for to the God of peace and unity who are so addicted to their own conceits, and so indulgent to their own interest, as to raise and maintain new doctrines, and to set up new sects in the “ Church of Christ ” (in, not out of the Church), “ varying from the common and received truths ; laboring to draw disciples after them, to the great distraction of souls and scandal of Christianity.”

The English Reformers and their immediate successors were neither blind nor indifferent to the value and the obligation of Episcopacy. All their sympathy with their suffering brethren on the Continent could not have extorted from them an acknowledgment of Church character without Episcopacy, had they not, as students of the Bible and antiquity, been convinced that Episcopacy however valuable and obligatory, is not, in such sense, essential to the being of the Church ; that, without it, the Church cannot exist.

(2.) As to the latter part of the plea : It is true

that the Ignatian Epistles are now admitted to be authentic ; but it is not universally conceded that they are free from interpolations. Mr. Cureton, a learned Orientalist in England, some time since published, and, by permission, dedicated to the Primate of the English Church, an interpretation of the Syriac version of three of those Epistles ; which, as there is said to be little reason for considering them abridgments, would show that the expurgated Greek copies in ordinary use, much as their former contents have been reduced, still contain many interpolations ; and, what is remarkable in this shorter Syriac version, almost all the strong passages on the subject of Episcopacy are wanting. Allowing, however, that the common Greek copies are both authentic and genuine, or that Ignatius wrote all the strong passages ascribed to him on the subject of Episcopacy, this makes him not a teacher of the ultra-Episcopal dogma. You search those Epistles in vain for that Idea of the Apostolical Succession which makes Ordination a Sacrament, transmitting not merely OFFICE, but a certain mysterious SACERDOTAL POWER, on the possession of which, from the Apostles' hands, through the line of Bishops alone, depend the validity and efficacy of all other sacraments and ministerial acts. Not one of the strong passages referred to represents Ordination as the exclusive prerogative of Bishops ; not one speaks of Ordination

as conveying that mysterious Sacerdotal power. Allowing that he wrote all those passages, Ignatius was evidently pressing the Episcopacy as simply the regularly-derived GOVERNMENT of the Church, a Government then universally received, but having no necessary affinity with the Idea of a Sacerdotal power, conveyed in Ordination, and without which there can be no valid or efficacious ministerial act. Ignatius looked at Episcopacy as a Government for the Church, and not as a channel of Ordination for the transmission of any such mysterious power. At least, his epistolary remains furnish no evidence of such ultra-Episcopacy. A single passage will serve to illustrate these remarks. To the Magnesians, he writes : "I exhort that ye study to do all things in a divine concord, your Bishop presiding in the place of God ; your Presbyters in the place of the Council of the Apostles ; and your Deacons, most dear to me, being entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ." This, it is needless to say, has nothing to do with Ordination, though it has much to do with Government. It is simply an exhortation to CONCORD in all things under the PRESIDENCY of Bishops with their associated Presbyters and Deacons ; that is, to a peaceful and Christian co-operation with their proper ecclesiastical governors in all things pertaining to the welfare of the Church. Similar passages are of frequent occurrence in his Epis-

tles ; and they show how little Ignatius had to do with the theory of transmitting Sacerdotal powers through Bishops alone..

It may be added that the English Reformers and writers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries were not unlearned in Patristics. USHER, at Oxford, in 1644, as well as VOSSIUS, at Amsterdam, in 1646, was very learnedly engaged in expurgating these very Ignatian Epistles. The sacred scholars of England, in both centuries, studied the fathers deeply, and the Bible profoundly ; and thus, well versed in both, and, withal, skilled as few have since been in meeting all the turns and foiling all the movements of the Romish Argument on the subject of the Church, they adopted the only Church theory which can stand this side of an admission of the entire claim of Rome.

The English Reformation theory of the Church, giving Episcopacy its due place of value and of obligation, yet leaving to all Christians an open ground of common membership in the Church of Christ, a ground on which they may all come together in the work of kindly drawing all hearts into one feeling of love, and of lovingly uniting all mouths in one profession of faith, has, as the Author believes, the Bible for its base and the mind of God for its origin. It is, peradventure, the only Window in the roof of our Ark through which light

from Heaven can come in upon the darkness of those confusions and divisions into which the Church has fallen, and make manifest the secret of peace, love, and concord among all who name themselves of Christ. Cheerfully, therefore, and trustingly, does he again bid this little work go forth to do whatever God may make it the instrument of doing in the blessed work of filling the world with the spiritual reign of the Prince of Peace.

Bow-MOUNT, 1866.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

THE CHURCH AS A SPIRITUAL BODY.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITIONS OF THE CHURCH.....	19
--------------------------------	----

CHAPTER II.

TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE—METAPHORS.....	39
---------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE—LITERAL TEXTS	64
--	----

CHAPTER IV.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN VISIBLE AND SPIRITUAL CHURCH; WITH TESTIMONY OF STANDARDS.....	96
--	----

CHAPTER V.

TESTIMONY OF STANDARD WRITERS	123
-------------------------------------	-----

PART II.

THE CHURCH, AS A VISIBLE BODY.

CHAPTER I.

SCRIPTURE VIEW OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH.....	149
---	-----

CHAPTER II.

OUR STANDARDS, AND STANDARD WRITERS ON THE VISIBLE CHURCH	174 (15)
---	-------------

PART III.

WELL-BEING OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE MINISTRY.....	199
----------------------	-----

CHAPTER II.

WELL-BEING OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH—GOVERNMENT.....	221
--	-----

CHAPTER III.

WELL-BEING OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH—WORSHIP.....	251
---	-----

CHAPTER IV.

WELL-BEING OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH—SCHISM.....	281
--	-----

CHAPTER V.

WELL-BEING OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH—UNITY.....	305
---	-----

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN	329
----------------------------	-----

P A R T I.

THE CHURCH, AS A SPIRITUAL BODY

THE LIVING TEMPLE.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITIONS OF THE CHURCH.

IN selecting a subject for my first course of Prelections in this Divinity School, I have endeavored to find some topic not unrelated to your general course of study ; at the same time, not to trench on any Department, in which you have other and abler teachers ; and yet to light upon some matter, which my own previous pursuits may be supposed to qualify me, in some measure, to discuss.

These views have, at length, induced me to invite your attention to the subject of THE CHURCH ; not, however, as seen under the aspect and within the department of Ecclesiastical Polity, nor as viewed amid the lights and affected by the incidents of Ecclesiastical History, but as presented to us, mainly, on the pages of the Bible.

This, so far as the Christian world is concerned, has become one of the great subjects of the age. It is occupying profoundly the thoughts of almost

all thoughtful Christians ; and, peradventure, of many who are kept by their ponderings on it from becoming Christians. The CHURCH ? What is it, where is it, and how may I know that I belong to it ? These are queries which our times have revived with an interest unfelt for ages. After having been long put—not out of sight among Protestants, but—behind the main truths of Christianity, they have been again brought forward, placed in the foreground, and made to demand a distinct answer. Such an answer they need at all times, but especially from the teachers of the present generation.

Nor is this question unrelated to your present general course of study. Christ and His Cross are, indeed, what, as preachers of the Gospel, you most need to know ; yet the Church, though not Christ, is His mystical Body ; though it cannot stand in Christ's stead, as a Saviour, yet it exists in the world as His Servant ; though it cannot make the Gospel which it is to preach, yet it can and should preach the Gospel of which He is the center and the subject ; though it cannot give life through the sacraments, yet it does administer the sacraments of Him who giveth life through Himself. When, therefore, we speak of the Church, provided we speak right things, we do, in truth, teach Christ ; we teach that in which He is intimately con-

cerned, that which holds intimate relationship with Him.

Since, then, this question needs an answer, and since a right answer has so close relation to your chief study, let us proceed to seek for some clear, and, should God so favor us, some just conclusions on this great topic of the day. What is the Church, and who belong to it? The Church, in its comprehension, with some thoughts as to what affects its well-being, is the theme on which we enter.

1. The Romanist, then, defines the Church, in its catholicism, universality, or comprehension, as that visible Society only, of professing Christians, which holds and submits to its one temporal, human head, the Pope, and which, under this head, has communion in all the so-called Sacraments of that Church. All other bodies called Christian, for whatever reason they may have been cut off, and however they may call themselves Churches, do not, in his view, belong to the One Catholic or Universal Church. To him the Greek, Armenian, Syrian, and Coptic, the English and American Episcopal, with all other Protestant Bodies—planted, as these communities are, with all their millions, from end to end of the earth—though they may retain some portions of Christian truth, and though many of them, as individuals, may

peradventure be saved, yet, are not Churches, nor do they belong to the One Catholic Church in the World. They are but heretical or schismatical Sects, and have neither part nor lot in the One true Church. To him, the Roman communion embraces this Church, “*Totus, teres, atque rotundus.*”

2. Again, the Exclusive Episcopalian, eschewing, as far as he may, the name of Protestant, adopts a view of the Church somewhat more comprehensive. He defines the Church as that visible Society of professing Christians which holds and submits to an Episcopal ministry, and has a common union in Sacraments Episcopally administered. This definition includes, within the Catholic pale, the Romish, Greek, and other Oriental Churches, together with the English, American, and other Episcopal bodies. All these, it is admitted, exist as separate ecclesiastical organizations ; and so long as they neither hold free intercommunion, nor acknowledge one visible unity, their separation, though it leaves them still within the Catholic pale, is yet one of the sorest and most to be deprecated of evils ; and its removal is to be sought as one of the highest attainable blessings. But, at this point, the limit of Catholicism with this class of definers is reached. According to them, all Protestant, or other religious bodies, not Episcopally

constituted, however numerous, full of spiritual life, and active in spreading the knowledge of Christ and the blessings of Christianity to the ends of the earth, do not belong to the Church. They may hold much Christian truth ; and, as individuals, many of them may be saved ; but they are not Churches, nor parts of the Church ; they are but heretical or schismatical sects, and their existence as such is an evil of the gravest, most afflictive magnitude. The Church's labor should be to re-absorb them into herself, while, at the same time, seeking to recover her own lost visible unity. Submission to a universal Episcopacy, claiming the supernaturally derived power of conveying the Holy Ghost, and the real Body and blood of Christ, in ordination and in sacraments, is, upon this theory, the indispensable requisite, not only to the integrity and perfectness, but to the very existence, of the Church.

3. And now, to those, who cannot adopt, as their own, either of the foregoing definitions of the Church,—and, for one, I acknowledge myself of this class—it remains to seek a third. In seeking this third definition, however, which I hope to make exhaustive, I propose to approach it, not directly, but through some preparatory views, taken from Scriptural points of observation.

1. And first,—The design of God, in the revela-

tion of His will and in the Incarnation of His Son, is to save men from sin, and to make them partakers of eternal life. This design, as realized in the sinner, requires a thorough reconciliation to his Heavenly Sovereign, on the simple terms of "Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts, 20: 21—an individual and hearty concurrence in the Divine counsel of Redemption. Every person thus reconciled, is said to be "justified by faith;" and hath "peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5: 1. Every one, thus justified, is "renewed in the spirit of his mind," lives "a godly life," grows in holiness, and has, even on earth, the beginning of the true life eternal. This eternal life now "abideth in him;" he has already entered on the foretaste of his salvation. Hence the words of Christ: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed"—passed already—"from death unto life." John, 5: 24. This assurance, in its original, essential truth, is tied to no observance of outward institutions. It brings to view nothing but the Saviour and the sinner; the Saviour's word and the sinner's faith; that faith which is always followed by repentance and holiness. It is an assurance, based essentially on an inner transaction between Christ and the true be-

liever. Wherever the Word goes and is received into the faith of the heart, there is the basis of this Divine assurance, "he is passed from death unto life." This is the reason, not merely why there shall be, but why there "is, joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." His repentance is the first step out of that faith which taketh hold on eternal life. The angels see in it another victory for Christ; another soul already "passed from death unto life."

The Scriptures abound in this peculiar teaching—the assurance of salvation to every one, be his outward circumstances what they may; who truly believes in Christ. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts, 16: 31. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek," the most and the least privileged; "for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him; for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Rom. 10: 4, 12, 13. Whosoever calleth in that faith, which "cometh by hearing," as hearing "cometh by the word of God," shall be saved. Whosoever. It is impossible to find a man with this faith under such peculiar circumstances as to invalidate the truth of this assurance—"he shall be saved." The eternal Father hath so bound

Himself to this, that He would not be "just" were He not also "the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus," wherever and whenever this believer may be found. Both "the Law and the Prophets," as well as the Gospel, concur in the "witness" that "the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all and upon all them that believe." Rom. 3 : 21, 22, 26. As "all have sinned" and are alike in that, so, among those who have this faith, "there is no difference." Nothing can make a difference in favor of one and against another, in whom this faith dwelleth. "Jesus said, I am the Bread of Life ; he that cometh to me"—whoever he may be, and whatever his outward lot—"he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." John, 6 : 35. "I am the resurrection and the life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John, 11 : 25, 26. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John, 3 : 16.

There, Christian student, is the Gospel in element, in its simple, yet all-comprehending base. We must convict the solemn Trinity of falsehood before we can take eternal life from him that truly believes in Jesus Christ. It matters not by what

name he is called, or in what connection he is found, if he have this faith in his heart, whole and uncorrupt, he hath eternal life ; and no man can take from him that “gift of God.”

And now, why does the Bible make so much of this faith ? Is it because this alone constitutes the Christian character ? No : but because this faith cannot be alone in that character. It is, under the Spirit, the parent of all holy graces. This truth, in former times, drew from that “staunch churchman,” Bishop Hall, the exclamation : “ O the grace of faith ! justly represented to us by St. Paul, above all other graces, incident unto the soul, as that which, if not alone, chiefly transacts all the main affairs tending to salvation. For faith is the quickening grace, the directing grace, the protecting grace, the establishing grace, the justifying grace, the sanctifying and purifying grace. Faith is the grace which assents to, apprehends, applies, appropriates Christ ; and, hereupon, it is the uniting grace ; and, which comprehends all, the saving grace.”

In the texts thus far cited, we see the simple, essential requisites to salvation under the Gospel ; those without which no man, to whom the Gospel comes, can be saved ; and with which any man will be saved.

2. We now take another step. Every one, in

whom the required faith is found, has a direct and personal union with Christ ; so that he draws his spiritual life, not by succession, nor by transmission from any other believer, but immediately from the Saviour Himself. Nothing, however thin, intervenes between the two. By faith the believer is “in Christ ;” and by the same faith Christ “dwells” in the believer’s “heart.” Eph. 3 : 17. This mystic union between Christ and each individual Christian is as close and perfect, as though Christ and each individual were the only ones in all the world concerned in that union. As a foundation, Christ is as long as the age of grace, and as broad as the realm of sin ; so that every true believer touches, immediately and for himself, that on which he is builded. In this peculiar union there is, not a miraculous impartation of the divine substance, but a real derivation of the divine life ; and faith is the grace, by which the heavenly derivation is realized. Faith brings the soul to the spring-head of that life in Christ. Faith drinks of the “living water” which He gives. “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John, 4 : 14. “I am the Vine; ye are the branches ; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.” John,

15 : 5. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." 2 Cor. 5 : 17. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Eph. 3 : 17. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you : now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Rom. 8 : 9. "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. 3 : 3. He that, with an appropriating faith, "eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him." John, 6 : 56. These are some of the passages in which this sacred union is indicated ; and they show that, while Christ holds this union with all who truly believe in Him, He still holds it with each separately and severally. Each single Christian holds this living connection and communion with the Saviour as immediately and as closely, and draws life therefrom as abundantly and as perfectly, as though himself and the Saviour were the only beings concerned in the divine affinity.

3. We have thus seen what it is that essentially characterizes the true Christian, and what is the relation which he sustains with Christ. We now take one further step. There are, then, in the world, as there have been from the beginning, and will be to the end, a steadily growing, and at length a very great company of human beings, sustaining the character and the relations which I have just

explained ; the character of true believers in Christ, and the relation of a holy, individual union with Christ. These, as represented in the Bible, and as found in fact, are an exceedingly "peculiar people." There are none like them in all the world. In some outward respects, they seem like common men ; but in the depths of their being, they are quite unlike all others. They are stamped with the lineaments and features of quite another character. If what has been wrought within could be laid open to the eye of sense, they would at once be known from other men all over the earth and throughout all heaven. Gathered from whatever nation or kindred, and marked by whatever peculiarities or inequalities, they would yet be found in their main characteristics alike ; shaped by the same divine hand, stamped with the same spiritual features, passing through the same general experience, belonging to the same great company, and tending to the same sublime destiny.

Now, this exceedingly "peculiar people" are found, not exclusively within the lines of any one Christian community, but, in greater or less numbers, within the limits of all : some, doubtless, even among the most corrupt of those communities ; and multitudes among those which rise nearest to primitive purity. Here, then, comes into view a very remarkable fact. A large number of these "pecu-

liar people" are found in organized Christian communities, which neither submit to one supreme, temporal, human head—the Pope, nor receive into their organizations an Episcopal ministry and sacraments. They are known by various human names ; but, in character and relation, they belong to that same "peculiar people" who have been described. They have all the lineaments and features, all the views and experience, of that people ; everything that can mark them as belonging to the same spiritual race. Of this there is and can be no question.—If the true, though hidden characters and relations of the whole holy company were laid open, this portion of them would be seen, before earth and heaven, to be identical with all the rest. What, then, is the relation, which, as individuals, and as organized bodies, these acknowledged Christians, thus destitute of the Episcopacy, bear to the Church of Christ ?

This question is important. I have no undue sympathy with those who refuse, or fail, to receive an Episcopal ministry. Still, their existence in such considerable numbers, and with such undeniable evidences of identity with the "peculiar people," is a grave and weighty fact, of which we must in some way dispose. Again, therefore, I ask : what relation do these Christians and Christian communities bear to the Church ? This question is

important, chiefly, from the consideration that, if they belong to the Church, then a third definition of the Church, different from either of the former, becomes indispensably necessary. Do these Christians, then, individually and in their organizations, belong to the Church? The advocates of both the previous definitions answer, No. I am constrained to answer, Yes. My reason for this answer however, must, for the present, be brief.

Either, then, they belong to the Church, or, in so far as they are Christians, they are saved without belonging to the Church. Now, whether God ever saves men where Christ is unknown, or when it is impossible to confess Him before men, it is not here necessary to inquire. Of this, however, we may be sure: that, where the Gospel is preached, where the Holy Spirit is given to apply that Gospel, where Christ is thus fully made known, and where men have an opportunity to confess Him before their fellow men—there God saves no man but in His one, appointed way, on the terms of His one, unchangeable covenant of grace, and as a member of His one, true Church. Under the conditions here assigned, the doctrine is strictly true, “Out of the Church is no salvation.” It is only when a false conception of the Church is entertained, only when some particular ecclesiastical organization arrogates to itself exclusively the style and

prerogatives of the Church, that the doctrine becomes not only false, but impious. When the word Church is rightly understood, and is used within the conditions just named, the doctrine is both true and precious : "Out of the Church is no salvation." But, the Christians of whom we speak obtain salvation ; and they are saved within the specified conditions ; they are saved by means of the Gospel, through the knowledge of Christ, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and with a confession of Christ and His truth before men. They are saved as all other Christians are saved. They, therefore, belong to the Church.

If, by the opposite opinion, it be meant, that though saved, yet they are not members of the Church in the sense of either of the two definitions already given, this is but saying that they are neither Romanists nor Episcopalian : but, if it be meant that though saved, yet they are not members of the Church in any sense, then we ask : what essential necessity for a Church can be shown ? If, from age to age, such myriads are saved, where the full light of Christ is shining, and where the rich gifts of the Spirit are bestowed, while yet they belong not to the Church, then the Church, instead of being exalted, and shown to be divinely useful, is degraded and shown to be of no worth. Men may be saved outside as well as with-

in its enclosure ; without as well as with its name. The Church, as to her specific difference, is brought down to the rank of a mere keeper of manuscripts, and regulator of forms. All higher attributes and privileges, all more spiritual functions and influences, she merely shares in common with a body of Christians who belong not to her communion. The moment we say that these higher attributes and privileges, these more spiritual functions and influences, whereby Christian men are saved, are not partially and accidentally, but wholly, and in God's design, enjoyed by the Church (and this is true doctrine)—the moment we take this position we compel ourselves to admit that these other Christians, who share these attributes and privileges, these functions and influences, and are saved thereby, belong to the Church. There is no way of evading this conclusion but by admitting that the Church merely shares the highest and richest means of salvation with individuals and communities who are no part of the Church.

But, if these Christians belong to the Church, then, clearly, so far as its comprehension is concerned, neither of the definitions which have been given is right, and we are compelled to seek for a third. What, then, is this third, this exhaustively complete definition of the Church ?

The answer comes from what has already been

said. Without denying, but rather distinctly holding, that in one sense the word Church may, with strict propriety, be applied to a particular ecclesiastical organization, and actually is so applied in the Bible, in history, and in common usage, it is nevertheless plain that what has thus far been said leads directly to this definition : the Church, in its largest, highest sense, is that great company of true believers in Christ, who hold His truth, in the main, whole and uncorrupt, and who, by His sole divine power and agency, are saved from sin and everlasting death. In this its largest, highest sense, the Church is, precisely, the whole company of that "peculiar people," whose character and relation to Christ have already been described. This great company exists both in heaven and upon earth. It is gathered and to be gathered from the present, from the past, and from all coming ages. This, with Bishop Taylor, I understand to be the sense of that article in the Creed, "the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints." The body, thus named in the Creed, is not merely in name, but in reality, in the truth of words, and in the sight of God, a holy Church, literally a "communion of saints." It comprises all, of whatever age or country, of whatever name or connection, who hold the truth of Christ, in the main, whole and uncorrupt, and are saved by Him from sin and everlasting

death. It is a “communion of saints,” or of those holy ones, who have a common union with Christ in His truth, His life and His salvation. These alone are His spiritual Body, and He alone is their Head. They only are His true Temple, and this Temple only is filled, always and truly, with His divine and sanctifying presence.

Nor is this body, thus holy, merely called a Church : as if, by a figure of rhetoric, it were honored with a name really belonging to something else, to which it is related ; but it is the Church in its largest, highest sense. Christ first constituted and has ever since enlarged this Church, by gathering and “adding to it those who are saved ;” ($\tauονσ\sigmaωζομένων$). Acts, 2: 47. The Saviour and the saved are the fundamental elements, as well as the finished development, of His Church.

Whether the Church in this highest sense is the original, and gives its name to the Church, in its lower aspect, as a visible society ; or, whether the latter first received the name, it is not necessary to decide ; although high authorities are not wanting for the opinion that the name belongs primarily to the higher embodiment. Thus, Bishop Taylor, distinguishing “God’s sense” from what he calls “man’s sense” of the term Church, says that the former is “the true, proper and primary meaning.” The eminent Jackson also declares that this is

the prime sense of the term, ‘Catholic Church.’” It is enough, however, for us to know that the grand company of “the saved” are—not by a figure of speech, but—in verity, a Church; in its most important sense, the Church of Christ.

The difference between this idea of the Church and both the previous definitions of it which have been given, will be seen by observing that the Church is not, in itself, an agent in saving men, but the whole company of men saved in union with Christ their Saviour. The difference is essential. The Church doubtless, uses means for saving men. This, however, makes not the Church, in itself, an agent in saving men, any more than medicine, in the hands of a physician, makes the physician himself a medicine, or constitutes him the power which gives that medicine its effect in healing the sick. To make the Word and sacraments to be “of the essence” of the Church, prepares the way for making the Church itself, in a sense co-ordinate with Christ, an agent in saving men. In its true idea, the Church is just the whole company of “the saved,” in union with Christ, the Saviour. Christ and the company of those who live in Him by faith, and in whom He lives through faith—this is the real essence of the Church; that without which no Church can exist; that, with which the Church cannot but exist. The importance of keeping this idea in mind cannot well be overrated.

Thus far, we have merely been seeking a definition of the Church in its largest comprehension. Hereafter, we hope to show that this definition is sustained by the Scriptures and by our own standards ; after which we will attend to that sense of the term, which brings before us the Church as a visible organized society.

For the present, I close with a single inquiry : Do we, each for himself, belong to the Church of “the saved ?” This question touches not merely outward relations. It is not settled by mere membership in a visible ecclesiastical organization. Do we belong to that “peculiar people” described ? We must, or we do not belong to Christ, and cannot be saved by Him. We must be in Him by faith, and by faith draw life directly from Him. If His in an external sense only, all the names, badges and privileges of our Christian lot will be but so many aggravations of our guilt when we come to stand before God ; only so many splendid patches on the dark garment of our shame ; like the painted flames on the vesture of victims at an *auto da fe* ; enhancing by the very strangeness of their contrast, the ignominy and the misery with which we shall be inwardly consumed.

God give us all a discerning eye, and a believing heart ; that, being “in Christ” here, we may hereafter be “found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless.”

CHAPTER II.

TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE. METAPHORS.

THE Church Universal, as described in the language of the Creed, is “the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints.” It is the great company of those, who have a common union with Christ by faith, who hold to Him as their sole Head, and to His Truth, in the main, whole and uncorrupt; and who, by His sole power and agency, are saved from sin, and made partakers of eternal life. This idea of the Church, so far as it was brought out in the first chapter, was drawn from the language of the Bible, descriptive of the true Christian and of his individual relation to Christ.

But, it will be asked, is there any thing in the Bible, which authorizes us to call this great company of “the saved” by the name of the Church? Are there any Scriptures, intentionally describing the Church itself, which contain the basis of the idea just presented?

This question will lead me to an examination of two sets of passages, the true sense of which, as I apprehend, will show that the definition of the Church which I have given, is sustained by the teaching of the inspired Word. Of these passages, the one set presents the Church under certain metaphors ; the other, under its own proper name.

I.

First, then, passages which present the Church under certain metaphors.

1. In the tenth chapter of the Gospel according to John, Christ describes the Church under the metaphor of a "FOLD." In this figure, the relation between Himself and His people, is that of the shepherd and his "FLOCK." The following is some of the language, which He employs in carrying out the figure. "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, the same is a thief and robber." "I am the door : by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill, and to destroy ; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good Shepherd ; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "And other sheep I have, which are not of this FOLD ; them also

I must bring ; and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be ONE FLOCK and ONE SHEPHERD.”* “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me ; and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one.” John, x. *passim*.

Now, here, under this metaphor of a FOLD, we have a description of THE CHURCH ; for, that this FOLD and the CHURCH are identical is not and cannot be doubted. Analogous metaphors, as we shall see, decide this point. Christ’s FOLD is the CHURCH. Of whom, then, does this FOLD, or CHURCH, consist ? Of none but the Shepherd and His flock ; $\piοίμνη$; of those and those only, who “enter in” by Christ and are “saved ;” who “hear His voice and follow Him ;” to whom He “gives eternal life” and who “shall never perish.” The Fold, if explained separately, as that which encloses both the Shepherd and His Flock, may be regarded as the securities of that fixed and unchangeable covenant of

* There is an ambiguity in our translation of this passage. As we have it, it is—“Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold ($αὐλῆσ$), them also I must bring, etc.,” “and there shall be one fold ($ποίμνη$), and one shepherd.” Our translators have wrongly rendered two distinct words by one and the same. $αὐλῆσ$ is the fold, which encloses : $ποίμνη$ is the flock which is enclosed. I have removed the ambiguity in my use of the passage.

grace within which the whole sacred company, in their spiritual union with Christ, are safely held : but the whole figure, interpreted together, the Fold and those whom it contains, represents, simply, the Church of Christ ; both that part which had been saved before His advent, and that which was afterwards to be saved. “ Other sheep,” says Christ, “ I have, which are not of this fold ; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice ; and there shall be ONE FLOCK and ONE SHEPHERD.” That is : “ My sheep among the Gentiles, as well as among the Jews, are not yet actually gathered in ; but they are mine, and gathered in they shall be. The Flock is one, and the Shepherd one ; and when the gathering is ended, eternity shall receive the whole to the fullness of my salvation.”

In this passage, the metaphoric fold clearly means the whole unfolded flock, who are to be saved from first to last, under the security of the eternal covenant of grace, in union with Christ, their only and divine Head. There is no reason, either in the occasion of Christ’s speaking, or in the language which He uses, to show that He is describing a mixed and semi-worldly company of professed believers. On the contrary, though there was such a company, and though He sometimes confessedly describes it, yet both the occasion and the language here show that He was

intentionally describing a different company, simply the whole company of “the saved.” He was looking far above and beyond the imperfect and the temporal condition of His kingdom. Indeed, He expressly distinguishes between this and the fold of which He was speaking. So far as there was then a visible and mixed Church on earth, the Jews with whom He was discoursing belonged to it: and yet, He told them, unequivocally, that they did not belong to His Fold, the Church which He then had in His eye. “But, ye believe not,” said He, “because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.” This plainly settles the question. Christ was intentionally discriminating between the mixed, visible Church in the world, and that Church, which is HIS FOLD; HIS CHURCH, in its highest, largest sense.

2. In the third chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul presents the Church under the metaphor of a FAMILY. “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and

length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge ; that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now, unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end.” Eph. 3 : 14–21.

It needs little or no comment to show that the FAMILY here mentioned is the Church, in its largest, highest sense. It is the Church, because, in the latter part of the passage, it is expressly called so ; for there is no reason to suppose that, by Family, in the former part of the passage, the Apostle means one company, and by Church, in the latter part, another and a different. Evidently, the two are one and the same company. This Family, then, is the Church. And it is, as evidently, the Church in its largest, highest sense ; “the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints ;” the one spiritual Household of faith ; the whole company of “the saved,” whose only Head is Christ. This appears, not only from the Apostle’s prayer, “that Christ may dwell in the hearts” of its members “by faith ;” that, “being rooted and grounded in love, they may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ which

passeth knowledge ;” and “that they might be filled with all the fullness of God”—for this prayer might be offered in behalf of any company—but, from the language which he uses in describing the sacred Household. It is not only a Family, but “THE WHOLE FAMILY” named of Christ, “IN HEAVEN AND EARTH.” The very terms show that he was not speaking of the limited, mixed, semi-worldly Church of this life. He was describing the whole Family of Christ, part in Heaven and part on earth ; and the part on earth homogeneous with the part in Heaven, and finally to become one with the sacred whole. Such being his description of this Family, the prayer which he offered for its members becomes most impressively appropriate. It shows that his mind was lifted far above and beyond the temporal, the imperfect, and the mixed, and was realizing that incomparably grander, purer, and better thing—the whole company “of the saved,” from the beginning to the end of time, who are to live together in glory forever. And the Idea which thus swelled his mind in describing the Family, continued to fill his thoughts when he came to call it the Church. Hence, he terms it “the Church in Christ Jesus” ($\tauῇ εκκλησίᾳ ἐν Χριστῷ Ιησοῦ$), in which God is to be glorified “throughout all ages, world without end,” all ages, past, present, and to come. The Family

and the Church, here, are connatural and commensurate ; and neither of them can be identified with, and limited by, the imperfect and mixed company called the Church, in this world.

3. In the twenty-first chapter of the Book of Revelation, John presents the Church under the metaphor of A BRIDE. "Come hither," says the Angel of the Vision, "and I will show thee THE BRIDE, the Lamb's wife." Rev. 21 : 9.

This Bride, the Lamb's wife, is confessedly the Church of Christ. Of whom, then, do its members consist ? This question is answered near the close of the chapter, where, while the sense is the same, the metaphor has been changed for that of a "City." "The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it." "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither that worketh abomination or a lie ; but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

This vision is, by many, though not by all, supposed to represent the finished state of the Church in Heaven ; inasmuch as "the Bride," or "Great City, the Holy Jerusalem," was shown, "descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." Suppose, then, for the sake of the supposition, that the object of the vision was to exhibit the Church in its heavenly state ; this would not

destroy the force of the metaphor in its application to our subject ; for the Church becomes “ the Bride, the Lamb’s wife,” on earth ; and it is only because she is espoused to Him on earth that the marriage will finally be solemnized in Heaven. Hence the Apostle says of the marriage union between husband and wife, “ This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.” Eph. 5 : 32. That is : the ordinance of human marriage is a mystic symbol of the divine union existing between Christ and the Church. This union has existed from the beginning, and the Church has been and will be “ the BRIDE, the Lamb’s wife,” through all time as well as through all eternity.

That this relation exists on earth is evident from the close of the chapter quoted, Rev. 21 : 27, where it is said, “ none shall enter into it,” none shall be recognized as members of this BRIDE, “ but they which are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” WHEN are they written in that Book ? On Earth and in Time, or nowhere and never ? The Seventy rejoiced that “ the devils were subject unto them.” Christ bade them, “ rather rejoice because your names are written in Heaven”—“ ARE written,” not“ SHALL BE written.” Had they not been so written on earth, their names would never have been found on the Register of Life in Heaven. And this is as true of every Christian as it was of

the Seventy. Even then, on the supposition that the metaphoric Bride means the Church in its finally perfected state, yet none belong to it but those who, while on earth, have their names written in Heaven. The relation between the Divine Bridegroom and His holy Bride is formed in this world, and is only to be publicly solemnized in the world to come. Still more definitive of the question is the metaphor on its true construction, that "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife," is a figure of the Church on earth, as well as in Heaven. In this light, the metaphor solves all doubt. The Bride, the Church of Christ, in its largest, highest sense, is composed exclusively of "the saved," of those who, on earth, have their names "written in the Lamb's Book of Life;" His Book of LIFE. No spiritually dead soul is ever betrothed to the Divinely living Saviour.

To this view it may, indeed, be objected that, in the Old Testament, God is said to have married the whole country and people of Israel—Isa. 62 : 4, 5 ; that among them were multitudes of the most ungodly, and that therefore, under the New Testament, the term Bride may be considered as designating the Church in its visible, mixed, and imperfect state. To this, however, I reply : it is by no means certain that the language referred to designates the relation between God and the

strangely mixed visible Israel. But, even if we were to allow this, it would make nothing against the interpretation now given of the metaphoric Bride in the Revelation. The relation between God and the mixed visible Israel of old was not a type of the mixed visible Christian Israel. The Church of the Old Testament was not a type of the Church of the New. They were one and the same Church, under different Dispensations ; and both, as visible and mixed, were but signs and means of God's relation to the true spiritual Israel, the true spiritual Church of Christ ; so that the real Bride, the real Church, for which we seek, remains the same, the whole company of "the saved," in union with the living Saviour. The Type of a thing may be imperfect, while the Anti-type, the thing typified, is perfect. The typic Bride of the old Testament turned adulteress, and was put away. The typic Bride of the New has too often followed her example and shared her disgrace. The True Bride is never unfaithful. She is betrothed for eternity.

4. In the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Church is presented under the metaphor of a BODY. Upon this body various gifts were bestowed "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the BODY of Christ ; till we all come, in the unity of

the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ;”—that—“ speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, Christ ; from whom the whole BODY, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working, in the measure of every part maketh increase of the BODY unto the edifying of itself in love.” Eph. 4 : 12–16.

This is exceedingly strong language. It speaks of saints who are to grow up into the edified “ body of Christ,” unto a divine “ unity,” unto “ a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” They are to grow up into Him “ in all things,” as their “ head.” From Him, “ the whole body,” every part and member, is to be “ fitly joined and compacted together.” In this divinely vital fitting, joining and compacting, “ every joint supplieth ” its due proportion. In this supply, there is an “ effectual working,” a divine energy. And, through this effectual working, there is to be made “ a proportional increase of the body in every single part.” This last expression gives the true force of the language in the original.

Now, the BODY, described in this passage, is confessedly the Church. And it is certainly a Church, every joint, limb, ligament and function of which,

without any indicated exception, is to grow into, and from Christ by an inward, divine energy, and is to be a spiritually vitalized part of that fitly joined and compacted body, which carries the life of Christ in every portion, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. It is that Church, which, when the sacred body is at length completed by the addition of its last member, is to become “a perfect man,” in its analogy with a perfect human body and soul ; “a perfect man ;” its head, Christ ; and its body, all His glorified members ; in short, “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

Is it possible, then, to understand, by the Body, thus described and characterized, the merely local, visible Church, organized at Ephesus, to which this Epistle was confessedly addressed, and which, as a local organization, doubtless shared in the spiritual gifts shed on the Church in its largest, highest sense ? Is it not manifest, from the language used, from the description elaborated, that St. Paul had risen far above, and passed far beyond, the local and probably mixed organization at Ephesus, and was setting before them that unspeakably diviner thing, the one, universal, glorious Body of Christ, of which Ephesus, if not faithless, hypocritical, or self-deceived, might become, with all saints, glorified members ? For one, I feel it would be doing

violence to all spiritual understanding to take such language from the lips of an inspired Apostle, and consider it as intentionally describing the locally organized and mixed body, called the visible Church in this world. This body is not, and never will become, the “perfect man ; the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” The idea which filled the Apostle’s mind, seems manifestly to have been—not that of the mixed visible Church on earth, but—that of the literally one, universal Body of Christ, part growingly sanctified on earth, part already glorified in Heaven, and all to be finally “presented” by Himself and “to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but—holy and without blemish.”

5. Once more : in Ephesians, 2 : 21, the Church is presented under the metaphor of a TEMPLE. Speaking of “the household of God,” gathered from all nations, the Apostle says : “All the building, fitly framed together, growtheth unto an holy TEMPLE in the Lord.”

This temple, it is confessed, means the Church. In the chapter where the term is used, the Apostle tells us that in Christ “is made, of twain, one new man.” Now, what were “the twain” thus made “one” in Christ? Not the whole Jewish nation and the whole Gentile world ; but “the saints” from among the Jews, and the saints from

among the Gentiles, who had been and were to be, gathered into Christ. To both of these parts of the human family the blessings of the Gospel were at length equally opened. The coming and work of Christ had “broken down the middle wall of partition,” and opened the door to all believers alike, of all nations. Those, thus gathered, constitute the “one new man” in Christ, whose members are collected from “the twain,” the two ancient divisions of the human family ; and thus collected, they constitute the Church, or no Church in Christ has ever been gathered. The soundness of this interpretation is evinced by what immediately precedes this chapter. Speaking of the same company of “saints,” which he here calls a “Temple,” the Apostle says that Christ is “head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.” On this passage I shall hereafter remark more at length. I cite it now merely to show that by the word TEMPLE, the Apostle means the Church.

It behoves us, then, to look well to the question, of what materials is this temple composed ? Looking at the chapter in which the building is described, we find it built of “saints,” only ; of those who by faith are united to Christ and saved. They are particularly addressed as having been “quickened from a death in trespasses and sins ;” “raised

up and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus ; “ saved by grace through faith ; ” “ made nigh by the blood of Christ ; ” and blessed with “ access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Both the Jewish and the Gentile saints, who constitute this “ one new man ” in Christ, are represented as reconciled to God in one body by the Cross ;”— terms which cannot be applied to mere saints by courtesy. It is doing gross violence to language to say that unconverted Jews and unconverted Gentiles are “ reconciled unto God by the Cross,” and thus made “ one body in Christ.” Such terms can comprehend none but true believers, made one in the true Saviour. Hence in this passage, the converted Ephesians are called “ no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints,” saints with saints, “ and of the household of God ; ” “ built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” In Him, “ all the building,” ALL, every stone and timber from foundation to pinnacle, ALL is “ fitly framed together ; ” and, thus framed, ALL “ groweth,” ALL, every part and particle, “ unto an holy TEMPLE in the Lord ; ” a temple, all “ holy,” and all “ in the Lord ; ” all “ builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit ; ” and, through that Spirit, filled by its occupant in every part.

Such is the simple import of the passage on which we are now engaged. It describes a Church, every part of which is united to Christ by faith, in a vital and holy union ; and, thus united, is saved by Him from sin and everlasting death. In building this Temple, no account is taken of any other materials ; no other materials are found in any part of the sacred edifice. It is built for God, and “through the Spirit” God dwells in it, vitalizing, sanctifying, and finally glorifying every part. It is that Church which Christ “ filleth all in all.”

This view is sustained by reference to the true idea of a Temple. In the sense of the Bible, what constitutes a Temple ? Not a mere pile of hewn stone and cedar, overlaid with gold and silver. We may call such a structure a Temple, and by this customary mode of speech we are too easily led to suppose that, in itself, it is a Temple. This, however, is a low view. Why was that wonderful edifice at Jerusalem a true Temple ? Not because of its materiality, or visibility ; not because of its costliness or splendor ; not because of its curious structure or mystic design ; but because of God’s indwelling. This indwelling makes any place, any thing, a Temple. This made a Temple of Jacob’s solitary night-tent, the stone pillow of Luz, with the one-arched sky-canvas above.

"Surely," said the patriarch, when he awoke to realities, "surely Jehovah is in this place, and I knew it not." "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the House of God, and this is the gate of heaven." He had been in an august Temple because he had been specially with God. This, too, shows why the true believer's body is a Temple. "Know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?" And this, emphatically, made a Temple of the perfect Body of Christ. When His hearers understood Him to speak of destroying the Temple at Jerusalem, and building it in three days, we are told "He spake of the Temple of His Body." It was a most perfect Temple; for "in Him was God manifest in the flesh." "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

This opens for us the meaning of the word Temple, in Eph. 2: 21. The company there described are a Temple, because in each and every one "Christ dwelleth by faith." His dwelling in each separately, and thus in all collectively, makes them collectively, what each is individually, a wondrous Temple; "the Temple of the living God;" God "dwelling in them and walking in them;" He, "their God," and they "His people;" He, their "Father," and they His "Sons and daughters;" all builded together and constituting the

one glorious Temple of the saints.. 2 Cor. 6 : 16, 18.

This Temple, in every part inhabited, this Church, in every member vitalized, by God, is identical with that "Spiritual House," which St. Peter describes as built of "living stones" on the Foundation of Christ, the "living Stone." This edifice he immediately calls "a peculiar people," designed to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light ; which, in time past, were not a people, but are now the people of God ; which had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy." 1 Pet. 2 : 5, 9, 10. It is eminently "a Spiritual House," all alive from the Foundation to the top stone, with the life of Christ in every one of His members.

I have thus shown that the idea of the Church, presented in the first chapter, is evidently found in various places, where the Church is described under the several metaphors of a FOLD, a FAMILY, a BRIDE, a BODY, and a TEMPLE. To my interpretation of these metaphors I am aware, indeed, that some apparently fair objections may be raised.

1. It may be said that the epistle from which most of the passages are cited, and other epistles as well, were addressed to local churches, evidently visible, mixed, imperfect bodies ; and that,

therefore, these metaphors must be interpreted in accordance with this idea of the churches addressed.

But to this I reply : the fact that the Epistles were addressed to local mixed churches necessitates no such conclusion. The fact that the Apostle was writing to a probably mixed company at Ephesus, for instance, no more restrained him, when he had reached the heart of his subject, from rising above the idea of a local and mixed body into a conception and description of the Church as one, universal and holy, than it restrained him from rising into the sublimity of any other Christian verity with which he wished to fill their thoughts and fire their hearts. In truth, when we come to look at the metaphors which have been explained, a careful study of the context uniformly shows that the inspired writers were conceiving and describing, not the local and the mixed, but the Universal and the Holy Church ; the Church of Christ in its largest, highest comprehension.

2. Again, it may be said, that the context of some of these metaphors exhorts the members of the Church thus addressed, to fidelity and holiness, and warns them against unfaithfulness and sin ; and that we may hence infer that the Church described was a mixed body, composed of true believers and of such as merely professed the true

faith, while they were really either self-deceived or hypocrites.

To this, however, I reply : that the exhortations to fidelity and holiness, and the warnings against unfaithfulness and sin, whenever addressed to the Church, as described in these metaphors, do not prove that the Church, thus exhorted and warned, is composed, in part, of impenitent men, of men without faith and with none of the elements of holiness. It proves no more than this : that, in the Church so gloriously described, Christians are not perfect in holiness at the first moment of their union with Christ by faith ; that they are, too often, needlessly imperfect ; and that they are, therefore, proper subjects for the discipline of such grave instructions as have been given. The “Spiritual House” into which they are builded, is, in every part, a **LIVE** Temple ; Spiritual life goes out of the **LIVE** Rock into every single stone built thereon ; so that what is lacking in each is, not the living principle, but some of its fuller and higher actings ; not the true nature of the holy materials, but some of their more finished and heavenly adornings.

The point before us, then, may be considered as sufficiently clear. Various metaphors in the Bible describe the Church under the idea of it which I have presented ; an idea, which, in exhibiting the

essential marks of the “One Holy Catholic Church,” knows nothing of any outward unity in submission to one temporal human head, the Pope ; nor any thing of such unity in subordination to One Episcopacy with Sacraments Episcopally administered ; an idea, in short, which, in unfolding the essential being of the Church, holds forth Christ and life from Him by faith in the Individual Soul, as the very base and substratum, yea, the very material and superstructure of that Church. This idea of Christ’s “Holy Catholic Church” the Bible certainly gives ; and, doubtless, it is only because many have been so long familiar with a different, so long wedded to a conflicting notion, that this seems to any mind strange, or otherwise than based on the highest reason.

The Bible, it is admitted, often uses the word Church in a looser sense : it often speaks of the Church as a thing of external organization, and endowed with a ministry and sacraments ; and in this character we shall hereafter be called to study the subject. For the present, it is enough to add that the highest, truest idea of the Church which we find in the Bible, is that in which Christ, and individual union with Him by a true faith, with the result of growing spiritual life, constitute the very soul and body of the Divine Confederacy. The Church, in this idea of it, is a thing not of change-

ful and perishable visibilities, but of permanent and imperishable spiritualities. It is essentially marked by just such inward relations and affections as are at once suggested to thought by the metaphors under which we have seen it figured. The Fold, the Family, the Bride, the Body, the Temple! What things of life are these! How full is each of Divine affinities! What a Fold is that of which Christ is Shepherd! What a Family, in which Christ is Father; what a Bride, to which Christ is Husband; what a Body, to which Christ is Head; and what a Temple, of which Christ is both Foundation-Stone and cement! And whom does the Bible set forth as participants in these holy relationships? It shows that he is a sheep of Christ's Fold who hears His voice and follows Him; that he is of Christ's Family who is born unto Him by the Spirit, through the truth; that he is a part of Christ's Bride who is espoused to Him in faith and holy love; that he is a member of Christ's Body who draws spiritual life, and feels a living control, from Him as Head; and that he is in Christ's Temple who is built on Him as the only Foundation, and grows, as by a Sacred Cement, to that on which he is builded. He only who enters into these heavenly affinities, and is held by them, comes within the scope of such passages as have been examined; and all who do thus enter, and

are thus held, in affinity with Christ, do also come within the scope of those passages, by whatever outward name they may be known, in whatever varying clime they may be found, and under whatever outward disadvantages they may labor. Nothing but these affinities can make up the Body of the true "Holy Catholic Church," and nothing can cut off from this Body where these affinities really exist. In the Visible Church, as we shall hereafter see, outward institutions of ministry, and sacraments, and discipline, have their proper place, and are invested with due importance. They bind us, as things of order and as means of grace ; but they bind not God, as essentials to Christian life and incorporation into Christ. His one Holy Church is the issue of His working, by whatever means ; and when, by his working, it is gathered into Christ, nothing can cut off from it that does not at the same time sever from Christ himself.

As yet, however, I have examined but one of the two sets of passages referred to. Our study of the other must be reserved for the next chapter. Meanwhile, I ask two things : that you will not conclude hastily against the view which has been presented, and that you will not write me down as no Churchman because I have attempted to unfold this view. In what I have yet to say, I hope to show that

this view of the Church at large is sustained by our own standards, and that the view thus sustained is in perfect keeping with all good fidelity and affection to the Church of our own tried loyalty and love.

CHAPTER III

TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE. LITERAL TEXTS.

IN looking into the Bible for the ground of that definition of the Church, which makes this Body commensurate with the whole company of "the saved," in union with Christ the Saviour, I have already examined one set of passages which describe the Church under certain metaphors. I am now to examine another, or passages which present the Church under its own proper name.

This examination is important, because, however clearly the Church, described by those metaphors, may seem to correspond with the idea before us, it is by some contended that, in all cases where the word Church is used, it designates an outward and mixed body, composed, in part, of true believers, and, in part, of those who merely profess the true faith, though they may be self-deceived, hypocrites, or apostates ; or that, in the Bible, the word Church designates a visible and organized society, with officers, sacraments, and mixed body

of members. Now, if this be true, it will apparently invalidate our interpretations of the metaphors which have been examined. But if it be not true, if there be passages in which the word Church carries the sense of our definition, then will our interpretation of those metaphors be confirmed, and the doctrine of the Church, involved therein, be established.

Now, that the word Church is often used in the Bible to designate a visible, organized and mixed society has already been freely admitted. And yet, this is not the primitive meaning of the word, which is translated by the term Church. In its primitive use, the word Ecclesia means simply an assembly, an aggregate of individuals ; and it has so little to do with visible organization, rules and constitution of government, that it was, in early times, applied to a tumultuous gathering, a very mob ; and that, to designate a lawful, or organized body, it needed an adjective to express the quality of lawfulness, or organization. Thus, we see, that when St. Paul was preaching at Ephesus (Acts 19: 23-41), and when the Ephesians, thinking the honor of their goddess in peril, and being excited to rage by the crafty silversmith, Demetrius, "rushed," rabble-like, "into the theatre," and for "two hours" shouted, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians ;" though "the whole city was filled with

confusion," and "the more part knew not wherefore they were come together," save to threaten violence to the Christians; yet, this very mob, the most disorderly of its kind, was called an Ecclesia. "The Ecclesia," says the sacred writer, "was confused, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together." And then, when "the Town Clerk" had succeeded in "appeasing the people," he "dismissed the Ecclesia," adding, that if they had any actionable matter against the Christians it "should be determined in a lawful assembly"—*ἐν τῇ ευνομῷ εκκλησίᾳ.*

The word itself, therefore, though generally translated Church, yet means simply an assembly, with no reference to organization and government: and, when used to designate an organized body, it originally needed an adjective to express the quality of organization. There is no controlling reason to suppose that, when the word first came to be applied to Christians, it was used to designate an organized, visible Church, in our sense of the term. It meant, I apprehend, simply the unorganized company of Christ's disciples. Afterwards, when the Christian Church had become an organized and visible body, or rather a multitude of such bodies, the word was doubtless adopted as the common name of each;—yet, not so as to preclude its first use as the name of the one, whole company.

of Christ's true disciples, in vital union with Him as their one divine head.

In Acts 7:38, the word is applied to the Hebrews in the wilderness. "This," Moses, "is he that was with the Church, $\tau\eta\ \varepsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha$, in the wilderness." But here $\varepsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha$ means—not the Church of God under the Old Testament dispensation, but—the aggregate of individuals constituting the politico-theocratic state of the Hebrew people. An organized visible Church, as distinct from that social theocracy, did not then exist. The Hebrew polity in the wilderness was a theocratic state, carrying among its individuals the elements of the spiritual Church, rather than a visible organized Church, in distinction from the state. Acts, 7:38, may properly be rendered, "This is He that was in the congregation in the wilderness;" that congregation being the whole aggregate of the Hebrew people, and not a Church, as we understand the term.

Again, in Matt. 18:17, the word is applied to those who were to hear complaints against offenders. "If he shall neglect to hear them," the "two or three witnesses"—"tell it to the Church," $\tau\eta\ \varepsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha$, etc. But to argue that by $\varepsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha$, here is meant an organized, visible Church, with power to constitute itself a court for the trial and punishment of offenders, is to plant the seed of a monster evil. The idea of a Christian Church, with author-

ity to try offenses, and to punish by the infliction of positive penalty, is anti-Christian and has wrought incalculable mischief. The language of Christ implies no more than this : " If thy brother offend thee, and will not listen to personal, private expostulation, nor to that of two or three witnesses, nor to the assembly of the brethren, withdraw from his company and have no more to do with him than with the rest of an ungodly world." This is all the power of discipline with which Christ has invested His disciples—the power of separating themselves from all approving fellowship with incorrigibly unworthy professors of His Gospel. *Vide* 2 Thess. 3 : 6-15 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 3-5 ; 1 Cor. 5 : 1 *ad fin.* The word *εκκλησια*, Matt. 18 : 17, does not, then, imply a visible, organized Church. Such a Christian body had not then come into recognized existence.

Since, then, the word *εκκλησια* does not, of itself, imply an organized visible Church, let us now proceed to search for passages in which it is used to designate the whole company of Christ's truly believing disciples—or, the simple aggregate of those who are saved through Him.

II.

Passages which present the Church under its OWN PROPER NAME.

1. I cite, first, Matt. 16:18. "Upon this rock I will build my CHURCH ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

This is the passage on which Rome relies for establishing her claim to be regarded as the one visible Catholic Church, and the claim of her bishop to universal supremacy, as successor to St. Peter, and sole vicar of Christ on earth. She interprets the passage thus : "Thou art Peter," a rock, "and on this rock I will build my Church ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (*vide Encyc. Am.*, vol. x., p. 253, art. "Pope, by a Catholic"); making Peter and the rock identical, constituting one head of the Church on earth, and making union with that head necessary.

Now, though this interpretation were, in principle, correct, it would yield no support to the claims of Rome and her bishop, unless they could prove, what history furnishes no infallible means of proving, that Peter was the first bishop, or ever a bishop, of that Church ; and, what there is no means at all of proving, that Peter's primacy among

the Apostles made the Bishop of Rome and his successors supreme temporal head of the whole Christian Church on earth.

But, is the above interpretation, in principle, correct? Many able and learned commentators on the passage have answered this question in the negative. Let us, then, look at the passage itself.

Christ had just asked His disciples—"Who do men say that I am?" And, on being answered that some called Him "John the Baptist;" others, "Elias;" and others still, "Jeremias," or "one of the prophets;" He asked again, "But who say ye that I am?" To this question, addressed to them all, Peter, more prompt, as well as possibly more divinely enlightened, than the rest, replied, "Thou art THE CHRIST, the Son of the living God." Jesus immediately added; "Blessed art thou, Simon, Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee; but my Father who is in heaven." Then follows the passage quoted. Let us read the two main words in the original Greek: "I say unto thee thou art $\Pi\epsilon\tau\rho\sigma$," (a stone) "and upon $\tau\alpha\forall\tau\eta\tau\bar{\eta}$ $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\rho\acute{\alpha}$ (this rock) I will build MY CHURCH; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Upon this reading, the question arises; is $\Pi\epsilon\tau\rho\sigma$, here, identical with $\tau\alpha\forall\tau\eta\tau\bar{\eta}$ $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\rho\acute{\alpha}$? If Christ had intended to constitute Peter the foundation of His Church, would He not have said, "Thou art $\Pi\epsilon\tau\rho\sigma$, and

upon $\tau\omega\nu\tau\omega\tau\omega\pi\varepsilon\tau\rho\omega$ I will build my Church ? This He did not say : He changed the main word in the sentence : and the question is pertinent ; why this change of $\Pi\varepsilon\tau\rho\sigma$, the proper name given to a disciple, to $\Pi\varepsilon\tau\rho\alpha$, the foundation of the Church ?

For light on this point, let us remember that Christ was then testing His disciples' enlightenment as to His true character : "Who do men say that I am ?" "Who say ye that I am ?"—and that, thus examined, Simon, answering apparently for the rest as well as for himself, had "witnessed a true confession" by replying, "Thou art the CHRIST, the Son of the living God." This, then, Jesus, "the ANOINTED, the Son of the living God"—a truth revealed to Simon, and peradventure to others of the disciples, by "the Father in heaven,"—this, the most elementary truth of Christianity, the very corner-stone of the Christian faith, the very life of the Church—this was the grand disclosure which the dialogue had elicited, the weighty theme which then filled all their minds. Is it not, then, in the highest degree improbable that, while His own soul was laboring, and while the minds of His disciples were filled, with the grandest birth of revelation, Jesus dropped the sublime theme, the very starting point and goal of His own inquiries, wholly out of His thoughts, brought in Simon, not as a subordinate, but as the chief object of re .

gard, and sunk the sublime teaching of the occasion to an anti-climax by declaring that He would build His forever immovable Church on the foundation of a weak and unstable man, divinely enlightened indeed in the knowledge of his Master's Messiahship, but rash, changeful and naturally destitute of the high moral courage of a great character ? On the contrary, is it not, in a corresponding degree, probable, that Jesus was still full of His main theme, and that he wrought it out, and carried it up to the real climax, not only in a true disclosure of His own Messiahship, but also in the assertion of the crowning truth that, as the Messiah, He is "the chief corner stone" of the Church, and that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid?" And is it not, in an equal degree, probable that His allusion to Simon was but incidental to His main purpose, designed to give him the new proper name, *Πετρος*, by way of commemorating his confession of the real *Πετρα*, and dignifying him, as on other occasions He dignified the rest of the Apostles, with the badge of that authority, which they were to exercise as nearest to Himself in His own "glorious Church ? "

Taking, then, the light thus thrown upon these two words, may we not accept the following as a fair paraphrase of the whole passage? "What think ye of my person and character? Simon

answered, ‘We believe that Thou art the Messiah, the Only Begotten of the living God.’ Jesus said unto him, ‘Thou art highly favored, Bar-jona ; this foundation-truth of Christianity has been revealed to thee and thy fellow disciples not by man, but by my Father in Heaven. And now I give unto thee a new name ; henceforth thou shalt be called Πετρος, to commemorate thy confession of me as the true Πετρα. Upon this Πετρα, this Rock, besides which no man can lay any other foundation, I will build MY CHURCH ; so that, thus founded and thus built, no persecutions of men, no subtleties of the Devil, and no powers of Death, shall ever prevail, either to extinguish or to subvert it. Moreover, in this Church, thus divinely founded, and thus immovably built, I give to thee, as I shall hereafter give to thy fellow Apostles, an office and authority peculiar to yourselves, as nearest to me in my evangelical kingdom, the power of opening and shutting, with the certainty that your acts on earth shall be ratified in Heaven.’” (*Vide* 1 Cor. 3 : 11 ; Matt. 18 : 18 ; John 20 : 23.)

For one, looking at the passage in this light, I cannot wonder at the comment of Stillingfleet : “The Rock, spoken of by Christ in his speech to Peter, if taken doctrinally, was St. Peter’s confession ; if taken personally, it was none but Christ himself ;” nor can I marvel that in substantial

agreement with him are to be found Chrysostom and Augustine, with other fathers, among the ancients, and Jewell, with similar authorities, among the moderns. (*Vide* Fathers of the Eng. Ch., vol. 7, p. 302.)

This, however, is not all the light that may be made to shine on this passage. St. Paul throws on it another powerful ray. "Our fathers," says he, 1 Cor. 10 : 1-4, "were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea ; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea ; and did all eat of the same spiritual meat, and did all drink of the same spiritual drink ; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock, $\Pi\epsilon\tau\rho\alpha$, was Christ." The same inspired pen which wrote this wrote also that other pregnant sentence, "Other Foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST." 1 Cor. 3 : 11. Here, then, is light indeed, the very Rock, $\Pi\epsilon\tau\rho\alpha$, by name, of which Jesus was speaking to Peter, Christ himself, the only Foundation of His Church. This light, too, will shine all the clearer, if we remember that the Prophet who wrote the Gospel for the Jews had predicted Christ under this very idea of a Foundation Rock. "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner Stone, a Sure Foundation ; he that believeth shall not make haste." Isa. 28 : 16 ; comp. 1

Pet. 2 : 5, 6. These words of Isaiah, applied to Christ by St. Peter himself, embody the very idea of Jesus in Matt. 16 : 18. Whosoever "believeth" on this Foundation Rock, says Peter, "shall not be confounded." The Church thus founded and built shall never be subverted. The disciples to whom Christ spake were, doubtless, familiar with this prophecy of Isaiah, and we may well conclude that this prophecy furnished to their minds the key to the meaning of their Divine Master, when He said : "On this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." They needed no labored exposition in words to guide them in catching His meaning when he uttered those living truths, proclaiming Himself alone the eternal Foundation, safeguard and keeper, of His own spiritual, believing Church.

Let us briefly draw out the argument from what has now been said. Isaiah, speaking by that "spirit of prophecy" which is "the testimony of Jesus," foretells Christ, as the Foundation of a believing and immovable Church. Christ Himself, whose inspiration spake by that prophet, calls the Foundation of His Church, $\pi\epsilon\tau\rho\alpha$, a Rock. And St. Paul, speaking by revelation from the same Inspirer, declares that this $\pi\epsilon\tau\rho\alpha$, Rock, was Christ. This is light from the Bible. The Rock, in Matt. 16 : 18, is not Simon, but Christ Himself ; and His

words to His disciple mean just this : “ I give thee the new name, $\Pi\epsilon\tau\rho\sigma$, because thou hast truly confessed me, the predicted $\Pi\epsilon\tau\rho\alpha$, the anointed Son of the living God ; and on this Rock I will build my Church, that living Temple of believers, which shall never be moved.”

And now, let us inquire, what kind of a Church is this ? I answer, it is a Church which CHRIST builds, not man. “ On this Rock I will build my Church.” Christ is Builder here, and only Christ. He is truly a Builder. Not only is He the true Foundation, but He really and ceaselessly works in building on that Foundation. He does all the work in the Building. By His Spirit and His Truth He lays every stone in the edifice. “ On this Rock I will build my Church.” Here is no mistake, no fallibility, no human infirmity, in selecting and arranging the materials. All is done with a Divine Master-Workman’s science and skill. Christ selects every piece, and builds it into the one sacred Temple ; and he never builds upon Himself and into union with Himself the souls of unbelieving, self-deceived, or hypocritical men. He builds with those only who accept His invitation, “ come to Him ” by faith, and “ find rest unto their souls ; ” those only who live and walk in Him, “ rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith.” This is what makes His Church immovable. Against

the Church, in a merely visible sense, “the gates of hell” have oft prevailed. By the floods which have poured through those open gates, the Churches of Jerusalem, and Antioch, and Africa, and those Seven of the Proconsular Asia, have all been swept away; and the same has virtually happened to all the other and later Churches of the East—mere fragments of them tottering still, to make their desolations the more visible ; while, as to even the great Western Church of the seven-hilled city, though those wasteful floods of hell leave her still standing in imposing magnitude, yet have they filled her with their own deep impurities, and left her thus, the all but deadly enemy of the Gospel. But the true Church of Christ, the Church of all believers, the Church which he has built and is building on Himself, from all nations and all names, this has never been moved ; against this the floods from the gates of hell have beaten and shall forever beat in vain. Against this they never have prevailed, and never can prevail. This Church rests on Christ, and He keeps it safe from every storm.

Such, I venture to conclude, is the sense of this famous passage. In looking for the meaning of such very peculiar language, unquestionably intended to draw Christ Himself into view, in His most essential, live-giving office, it is quite below

the subject to suppose that He ends by founding His Church on a fallible creature, to be built up with the implements of a human ministry, sent forth, in all their infirmity of judgment, to gather into a visible society all sorts of men, the believing and the unbelieving, the holy and the unholy ; united, as such heterogenous elements must necessarily be, by merely outward bonds in an external organization. Nothing can come up to the nature of the occasion and the design of the discourse, but that view which considers Christ as presenting HIMSELF, "the anointed Son of the living God," the living and the life-giving Saviour, building on Himself His own Spiritual Church ; by His Word and Spirit calling, teaching, and drawing believing souls into vital union with Himself ; and thus constituting them, in Himself, an impregnable Church, the vast "assembly" of those who "have received Christ Jesus the Lord," and who "walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith." Col. 2 : 6, 7. This is work for the Divine Builder ; and those only on whom He works with effect, are members of that Church which rests on Himself, never to be moved.

I will only add, that at the time when Christ uttered the words which we have been examining, no distinctly Christian organization existed. Either, therefore, the word Church, in this passage, must

mean the Spiritual Church of which I have spoken, or it must signify the then visible Church under the Jewish Dispensation, to be followed by its visible Gentile successor ; the Jewish being about to crucify the Son of God, and the Gentile destined often to “crucify Him afresh, and to put Him to an open shame.” Do the occasion, then, and the words which it called forth, point to the Church in this latter sense ? No. The Church, built on Christ, has another character and shares another destiny.

2. I cite, next, Acts 2 : 47. “And the Lord added daily to THE CHURCH such as should be saved ;” literally, added “the saved” ($\tauοὺσ σωζομένοις$) to the Church.” The participle here is the present, not the future, as we have it in our translation ; those who “are saved,” not those who shall, or should, peradventure, be saved.

This passage refers to a fact anterior to any distinct development of a visible and organized Christian Church. As a “communion of saints,” indeed, the “Ecclesia” had existed from the beginning ; and to this “the saved” might be added. The Visible Church, under the Jewish Dispensation, as a sort of Theocratic State, was also still in existence ; but, as it was then passing out of life, it is not supposable that “the saved” were added to that dying organization. Since then the Church,

as a distinctly visible Christian organization, can not be said to have more than begun to develop itself, it is the more probable that by “the Ecclesia” here, to which “the saved were added,” is meant the enduring “communion of saints” of all ages ; Christ’s “One Holy Catholic Church ;” the unfailing, the never transitory Church. To this “the saved” were a truly fitting addition ; and the term fitly indicates the idea of “the Ecclesia” as it probably existed in the mind of the inspired writer. The sense of the passage, then, may be thus expressed : “The Lord daily increased the Ecclesia, the great company of the saints, by the addition of those who were then saved.” The increase was in exact proportion to the number of “the saved.” No other element seems to have been then in view. The Church here described was, evidently, the simple aggregate of “the saved.” And this becomes the more evident, when we look at the language used : “The Lord added,” not man. The added were baptized, indeed, but it was by the Holy Ghost, as well as with water. It is true that, as the Christian organization gradually took on its visible development, we begin to find evidence of man’s work, not the Lord’s. Ananias and Sapphira, and Simon Magus appear among “the sacramental host,” and are cut off ; but under that outpouring of the Holy Ghost, dur-

ing the first sermon of St. Peter, we hear of none but "the saved," and of nothing but the Lord's work in saving them. The Lord would have His Church to consist of none but "the saved ;" but when "the saved" began to assume distinctly the forms of a visible organization, the evidences of man's infirmity began to show themselves in the mixing among them of earth's impure and unsaved elements. I doubt not, indeed, that at the time referred to (Acts 2 : 47), the visible Church, under its Christian form, was beginning to develop itself. Its ministry had received their commission, and they were just entering on their labors in preaching the Gospel and baptizing converts. Nevertheless, I think the words, *τοὺς σωζόμενους*, may be considered as showing what was the true primitive idea of the Church, as the living and holy body of "the saved" in Christ.

3. I cite next, Eph. 1 : 22, 23 : "And gave Him Head over all to THE CHURCH, which is His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

In seeking the idea of the Church, of which Christ is here styled the Head, it is important to look at the context. The Apostle prayed for the Ephesian converts, that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him ; the eyes of their understand-

ing being enlightened that they might know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." And then he goes on to address them as those who, having been "dead in trespasses and sins," were at length, unlike all the rest of a dead world, "quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places," or relations, in "Christ Jesus." Such is the context, before and after the passage which I have cited ; and it must be allowed that the persons here described, in connection with the word Church, were the renewed subjects of Christ's mighty and saving power. His whole discourse, in this part, teems with the loftiest possible conceptions of the character and privileges of those who belong, in faith and holiness, to Christ. These conceptions lie all round the word Church, as here used. They enter into that word, and embody themselves alone in the idea to which the name Church is given. Glory

shines round about it, from the Resurrection mystery on earth, and from principalities and powers in Heaven ; from the inward shining of the Holy Ghost, and from the surrounding brightness of divine affinities to Christ. This glorious Church embodies “the Hope of Christ’s calling ;” it is “His Inheritance in the Saints.” It displays “the exceeding greatness of His power towards them that believe.” It constitutes, in the truest sense, “His Body ;” and to this, by a divine affinity, He is united as “Head.” It is the fullness of Him that filleth “all in all.”

These last words fix the sense of the term Church, in this place : “the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.” This Church is the fullness of Christ, because without it He considers Himself incomplete, wanting the most important of the “principalities and powers” that are subject unto Him. It is the COMPLEMENT of Himself, that which renders Him complete in His spiritual dominion. A King must have a Kingdom, and a Head must have a Body, or neither of them is complete. A kingdom is thus the complement, or “fullness” of a king ; and a Body is the complement or “fullness” of a Head. In the same sense the Church is the complement or “fullness” of Christ. It is that Body, without which the very idea of His Headship would be incomplete. Hence the Apostle declares,

“Ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power.” Col. 2 : 10.

What, then, is the character of that Body, which is thus Christ’s “fullness”? Are wicked men, baptized unbelievers and hypocrites, part of Christ’s fullness? Is the idea of His Headship incomplete without them? It is not a sufficient answer to this question to say that the Church, necessary to complete the idea of Christ’s Headship, may contain some dead or false members, and that, therefore, the mixed, visible Church, may be called “the fullness” of Christ; for, to show the utter inadmissibility of this construction, the language of the passage before us is made still more peculiar: “The fullness of Him that filleth all in all.” This Church is so His fullness that He filleth it “all in all.” Taken in its connection, this is not a mere general assertion of Christ’s Omnipresence in the world. It is a special declaration of His indwelling in the Church. He fills this Church, “all in all.” He fills all the members with all needed grace; all that is necessary to the perfecting of the divine whole. The Church is His “fullness,” and He fills His Church “all in all.” There is no member of this Church whom He does not ultimately fill with “all spiritual grace and benediction.” This one passage illustrates the sense of all parallel or analogous passages, and shows that, in the Bible, we are pre-

sented with a Church identical with the whole company of “the saved.”

4. I cite, next, Eph. 3 : 9, 10, 11, 20, 21 : In his peculiarly elevated strain the Apostle here declares that God “created all things by Jesus Christ. To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by THE CHURCH the manifold wisdom of God, according to His eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” And then, as a fitting doxology to that most sublime prayer which closes the chapter, he adds : “Now, unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in THE CHURCH in Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end.” In this last expression, the grammatic turn of the language is similar to that of the passage, Acts, 7 : 38 : “ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐν τῇ ἑρήμω.” Eph. 3 : 21 : “ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐν Χριστῷ.”

“To Him be glory in the Church in Christ Jesus ;” the Church which is in Him truly, by a divine affinity. A visible, mixed Church is not thus in Him. Only a part, the true and sanctified members, are really in Him. But the whole Church, here mentioned, is really and truly in Him. It is “the Church in Christ Jesus.” It is, therefore, the spiritual and holy, and not the visible and

mixed Church, of which the Apostle speaks. This alone comes up, fully and justifyingly to the amazing strength of the language used. This, only is the Church, which “now makes known,” and will forever make known, “unto the Heavenly principalities and powers, the manifold wisdom of God.” This only was and is a body fit to be comprehended in God’s “eternal purpose, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” None but the vast assembly of “the saved” were included in that august purpose of the everlasting age.

5. I cite, next, Col. 1 : 18, 24 : “He is the head of the body, THE CHURCH.” I “rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His Body’s sake, which is THE CHURCH.”

In the context, here, the Apostle speaks of those whom God had “made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light ;” whom He “had delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear son ;” who had been “alienated and enemies in their minds by wicked works,” but whom Christ at length, had “reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present them holy, and unblamable and unproveable in His sight ;” and to whom, as “saints,” God would “make manifest the riches of the glory of His mystery among the Gentiles, which was—

Christ in them, the hope of glory.” The company, thus described, are represented as “reconciled” to God “through the blood of the Cross,” and as existing, like the spiritual family, formerly described, “whether in earth or in heaven.” In the midst of these strong expressions, so peculiarly descriptive of the saints, and of the Evangelic kingdom of Christ, the Apostle brings in the same idea, as in another place, of Christ’s supreme dominion over heavenly principalities and powers ; of His creation of all things ; and of the divine pleasure “that, in Him should all fullness dwell.” And it is while uttering all this, that St. Paul says of Christ, “He is the head of the body, THE CHURCH ;” and professes to “rejoice in his sufferings,” and in “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ”—“for His Body’s sake, which is THE CHURCH.” Is it not plain, then, that though speaking to the probably mixed company of professed disciples in Colosse, yet he was speaking of a Church of immeasurably larger comprehension, and of truly homogeneous character ; the “one holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints” in all ages, and in both worlds ?

6. I cite, next, Eph. 5 : 25-27 : “As Christ also loved THE CHURCH, and gave Himself for it ; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word ; that He might present it to

Himself A GLORIOUS CHURCH, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

If the Church, here described, be the visible Church, composed of the unexcommunicated subjects of baptism, we shall be driven to admit, what indeed a certain class of doctors strenuously maintain, that all the baptized who die not excommunicate, are saved ; and that, in order to their salvation, a purgatory is necessary to purify the countless myriads of the baptized who die in all the defilement of sin. For, that the Church here described is all saved is manifest from what precedes, as well as from the passage itself. The words occur in an exhortation to husbands and wives. "The husband," says the Apostle, "is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church ; and He is the Saviour of the Body." That is, as I have said in another place, marriage is a sacred symbol of the union between Christ and the Church. With the Church, as here intended, Christ holds a living and spiritual affinity ; and His Union with it is saving : "He is the Saviour of the Body." The whole Body of which He is the Saviour, is identical with the whole Church of which He is the head. As no part of the Body of which He is the Saviour is lost, so no member of the Church of which He is thus the head perishes. His headship in it is vital,

sanctifying, saving. And so it follows, He “loved this Church”—all of it—“and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word,” or by the sanctifying and cleansing power of the Spirit and the Truth, as predicted under the figures of “sprinkling and pouring clean water” on the true people of God (Ezek. 36 : 25–27 ; Isa. 44 : 3), and “that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Is it, then, an admissible opinion, that the Apostle is here speaking of the visible Church of all the baptized ? Is Christ the Saviour of this body taken as a whole ? We cannot receive a proposition so manifestly untrue. And yet, the Church here described is just that Body, of which taken as a whole Christ is the Saviour. Not the visible Church of the baptized, then, but the spiritual Church of “the saved,” is the subject of this passage.

7. I cite, next, 1 Tim. 3 : 15 : “That thou mightest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house,” or household, “of God, which is THE CHURCH of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

Some of the best of the old doctors, like Archbishop Cranmer, understand this well-known pas-

sage in the sense which I urge. Speaking in their style, we should say, the Church here named is the live Church of the living God. As such, it is really "the pillar and ground of the truth." It receives, exhibits and supports the truth, always in its purity, and in its entireness. Nothing, save its divine Head, is so precious to it as this truth. Nothing, save Christ, is so loftily held up and so unwaveringly maintained by it. Death is sweeter to this Church than treason to the truth. The spirit of this Church is always the martyr spirit. Of the Church, as a visible and mixed body, this cannot be said. In this character, it has often betrayed, and oftener still corrupted, or concealed the true and saving Word of God. It is only the live Church of Christ that always retains, magnifies and preserves the pure Word of His living truth.

8. I cite, next, Heb. 2 : 10-13 : "It became Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For, both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all one ; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren : saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren ; in the midst of THE CHURCH will I sing praise unto thee." . . . "Behold ; I, and the children which God hath given me ! "

In this passage, the meaning of the word, Church, is unconcealably manifest. God proposes to Himself a great object, the “bringing of many sons to glory ;” the salvation of the countless multitude of His holy ones. He furnishes the means of securing this great object, by “making the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings,” the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God. He brings forth the result of the whole in the “one” sacred family of Him “that sanctifieth and them that are sanctified.” And then, this sanctifying Saviour appears among them, and calls them “brethren”—His spiritual kin, the “children, whom God hath given Him ;” and having done all this, He names them “THE CHURCH,” in the midst of which He is to praise the Father of this whole plan and consummation. The word Church, here, is undeniably a synonym of the company whom Christ calls His “brethren ;” His brethren, not only in that He shared with them their human nature, but also, in that they share with Him his spiritual life. And carrying back the thought through the passage ; this company of brethren, with Christ, are identical with that “one” sacred family of the sanctifier and the sanctified ; as these, in their turn, are identical with that bright army of “sons” under the victorious “Captain of their salvation,” whom, from age to age, God is “bring-

ing to glory : ” “ one ” company, under different names : so that, what stands forth in the last as the Church, is simply the “ sons of glory ” in the first, of these significant nominations.

9. And last, I cite Heb. 12 : 22-24 : “ Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem ; even to an innumerable company of angels ; to the general assembly and CHURCH of the first-born, which are written in Heaven ; and to God, the Judge of all ; and to the spirits of just men made perfect ; and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant ; and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

Here light shines demonstratively on the point which I am illustrating. The “ Mount Zion,” “ the city of the living God,” “ the Heavenly Jerusalem,” are simply synonyms of the one whole Fellowship of God’s holy subjects, consisting, as our hymn expresses it, of “ angels, and living saints and dead;” or, as a part of this passage has it, of the “ innumerable company of angels,” and “ the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven,” and “ the spirits of just men made perfect;” the whole in subjection “ to God, the Judge of all,” and “ to Jesus, the Mediator of the new Covenant.” With the “ angels,” as one part of this vast communion, our argument is not

specially concerned. Our interest is with the other part, "the general assembly and Church of the first-born;" "living saints and dead," "written in Heaven" while living on earth, and becoming, when they enter Heaven, the "spirits of just men made perfect." These "living saints and dead" make up "the general assembly and Church of the first-born," as this and the "innumerable company of angels" make up the entire, grand comprehension, "the city of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem."

Here, then, we have THE CHURCH, in the very idea of it which I am illustrating—the assembly, on earth and in Heaven, of the saved and the glorified. It is not merely the Church as it will be after the Day of Judgment, but the Church as it now is and will be, consisting of saints alive in the flesh, and of saints alive as yet only in the spirit. To this Church every true believer comes, when he comes by a living faith to Christ. "Ye are" (or rather have) "come to the general assembly and Church of the first-born."

It is, to me, quite surprising that McKnight translates this, "Ye shall come," etc. Hebraistically, he changes a Greek past into an English future tense, on the ground that we cannot be said to come now "to the Heavenly Jerusalem," that coming being a yet future event. Obviously, no

such strain upon language is needed by the translator of this passage. We may as well say that we do not "come to God, and to Jesus, and to the blood of sprinkling," until after the Day of Judgment, as to say that we cannot come to "the Heavenly Jerusalem" until after that Day. Because part of the Universal Communion is already in Heaven, that is no reason why we may not enter it on earth. We must enter it on earth, or we shall never enter it in Heaven. True believers "come now to God;" they come now "to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant," and to "the blood of sprinkling." And they come now "to the innumerable company of angels," and to "the spirits of the just made perfect," considered as parts of "the Heavenly Jerusalem," the Universal Fellowship of the holy. They come to all these now, by the faith that makes them one in Christ. They come now, in the realizings of Life eternal, begun already in their souls, and in those inner sealings of the Spirit "whereby they are sealed unto the Day of Redemption." These are all present realities; the earthly privileges of their "citizenship in Heaven;" the seals, in time, of their "joint heirship with Christ" of the full and glorious inheritance of His Kingdom in Eternity. They wait not for these things in dubious gloom till the darkness of the grave be past. The light

of them shines clear on their blessed lot in the land of the living. All these things, however, are no more surely God's truth than is this other: that true Christians come now to this "General Assembly and Church of the first-born." The names of all the members of this Church are "written in Heaven," while they sojourn upon earth; and the Church to which they thus belong hath a life which, at the same time, touches and animates every saint below and every saint above.

This, then, is the Church in its essence and in its comprehension. The Bible teaches this doctrine of the Church. Every soul that hath a true faith in Christ is a member of the true Church of Christ; and this idea of the Church is unspeakably more grand and more important than all that men can conceive of outward splendor and visible unity.

Here I close my examination of passages in support of that definition of the Church which I have given. All the metaphors and all the literal texts examined are filled with light from this last description of the Church. They all come together, and find their full expression in this one graphic outline of the Church of Christ, as it now exists on earth and in Heaven.

In the next chapter I propose to enter on some further views of the subject.

CHAPTER IV.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN VISIBLE AND SPIRITUAL CHURCH, WITH TESTIMONY OF STANDARDS.

MY next step, in the present course of study, will take me into an examination of the standards and standard writers of our Church on the subject before us, in order to show that the view of the Church, which I have presented, is neither novel, nor without the amplest support of human testimony. Before entering on this examination, however, I wish to offer a few preparatory remarks.

It was one of the strong features of the Protestant Reformation that it drew into prominence that long-hidden idea of the Church, which, it is the design of this Treatise to exhibit. "The Church," said one of the teachers of that great age (see, Lambert's Theses in D'Aubigne's Hist. Ref., vol. iv. p. 34), "The Church is the congregation," the *εκκλησια*, "of those who are united by the same spirit, the same faith, the same God, the same Mediator, the same Word, by which alone they are

governed, and in which alone they have life. D'Aubignè, the historian of that age, observes : “Undoubtedly, the Lord has left His Church outward seals of His grace ; but He has not attached salvation to these signs. The essential point is, the connection of the faithful with the Word, with the Holy Ghost, and with the Head of the Church. This is the great truth, which the Reform proclaims.” [Hist. Ref., vol. iv, p. 107.] The opposite doctrine has tended to generate, at least in the common mind, the idea that “the Church saves.” It was the great work of the Reformation to bring out, into proper distinctness, the truth that Christ alone saves, and that the Church in its largest, highest sense, is just the body, or communion, of “the saved.”

1. Against this definition of the Church, however, it is objected, that it rests on a distinction between what is called the visible, and what has been termed the invisible Church. This distinction, it is contended, is groundless. To many ecclesiasticians the thought of giving the name, Church, to the simple aggregate of those who believe in Christ unto life eternal, and whose hearts are with certainty known to God only, seems positively distasteful. It is not, however, under that distinction, but under this objection and this repugnance to it, that the groundlessness really lies.

That there is a vast company, composed exclusively of saints, or true believers in Christ ; that He is, in the truest sense, their spiritual or mystical Head ; and that they are, in the truest sense, His spiritual or mystical body ; these things are as certain as that there are a Bible and a Saviour. Why, then, should not the name, Church, be given to what is, in reality, a Church,—the holy company thus constituting one mystical Body in union with its one mystical Head ? Has it not already been shown, that, to this company, the name, Church, is actually given by inspiration itself ? The Bible, indeed, speaks of visible and organized bodies as Churches. Such were “the seven Churches” of Asia, and other distinct, outward organizations. But the Bible also speaks of the company of “the saved,” of holy believers in Christ, as the Church ; and therefore justifies the distinction between the visible and the spiritual Church. These, indeed, are not two separate, independent bodies, without any mutual relation. In this world, the spiritual, is contained in the visible, as wheaten kernels are contained in the husks and straw : still, the two are distinguishable and ought never to be confounded. A field of the growing grain is called wheat ; and so is a measure of the pure, clean kernel ; and the latter is the true wheat, that for which the whole crop is cultivated. Is this making the chaff and

the straw of no value? By no means. They are temporarily very important. They minister to the protection, growth and ripening of the kernel; but when the kernel is full grown and ripe, they are separated and set aside, to very inferior uses. In like manner, a visible organization is called a Church; and so is the spiritual company, "the communion of saints:" and it is, in the largest, highest sense, the Church, that for which all visible Churches are organized. Nor is this to disparage the Church as a visible organized body. This latter is of great importance. It ministers, or, at least, was designed to minister, to the protection, nurture, and perfecting of the saints in life and godliness. But it is not, in the highest sense, the Church; and when the saints shall all have been gathered in from the fields of time, the visible organization will be laid aside, as of no longer any use. The true Church, alone, will survive, living from the beginning of time through all coming eternity.

2. It has been objected again, that the very etymology of the word, *ἐκκλησία*, Church, implies the visibility of the company, thus named; and that, as derived from the verb, *καλεῶ*, "I call," there is the same difference between the *ἐκκλησία*, the visible Church, and the peculiar company of the "saved," as there is, in Matt. 20:16, between the derivative

κλητοὶ, “called,” and the *ἐκλεκτοὶ*, “chosen :” the *κλητοὶ* including all to whom the call of the Gospel is brought in the visible Church ; and the *ἐκλεκτοὶ*, none but those who are saved.

This criticism implies that the *ἐκλεκτοὶ*, by themselves, are not to be regarded as the Church. As a criticism, however, I think it will not bear examination. In Matt. 20 : 16, indeed, the *κλητοὶ* and the *ἐκλεκτοὶ* describe the two companies of the promiscuously called, and the really saved : and if the word, rendered Church, were simply *κλησία*, the criticism would have some weight. But, we find an important addition made to that word. It is not merely *κλησία*, but *ἐκ-κλησία* ; derived, not merely from *καλεῶ*, “I call,” but from the compound, *ἐκ-καλεῶ*, “I call out.” This makes the *ἐκ-κλησία*, or Church, agree in force with the *ἐκλεκτοὶ*, and designate, as I have urged, the company of “the saved,” and not merely that of “the called,” as the Church. So far as mere etymology is concerned, the *ἐκκλησία* is a company “called out;” as Christ said of His disciples ; “I have chosen you out of the world.” The *ἐκκλησία* are called out of the world, as the *ἐκλεκτοὶ* are chosen out of the world ; the two words are etymological equivalents. Besides, in Rom. 8 : 29, *κλητοὶ*, called, is identical in sense with *ἐκλεκτοὶ*, chosen, in Matt. 20 : 16.

As to the alleged visibility of the *ἐκκλησία*, this

makes nothing against this sense of the word. The old phrase "Invisible Church," may mislead us here. What is meant by this phrase? In the seventeenth century, a period of intense conflict between the Protestant Church in England and her Romish opponents, it was a phrase much in use. Whether it was a wisely selected phrase, it may be doubted. But, be this as it may, it meant—not that the Church, in this idea of it, is a mere abstraction, an invisible notion, but—that the faith in Christ and its resulting holiness, which constitute men members of this Church, are invisible, seen of none but God. God only knows, with absolute certainty, who belong to this true Church of Christ. His "foundation standeth sure, having this seal; the Lord knoweth them that are His." 2 Tim. 2:19. "By their fruits we may know them" reasonably well; still, our judgments on this evidence are fallible. God only "knoweth who are His" in such a way as not, by any possibility, to be deceived. For this reason the old writers called the whole communion of "the saved," the "Invisible Church." The persons of those who constitute it, so long as they live, are visible; but their inward proofs of membership are invisible. Their organization under Christ as Head is spiritual, not an object of sense. God alone can point out their persons with infallible certainty. Thus under-

stood, there can be no solid objection to the phrase ; though I have not chosen to adopt it, because, in every respect, save that of the secret of true membership, and organization in Christ, the individuals in this Church are as visible as any others in the world. The *ἐκκλησία*, as equivalent to the *ἐκλεκτοὶ*, are visible in person, though each carries within an invisible union with Christ.

3. In John 10 : 26, occurs a passage, already referred to, which recognizes this distinction between the mixed and the spiritual Church. "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." The Jews, here addressed, were natural descendants from Abraham ; they claimed God as their Father ; John 8 : 34-42, and they were members of the then existing visible Church. And yet, Christ tells them that "they were not of His sheep," as He had before told them that "they were of their father, the devil." John 8 : 44. Notwithstanding their membership in the visible Church, they were not of Christ's Fold, the true Church. Then, as well as now, the mixed and the spiritual Church existed ; and Christ knew perfectly the distinction, as well as the relation, between the two.

Equally significant is the language of St. Paul, Rom. 2 : 28, 29. "He is not a Jew, who is one outwardly ; neither is that circumcision, which is

outward in the flesh ; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly ; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter ; whose praise is not of men, but of God :" and the similar language, Rom. 9 : 6-8. "They are not all Israel, who are of Israel ; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children ;"—"that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God ; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed ;"—as also that of Gal. 3 : 7. "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."

In all these passages, the distinction between the visible and the spiritual Israel, between the mixed and the spiritual Church, is manifest. Membership in the spiritual company is constituted, not by a mere "outward" bond, but by a divine, inward work ; "the circumcision of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." "The children of the promise," they who, inheriting Abraham's faith, have the bond of a spiritual kindred with Abraham—these, and only these, "are counted for the seed." In making up the real Family of Christ, the promised SEED, none but these are "counted," or taken into Heaven's reckoning. The true Israel, of all Dispensations, never has been, and never will be, com-

posed of any but a really believing and holy seed.

The Bible, then, clearly recognizes the distinction between the Church as a mixed, local and temporal arrangement, and the Church as a spiritual, universal, and eternal Body in Christ. When we seize and hold up this distinction, therefore, we are not following a mere floating illusion of our own brain, but are grasping one of the settled verities of the Word of God. There is a mixed, and there is a spiritual Church. The two are distinguishable, though related Bodies. The amount of their relation, however, is, in this world, a variable quantity. At times they have been more nearly identical, their distinction approaching the vanishing point. Then, again, they have been immensely unlike, held together by a scarcely perceptible bond. Sometimes, the visible Church has been nearly all pure wheat, almost thoroughly purified by the winnowing fan of persecution and the hallowing breath of the Spirit. At others, under long, mildewing seasons, it has nearly all run to husks and straw, with but here and there a sound, ripe kernel to be found. Thus, when the fires of pagan persecution kept the outward Body comparatively free from dross, the visible and the spiritual Church were nearly one and the same ; but, in later ages, when the fires were lighted in Christ's name, and turned

against the true gold of His own Spiritual Temple, then the visible Church contained little but impure and noisome elements. In its most obtrusive characteristics, it became an offensive body of Death, though seated on thrones and chairs of state ; while the spiritual Church, so far as any portion of it lingered on earth, was but a hidden body of Life, concealed among mountains and caves. The one was mainly a gorgeous system of forms and formal persecutors ; the other, a little company of faith and faithful sufferers ; the two being held in relation by some remaining bonds, but scarcely touching each other by the links of a kindred life. In all ages, however, the distinction between the two has never disappeared, nor has there ever been a time when the name, Church, did not as rightfully belong to the spiritual, as distinguished from the visible Body.

4. Another remark. Not only is this distinction recognized in the Bible, but it is a distinction evidently vital. Its importance to sound Christian theology can hardly be overstated. This point deserves a fuller discussion than can now be given. I must, however, at least, glance at three particulars.

(1.) It is important to a right understanding of the unity of the Church.

Christ and His Apostles, we know, insist much

on the union of Christians, or the unity of the Church. They speak of the benefits of this unity; of its necessity as an evidence to the world of Christ's mission from the Father; and of the evils of violating this unity; and in His last and all-prevalent prayer, Christ virtually prophecies that this unity shall continue unbroken, and that its glorious testimony to the Truth shall be felt and acknowledged by the world.

But of what Church is this sacred, this Divine unity predicated? This is one of the most important questions in Christian theology. Volumes have been written on it. In answer, however, I can afford space for saying no more than this: that the unity on which Christ so fervently insists, that blest and heavenly bond which makes Christians one, even as Christ and the Father are one, resides in the spiritual Church. It is a reality and an actuality in this Church, and in no other. In this Church that unity has never been broken. Injured more or less, through human infirmity, it has been; but broken, never. In the main, it has been preserved untouched. True disciples of Christ have disputed, and, while unknown to each other, have indulged harsh and unkind feelings; but it has never needed more than that they should come together and know each other truly to show them how perfectly, in all essential things, they were

one in Christ. This coming together in thorough, mutual knowledge has ever proved the joining of the two ends of that electric chain of spiritual kindred, which, starting from the heart of Christ, passes round through the heart of every true Christian, and, returning to Christ again, holds the whole in one sacred brotherhood. That touch of mutual knowledge and intercourse has ever been all that was needed to start the current of their sympathetic life, and put it instantly in warm, glowing and blissful circulation. O Yes! It is no dream; it is true! This mutual and thorough knowledge of each other has ever been, to true Christians, the sweet though silent voice of Christ in their hearts, speaking their brief tempests into "a great calm," and making them realize that the vessel in which they are embarked carries HIM who carries HEAVEN! Under the one Divine Headship of Christ, this spiritual Church holds, and will hold forever, unbroken unity. Ecclesiastical history shows us, on the contrary, that, in the visible Church, unity under one human head and organization has never been more than a baseless, impracticable theory ; and that all efforts to force such a unity have been productive of little else than fightings, bloodshed, and hypocrisy !

(2.) The distinction between the Spiritual and the Visible Church is important to a right under-

standing and use of the PROMISES of the Gospel.

We know that "exceeding great and precious promises are given" to the followers of Christ; and that some of these promises seem to apply to them in their social rather than in their individual capacity. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18: 20. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. 21: 22. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." John 10: 27, 28. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt utterly condemn." Isa. 54: 17. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28: 20. Such are a few only of this class of promises.

Here, then, arises a question, similarly important to sound Christian theology. Are these and similar promises made to professing Christians as a visible, or to actual believers as a spiritual Church? And the brief but confident reply is, they are made to the latter as a spiritual Church—as the one whole communion of Christ's true followers. To this Church only are these promises appropriate, and

to this only have they been fulfilled. This Church has evermore Christ's presence. Against this Church no weapon has ever prospered. In Christ's promises she is virtually omnipotent. In His faithfulness her final victory is sure. His promises are her heritage, and His grace her possession. His blessings clothe her with the garments of salvation. She is "the King's Daughter, all glorious within," and her mercies ever have been and ever shall be "the sure mercies of David." All this can be said of the Church in no other sense than that in which she is spiritual, truly a "communion of saints." To apply these promises to the Church as a visible, organized, mixed Society, ever has been, and ever must be, a source of perilous delusion to the souls of men.

(3.) This distinction, finally, is important to a right understanding of the INFALLIBILITY of the Church.

We know that there is a sense in which the Church has been endowed with the attribute of infallibility, or indefectibility. "The Church of the living God" is "the pillar and ground of the Truth." The Holy Spirit is to "guide her into all Truth." And against her, in her truth as well as in her being, "the gates of hell" are never to prevail.

But the question arises, and one more important

to sound Christian theology can hardly be asked : So far as infallibility is implied in these and similar expressions, is it an attribute of the visible or a gift to the spiritual Church ? And we shall be safe in replying, to the latter, and to no other. This, only, has never either fatally or materially erred. By the very terms of its being, in holding to Christ, the Head, it holds to everything essential, and to nothing essentially opposed, to His Truth. The spiritual Church has often bled in defense of the Truth, but it has never turned a traitor to its cause. But not so on the contrary supposition. The visible Church has often and fundamentally erred. Indeed, the theory of an infallibility vested in the visible Church has done little else than to stereotype the most destructive errors.

The points thus briefly noticed have made Christian theology for ages one wide field of conflict, simply because they have been drawn out of their true connection, and forced into a position for which they were never designed ; and the conflict about them will never cease until Christ has again His own ; until He is acknowledged as the only Centre of Unity in His Church ; until His promises are regarded as the heritage of that Church in her spiritual oneness only ; and until men cease to seek for infallibility anywhere save in her Divine Head, in His own Inspired Word, and in His “One holy

Catholic Church," as verily a "Communion of Saints."

I proceed now to look at the standards and standard writers of our Church, for the purpose of showing that the definition of the Church, which I have given, is neither novel nor without the amplest support of human testimony.

In doing this, it is evidently proper to look for this idea of the true spiritual Church in the devotional, rather than in the dogmatical, standards of our communion. In her devotional standards, our Church bears her part with the whole body of spiritual worshipers, and therefore speaks the language of true catholicity; but in her dogmatical standards she legislates for her own government and discipline, and therefore speaks for herself only, without claiming to bind others in all things to her judgments. It is in her worship, emphatically, that she appears as the true Catholic.

1. In the Collect, then, for "All Saints' Day," she addresses God as having "knit together His elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of His Son, Christ our Lord;" and prays for "grace so to follow His blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which he has prepared for those who unfeignedly love Him; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

This language is strictly evidence in the case before us. Our Church is here teaching as well as praying. She is uttering her mind on a great and important subject, and, in doing so, she gives a distinct and comprehensive definition of the “one holy Catholic Church.” She defines it as God’s “elect,” neither disconnected, nor yet organized under visible constitution, but “knit together in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of His Son Christ.” Now, this “one communion and fellowship, knit together in the mystical body of Christ,” is a true Church, or there is no such thing as a Church on earth or in Heaven. Of whom, then, is this Church composed?

In answer to this, bear in mind that the Collect is a prayer for “all saints.” And who are all saints? Are they Romish saints only, or Episcopal saints exclusively? No; but God’s saints; His “blessed saints;” His saints in Patriarchal, in Hebrew, and in Jewish times; His saints in the days of Christ, of His Apostles, and of all Christian ages; His saints now and always; His saints here and everywhere; His saints alive in the flesh, and alive in “the spirits of just men made perfect.” All these, and only these, are the members “elect,” the “knit together in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of Christ;” in the one truly united and holy Church, of which Christ

is the divinely constituted Head ; and the Collect teaches us to pray for "grace so to follow" these recognized saints of God, "in all virtuous and godly living, that we too may come to those unspeakable joys which God has prepared for those who unfeignedly love Him." These last words are a Biblical exposition of the term "elect," in the opening of the Collect. The "elect" are they "who unfeignedly love God." "All things," says St. Paul, "work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose." Here, "they that love God," and the "elect," or "called according to His purpose," are identical in sense. They are mutually explanatory. So, in the Collect before us, they "who unfeignedly love God," and the "elect in one communion and fellowship" are identical in meaning. They are mutually exegetical. The language at the close of the collect, therefore, is equally available with that at the opening and in the middle, for the settlement of the question, Who compose this truly united, this one Holy Church ; this "one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of Christ?" They are all those "blessed saints," and only those "who unfeignedly love God." Dare any man take this and kindred language in the Collect, and limit it to a description of the visible Church, or even to those exclusively who are the truly holy mem-

bers of our own and of other Episcopal Churches ? Let him attempt so strange an act, and our Zion herself shall rise up from her knees, from the offering of this truly catholic prayer, and forbid such deep violence on her words. She is not here describing the visible Church, nor the saints under Episcopal regimen ; she is teaching us who compose the one, holy communion, the really united Church of Christ, and is praying, if peradventure they who are now her professed members may also be found included, at last, in that great, that Divine "knitting together" of all God's "elect."

It is hardly necessary to say, that the language of this Collect is based on some of the very passages in the Bible which I have expounded, and contains a description of the Church in strict harmony with the idea which it has been my purpose to exhibit. Had I explored the whole English language, I could scarcely have found terms more suited to my purpose than those here furnished ; the precise, luminous teachings of our Zion, as she deliberately, yet devoutly, utters her mind at the footstool of the Throne.

2. In the prayer at the close of our Communion Service, we thank God that we, "who have duly received these holy mysteries," who are really partakers of Christ by faith, "are also very members, incorporate in the mystical body of His Son, which

is the blessed company of all faithful people ; and are also heirs, through hope, of His everlasting Kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of His dear Son.” And to this thanksgiving we add a petition for “ grace to continue in that holy fellowship, and to do all such good works as God hath prepared for us to walk in.”

This passage expresses precisely the same idea with the former, and to it the same remarks may be applied. Our Church is here uttering her most solemn teachings, as well as her devoutest worship ; and in doing so she gives a concise, yet still luminous, definition of the one and whole Catholic Church. She terms it “ the mystical body of the Son ” of God ; and then, varying her description, she calls it a “ holy fellowship.” In this, too, as in the former instance, the body described is unquestionably a Church. The phrase, “ mystical Body of thy Son,” has the same meaning with that in which St. Paul says that God gave Christ to be “ Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body.” The term Body, as a metaphor for the Church, has an established meaning.

Of whom, then, according to the teaching here, is this Church composed ? The answer may be given in the simple words of the prayer itself. It is composed of “ the blessed company of all faithful people.” These words are a comment, in the

very form of a definition, upon those which precede, “The mystical body of thy Son.” The Church here described is expressly declared to consist of “the blessed company of all faithful people.” The style of this language belongs to the age in which the Book of Common Prayer was set forth. The phrase, “all faithful people,” meant then, just what we understand now, by the words, all true believers. A similar antiquity of style occurs earlier in the prayer, where real partakers of Christ, by faith, are said to be “very members, incorporated in His mystical body.” The meaning is, true members ; true, as opposed to false or merely formal ; members not only by “the outward visible sign,” but also by “the inward and spiritual signification ;” members of the body of Christ by the Spirit’s ingrafting. The Church, then, described in this prayer, is composed of “all true believers,” and of such only. It is not the distracted, but “the blessed company of all faithful people,” of all the “very members” of Christ’s “mystical body.”

And how fitting it is that, when we use this prayer, our hearts and minds should be filled with this one truly Catholic thought ! Let us remember that, when our Church uses this prayer, she has again gone down upon her knees, and that it is now amid the consecrated memorials, and after gazing by faith on the visible symbols of the bloody

passion of Him, who came into the world to “ taste death for every man.” She has gone down upon her knees amid hallowed memories of Gethsemane’s bloody sweat and of Calvary’s bloodier Cross. And she has gone down upon her knees to thank God for a Saviour to penitent and believing sinners! Remember all this, and then tell me, has she taken that soul-humbling posture, and placed herself amid those heart-melting associations, merely to bless God for salvation through an Episcopacy, or to define the Church as limited to those who enjoy such a rich and long cherished blessing? To suppose this were to do her unspeakable dishonor ; and she would once more rise up from her knees, and, pointing to the sacrament of her crucified Lord, would nobly put away from her the unmerited reproach. She would say : “ I took that lowly posture, and surrounded myself with those touching remembrancers, the better to realize my share in the mercies of Him, who “ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God ;” the better to realize my fellowship with patriarchs and prophets, with apostles and martyrs, and with all the noble company of saints in every age, from the morning to the eve of time ; the better to realize my own privileges in having contributed many from among my own children to that “ blessed company of all faithful people ;” the better to real-

ize a fitting sympathy with my once suffering, but now rejoicing Lord in every "broken spirit" and in every "contrite heart," that comes to Him, from this poor, dying world, for pardon, peace and life ; the better to mingle my tuneful song with that of all the redeemed from every land and of every name,—that "holy fellowship" of "the saved," whom Jesus is gathering out of time and preparing to glorify in eternity ! It was for all this that I knelt there, as if at the foot of the Cross, and amid "the sprinkling of the blood" of "the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world." I was seeking to identify myself with the great "mystical Body of Christ" the living "Head ;" that Body in which are no dead members ; the one part whereof is already joined with Him in heaven, while the other still walketh with His purifying Spirit upon earth."

Such are the posture and teaching of our Church in this most Catholic, most teaching prayer ; and thus does she define the one, unbroken and holy Church of her Divine Head ! And who does not delight to see her in such an attitude, and to hear her utter such a teaching ? Who does not delight to see her thus lowly before her exalted Lord, and thus thrilled with her divine theme ; thus covering herself—not with the Apostolic robes of her venerable Episcopacy, but—with that one ampler robe of salvation through the Crucified ; the robe which

is thrown over the whole of His one “mystical Body,” which adorns “the bride, the Lamb’s wife,” and which clothes the whole sacred “family,” living with Him in holy union and concord from the first saint that believed to the last believer that shall be saved !

The language, which has thus been examined from two of the most expressive forms of the Church, cannot be considered as defining either the visible Church, or the Church as limited by an Episcopacy ; because the visible Church contains a vast multitude of unconverted, and even many most ungodly members ; while the Church, as limited by an Episcopacy, does not contain all the really holy whom Christ is gathering out of the world, and unto Himself. It is language fitted for nothing else in the world but for a faithful and lively description of that spiritual Church, which consists of true believers only, and comprises all true believers, who ever have lived, or ever shall live.

3. Citations to the same effect from our devotional standards may be multiplied. Without attempting this, however, in detail, I will merely group together a few of the many that might be adduced.

The Creed, the Litany, and the Te Deum are among the most ancient and accredited of Chris-

tian compositions ; and they all breathe the true spirit of early Catholicity and devotion, and savor strongly of an age, when Christian fellowship in its generous grasp embraced all who truly held the Head, Christ. Thus, the Creed propounds to us "one holy Catholic Church, as "the communion of saints." The Litany prays God "to rule and govern His holy Church universal in the right way ;" and "to give to all His people increase of grace to hear meekly His Word, to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit." And the Te Deum sends up its hymn of praise from "the goodly fellowship of the prophets ;" from "the glorious company of the apostles ;" from "the noble army of martyrs ;" and finally, as inclusive of the whole communion of saints, from "the holy Church throughout all the world," in all its revolving ages. "When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers :" "We therefore pray Thee, help thy servants, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood :" "Make them to be numbered with Thy saints in glory everlasting :" "Oh Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine heritage." Here is language fitting the mouths of those who worship Christ. Here is a copious multiplication of terms, for the expression of one single idea : "all believers ;" "Thy servants ;" "Thy

saints ;" "Thy people ;" "Thine heritage ;" terms, which refuse any limit to their meaning short of that which bounds the fruit of Christ's bloodily redeeming sufferings and death ; and all ranged under the one broadly comprehending phrase, "The holy Church throughout all the world."

Much time might be spent in amplifying these concentrated, yet glowing expressions ; in tracing them up to their origin in the Bible ; and in illustrating their Christ-like Catholicism of comprehension. But it is needless to pursue even such a pleasing theme. I close, therefore, this point by simply reminding you that, thus far, I have been citing from the devotional Standards of our Church. You have been catching the utterances of her mind, while bowing in worship amid the hosts of the redeemed at the feet of the Redeemer, and while erect in praises amid the whole countless band of those, who shout, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," and "hath redeemed us to God by His blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hath made us unto our God kings and priests ; and we shall reign on the earth." You have, therefore, been listening to her in acts which lift her above all but the loftiest, and expand her beyond all but the broadest conceptions ; and which place her right by the side of Christ, as He looks, with divine satisfaction, over the whole fruit

of His sufferings, over the whole “travail of His soul.” In her worship, she is not sectarian but Christian; on her knees, she defines Christ’s Church as it lives in Christ’s heart, and not as it is bounded by visible lines.

The testimony of our standard writers is reserved for the next Chapter.

CHAPTER V.

TESTIMONY OF STANDARD WRITERS.

IN the last Chapter, after noticing some objections against the distinction between the spiritual and the visible Church, and showing the importance of this distinction to a right understanding of various points of Christian doctrine, I proceeded to demonstrate, that the definition, which I have given of the Church, as the whole company of “the saved,” in union with Christ, the Saviour, His “mystical Body,” composed of “all faithful people,” is sustained by the devotional standards of our communion ;—those venerable forms, in which our Church utters her mind at the foot of the Throne, not as a controversialist, nor as a mere legislator for her own government and discipline, but as a member of that great band of worshippers, who present their offerings of prayer and praise to one common Father, by faith in the one Saviour of them ALL. We found those standards familiar with the old Catholic idea of Christ, as “Head over all things to the Church, which is His body ; the ful-

ness of Him that filleth all in all ;” that body, whose organization is spiritual, consisting in the inward union of all its members with the Head, by a live and life-giving faith. For the present Chapter, I have reserved the labor of showing, by citations from the Standard writers of our own Protestant Reformation, that, theologically as well as devotionally, the idea of the Church, which I have presented, has distinct and most abundant sanction.

These Standard writers of our Church flourished chiefly, in two successive ages ;—that of the Reformation itself, and that which followed the Reformation. The former, in the Sixteenth Century, was an age of much controversy, but of more action. Principles were then asserted and defended ; but the main labor of the age lay in building up the Reformed Church on the basis of those principles, and, with martyr-blood, cementing it in the true faith of Christ. The latter, in the Seventeenth Century, may be distinguished as an age of much action, but of more controversy. The “good fight of faith,” with all its blood and fires, so far as the Reformation was concerned, was ended ; and the race of those controversial giants, subsequently sprung from the loins of the Reformation, came forth upon a comparatively quiet field, to demonstrate, from the Word of God, the truth of those

principles, which the preceding age had laid in the foundation of the Reformed Church.

Upon the main points, taken in this discussion the distinction between the spiritual and the visible Church, and the superior title of the former to the name of THE CHURCH—the writers of both these ages were distinct and full.

I. Writers of the Sixteenth Century, or age of the Reformation.

1. Cranmer, the martyred Archbishop, whose blood wet the roots of the English Reformed Church, in his explanation of the Apostles' Creed, writes thus : “ I believe the ‘ holy Catholic Church ; ’ that is to say : that there is ever found some company of men, or some congregation of good people, who believe the gospel and are saved. . . . For this word, Church, signifieth a company of men, lightened with the Spirit of Christ, who do receive the Gospel. . . . And this Christian Church is a ‘ communion of saints ; ’ that is to say, all that be of this communion or company, be holy, and be one holy body under Christ, their Head. And this congregation receiveth, of their Lord and Head, all spiritual riches and gifts that pertain to the sanctification and making holy of the same body. And these ‘ ghostly treasures,’ or spiritual gifts, ‘ be

common to the whole body, and to every member of the same.' " [Catechism of 1548.]

"The holy Church is so unknown to the world, that no man can describe it ; but God alone, who searcheth the hearts of all men, and knoweth His true children from others. . . . This Church is 'the pillar of the truth,' because it resteth on God's Word. . . . But as for the open, known Church, and the outward face thereof, it is not 'the pillar of the truth,' otherwise than it is, as it were, a register, or a treasury, to keep the books of God's holy Will and Testament, and to rest only thereupon." [Answer to Dr. Smith.]

"What wonder is it, then, that the open Church is now, of late years, fallen into many errors and corruptions ; and the holy Church of Christ is secret and unknown, seeing that Satan, these five hundred years, hath been let loose, and Anti-Christ reigneth, spoiling and devouring the simple flock of Christ?" [Answer to Dr. Smith.]

In these passages, bear in mind, the martyr is interpreting the Apostles' Creed, the highest, most authoritative standard of our Church. How, then, does he define "the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints?" Precisely as I have defined the one, true Church of Christ ; as the company of "the saved," that body, of which Christ is Head, and "every member" of which is a partaker of

those "ghostly treasures," which are the gifts of the Spirit. This Church, too, he carefully distinguishes from the visible, or, as he calls it, "the open, known Church ;" declaring the former to be, and the latter not to be, "the pillar of the truth." The great company of "the saved," of those who believe in Christ and are made holy, in all ages, is the Church, which Cranmer finds in the Apostles' Creed, the most ancient of all Christian Symbols.

2. His brother martyr, the accomplished Ridley of London, is in full accord with him on this point.

"The name, Church," says he, "is taken in Scripture, sometimes, for the whole multitude of them which profess the name of Christ ; of the which they are also named Christians. But, as St. Paul saith of the Jew, "He is not a Jew, who is one outwardly ; neither yet all that be of Israel are counted of the seed ;" even so, not every one which is a Christian outwardly is a Christian indeed. For, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of His." Therefore, that Church, which is His body, of whom Christ is the Head, standeth only of living stones, and true Christians, not only outwardly in name and title, but inwardly, in heart and truth." [Ridley's Works, Parker Soc. 7 Ed. p. 126.]

Here is the same distinction between the visible and the spiritual Church. The Bishop says,—

not that the professing Christian, while without the Spirit of Christ, does not belong to the Church, but—that, the name, Church, is sometimes given in Scripture to the whole company of those who profess the name of Christ, though many of them are “none of His :”—while the true Church, that “of which Christ is Head, standeth only of living stones, true Christians,” both “in name and title, and in heart and truth.” According to this martyr, there is a sense in which the merely nominal Christian belongs to the Church ; while there is another sense, in which he does not belong to the Church. Of the visible mixed Church he is a member ; but of the Church, as that spiritual, mystical body of which Christ is Head, he is not a member. This Church hath nothing in it but members joined to Christ by a vitalizing faith.

3. The martyr, Hooper, bears the same testimony. Explaining the phrase “Holy Catholic Church,” he says : “I believe that this Church is invisible to the eye of man, and is only to God known.” . . . It “is not set, compassed and limited within a certain place or bounds, but is scattered and spread abroad throughout all the world ; but yet coupled together in heart, will and spirit, by the bond of faith and charity.” . . . “This Church containeth in it all the righteous and chosen people, from the first righteous man, unto the last that

shall be found righteous in the end of the world."

. . . "As touching the visible Church, which is the congregation of the good and the wicked, of the chosen and the reprobate," . . . "I do not believe that to be THE CHURCH, because that Church is seen of the eye, and the faith thereof is in visible things." . . . The holy Catholic Church "is the Body of Christ, wherein there is never a corrupt, or infected member. It is the Spouse of Christ, which is pure and clean, without wrinkle and without spot ; it is holy and without blame, cleansed and sanctified in the blood and by the Word of her Head, of her well-beloved Spouse, Jesus Christ,"— [Hooper's Works, Vol. II. pp. 40, 41. Parker Soc. 7 Ed.] All this is plain testimony, and to the point.

4. Nowell's Catechism belongs to the same period, and gives the same teaching. It defines the Church, "the Body of Christ," to be "the universal number and fellowship of all the faithful, whom God, through Christ, hath, before all beginning of time, appointed to everlasting life." . . . And then, assigning a reason why we are taught in the Creed, to "believe" in this Church, it says : "Because this 'communion of saints' cannot be perceived by our senses, nor by any natural kind of knowledge or force of understanding, as other civil communities and fellowships of men may be, therefore it is here rightly placed among these things that lie

in belief." [Nowell's Catechism, Parker Soc. 7 Ed. pp. 172, 174.] That is ; the visible Church is an object of sight ; the spiritual Church is an object of faith.

5. Becon, also, Cranmer's chaplain, explains the Church mentioned in the Creed, by saying that it is "Verily a company of saints, or of holy and godly-disposed persons knit together by one Spirit, in one faith, in one hope, in one love, in one baptism, in one doctrine ; having one Head, which is Christ Jesus, and serving one God, which is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life." . . . "And in this company or fellowship of saints, all things appertaining to everlasting salvation are common," that is, enjoyed by each and every one, such "as the favor of God, remission of sins, quietness of conscience, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and everlasting life." [Becon's Catechism : Works, Vol. II., p. 43.] This language cannot be used as a description of the mixed, visible Church.

But I must pass from this first, to what may be termed the second age of the Reformation.

II. Writers of the Seventeenth Century, or post-Reformation period.

1. Among the earliest authors of this prolific period, stands Richard Hooker, a name in every

churchman's mouth ; as humble and holy as he was learned and wise.

In his great work, the "Ecclesiastical Polity," while expressly distinguishing the visible from the invisible Church, he says : "The Church of Christ, which we properly term His Body mystical, can be but one, neither can that one be sensibly discerned by any man, inasmuch as the parts thereof are some in heaven already with Christ ; and the rest that are on earth, albeit their natural persons be visible, we do not discern under this property, whereby they are truly and infallibly of that Body. Only our minds, by intellectual conceit, are able to apprehend that such a real Body there is ; a Body collective, because it containeth a huge multitude ; a Body mystical, because the mystery of their conjunction is removed altogether from sense." And now, mark what he says of this Church of Christ. "Whatsoever we read in Scripture concerning the endless love and saving mercy which God showeth towards His Church, the only proper subject thereof is this Church ;" this Body mystical, part whereof is in Heaven already with Christ, while the other part is still on earth, being truly and infallibly of that Body, though the mystery of their conjunction with it is removed altogether from sense. "Concerning this flock it is, that our Lord and Saviour hath promised : "I give unto

them eternal life, and they shall never perish ; neither shall any pluck them out of my hands." To this mystical Church, he says, "belong the everlasting promises of love, mercy and blessedness." . . . "Unto that Church, which is His mystical Body," it is "not possible" that wicked or merely formal members "should belong ;" "because that Body consisteth of none but only true Israelites, true sons of Abraham, true servants and saints of God." [Eccl. Pol., B. III., Sec. 1, pp. 269-272. Lond., 1825.]

Again, in his first sermon on the Epistle of Jude, he says : "The multitude of them which truly believe, howsoever they be dispersed far and wide, each from other, is all One Body, whereof the Head is Christ ; One Building, whereof He is Corner-Stone ; in whom they, as the members of the Body, being knit, and, as the stones of the Building, being coupled, grow up to a man of perfect stature, and rise to an holy Temple in the Lord. That which linketh Christ to us, is His mere love and mercy towards us. That which tieth us to Him, is our faith in the promised salvation revealed in the Word of Truth. That which uniteth and joineth us among ourselves in such sort that we are now as if we had but one heart and one soul, is our love." [Serm. I. on St. Jude, Sec. 11.]

To these beautiful conceptions and just delineations of the true Church of Christ—and Hooker abounds in such—I have nothing to add, except that every word falls in, in perfect accord, with the view which I have already so largely illustrated from the Bible and from our devotional standards. Hooker, one of the greatest divines of England, unquestionably held this view of the One Holy Catholic Church.

2. Perkins, also, another of that great army of reformed divines in the Seventeenth Century, speaks thus: “This Union to Christ maketh the Church to be the Church ; and by it the members thereof, whether they be in Heaven or in earth, are distinguished from all other companies whatsoever.” [Perkins’ Works, Vol. I., p. 277.] He calls “the Catholic Church militant,” “The number of believers dispersed through the world, who are effectually called, and sanctified and preserved unto life everlasting.” Of “two sorts of men, professing religion,” one of whom “do unfeignedly believe and are sanctified,” while the other only “make show of faith but believe not;” he says: “Of the former doth the Catholic Church consist and not of the latter.” These “are no members set into the Head of this Body, though they may seem to be.” “This Catholic Church is invisible, and cannot by the eye of sense be discerned.” It

"cannot utterly perish and be dissolved. All other congregations and particular churches, being mixed, may fail ; yet this cannot be overcome."

"To this assembly, and no other, belong all the promises of this life and the life to come. It is the ground and pillar of the truth ; that is, the doctrine of true religion is always safely kept and maintained in it." [Perkins' Works, Vol. III., pp. 482-504.] These passages clearly develop the idea of the Church which I have presented, and the distinction between it and the visible mixed Church : and they also show that to the spiritual Church alone are the promises made, and that in it alone is the true indefectibility found.

3. The following, from Bishop Hall shows that, in the same Church resides that divine unity on which Christ so earnestly insists. "If from particular visible churches you shall turn your eyes to the true, inward, universal company of God's elect and secret ones, there shall you see more perfectly the ONE Dove ; for what the other is in profession this is in truth ; that one baptism is here the true laver of regeneration ; that one faith is a saving reposal upon Christ ; that one Lord is 'the Saviour of His Body.' No natural body is more ONE than this mystical ; one Head rules it ; one Spirit animates it ; one set of joints moves it ; one food nourishes it ; one robe covers it. So is it

ONE in itself, so one with Christ, as Christ is One with the Father.” [Sermon on the Beauty and Unity of the Church.] “The whole Church is the Spiritual Temple of God. Every believer is a living stone laid in those sacred walls. There is no place for any loose stone in God’s edifice ; the whole Church is ONE entire Body.” [Treatise on Christ Mystical, Ch. viii., Sec. 2.]

4. Bishop Jeremy Taylor also, that, perhaps, most affluent of Christian orators, is full of the doctrine which I have unfolded. In his ‘Dissuasive from Popery,’ he writes thus : “They who are indeed holy and obedient to Christ’s laws of faith and manners, these are truly and perfectly the Church ; . . . the Church of God in the eyes and heart of God. For the Church of God are the Body of Christ ; but the mere profession of Christianity makes no man a member of Christ ; nothing but a new creature, nothing but a “faith working by love,” and keeping the commandments of God. . . . Hypocrites are not Christ’s servants, and, therefore, not Christ’s members, and, therefore, no part of the Church of God ; but improperly and equivocally, as a dead man is a man ; all which is perfectly summed up in these words of St. Augustine, saying that ‘the Body of Christ is not (*bipartitum*, it is not,) a double Body ; all that are Christ’s body shall reign with Him forever.’

If by a Church we mean that Society which is really joined to Christ, which hath received the Holy Ghost, which is heir of the promises and of the good things of God, which is the Body of which Christ is the Head ; then the invisible part of the visible Church ; that is, the true servants of Christ are the Church ; . . . to them only appertain the Spirit and the truth, the promises and the graces, the privileges and advantages of the Gospel. . . . The faithful only and obedient are beloved of God. Others may believe rightly, but so do the devils, who are no parts of the Church ; . . . and it will be a strange proposition which affirms any one to be of the Church, for no other reason but such as qualifies the Devil to be so."

'Those who are condemned by Christ (continues St. Augustine) for their evil and polluted consciences, are not of Christ's Body, which is the Church ; for Christ hath no damned members.' Although, when we speak of all the acts and duties, of the judgments and nomenclatures, of outward appearances and accounts of law, we call the mixed society by the name of the Church ; yet, when we consider it in the true, proper and primary meaning, all the promises of God, the Spirit of God, the life of God, and all the good things of God, are peculiar to the Church of God in God's sense, in the way in which He owns it ; that is, as it is holy,

united to Christ, like to Him, and partaker of the Divine nature. The other are but a heap of men keeping good company, and calling themselves by a good name ; managing the external parts of union and ministry ; but, because they otherwise belong not to God, the promises no otherwise belong to them but as they may, and when they do, return to God. Here, then, are two senses of the word Church ; God's sense and man's sense ; the sense of religion and the sense of government ; common rites and spiritual union." [Diss. from Pop., Part II., B. I., Sect. 1, §§ 1, 2.]

What Bp. Taylor intends by these distinctions is manifest. In "God's sense," the Church is the great company of the saved ; in "man's sense," it is the aggregate of those who profess the Saviour. In "the sense of religion," it is the Church as seen by the spiritually enlightened religious eye ; in "the sense of government," it is the Church as seen by the legally discerning governmental eye. In "common rites," it is the Church as bound together in the communion of outward forms and ceremonies ; in "spiritual union," it is the Church, as knit together in the inward fellowship of Christ's mystical body. Much more from the same exuberant author, and to the same effect, might be cited ; but I must hasten to draw somewhat from other stores.

5. Archbishop Usher, one of the great lights of

his age, in his “Body of Divinity,” puts this question : “ What is meant by the Catholic Church ? ” And his answer is : “ The whole, universal company of the elect, that ever were, are, or shall be, gathered together in one body, knit together in one faith, under one Head, Jesus Christ. For God, in all places, and of all sorts of men, had from the beginning, hath now, and ever will have, an holy Church, which is therefore called the Catholic Church—that is, God’s whole or universal assembly—because it comprehendeth the multitude of all those that have, do, or shall believe unto the world’s end.”

In the same work he asks again : “ Who are the true members of the Church militant on earth ? ” And his answer is : “ Those alone, who, as living members of the mystical body, are, by the Spirit and faith, secretly and inseparably conjoined unto Christ, their Head ; in which respect the true militant Church is both invincible and invisible.” [Bod. Div., 187, 189.]

“ The communion of saints,” says he [in his Sermon before the House of Commons], “ consists in the union, which we all have with one Head. For Christ, our Head, is the main foundation of this heavenly union.”

It is needless to point out the exact coincidence of all this with what I have already stated. Usher

belongs to the grand Protestant host, who make the Church of God to consist of every true believer, who is gathered into Christ and saved, from the beginning to the end of time.

6. In the same ranks, and eminent among the eminent, must be cited Dr. Thomas Jackson. In his "Treatise of the Church," which is "true, holy and Catholic," he says : "This Church is a true and real body, consisting of many parts, all really, though mystically and spiritually, united unto one Head ;—and, by their real union with one Head, are all truly and really united amongst themselves.

. . . That this Church is a true Body, the Apostle hath left registered : "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the affliction of Christ in my flesh, for His Body's sake, which is the Church." Every one, then, is so far a member of Christ's Church, as he is a member of Christ's Body. He that is not, in some sense, a member of Christ's Body, can be, in no sort, a member of His Church. He that is a true, live member of one, is a true, live member of the other. He that is but an equivocal, analogical, hypocritical, or painted member of the one, is but an equivocal, analogical, hypocritical, or painted member of the other." [Treat. on the Holy Cath. Faith and Ch., pp. 18, 19. Phila. 1844.]

Arguing from a passage in the Epistle to the

Ephesians, which I have already explained, he says : “ Every member of the Church, or of Christ’s Body, is more near, or dear, unto Him than our flesh is unto us, and more His own than our flesh is ours.” [Treat. etc. p. 21.]

Again, expressing himself in the strict form of a definition, he says : “ The Catholic Church, in the prime sense, consists only of such as are actual and indissoluble members of Christ’s mystical body ; or of such as have the Catholic faith not only sown in their brains, or understandings, but thoroughly rooted in their hearts.” [Treat. etc., p. 152.]

Again, “ As He [Christ] is the true Temple, because the God-head dwelleth in Him ; so all they, and only they, in whom He dwelleth by faith, are true temples of God and live members of the Catholic Church.” [Works, vol. xii. p. 21.] “ This Church is not termed holy, *a majori parte*, from the greater part only ; every member of it is inherently holy.” [Works, vol. 12, p. 26.]

And again, “ If the Ark, which Noah built, did save all such from the deluge as entered into it, how much more shall that holy and Catholic Church, which Christ hath built and sanctified by His most precious blood, give eternal life to all such as, in this world, become live members of it ! Such members they are made, not by external baptism, or by becoming members of the visible

Church, but by internal grace, or sanctification.”
[Works, vol. xii. p. 88.]

7. With this teaching agrees that of the great Dr. Barrow, the champion of England against the Papal supremacy. In his Discourse on the Unity of the Church, he says : “ The invisible or spiritual Church is ‘ the whole body of God’s people, that is, ever hath been, or ever shall be, from the beginning of the world to the consummation thereof, who having believed in Christ, and sincerely obeyed God’s laws, shall finally, by the meritorious performances and sufferings of Christ, be saved.’ . . . ‘ To this invisible Church, composed only of such as shall finally be saved, belong all the glorious titles and excellent privileges, attributed to the Church in Holy Scripture. This is ‘ the body of Christ,’ the ‘ Spouse of Christ,’ ‘ the House of God built on a rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail,’ ‘ the elect generation.’ This is that one Body, into which we are all baptized by one Spirit ; the members whereof do hold a mutual sympathy and complacence ; which is joined to one Head, deriving sense and motion from it ; which is enlivened and moved by one Spirit. . . . To this Church belongs peculiarly that unity, which is so often attributed to the Church. . . . This is the society, for whom Christ did pray ‘ that they all might be one.’ . . . All Christians are united by spiritual cognation and

alliance, as being all regenerated by the same corruptible seed ; being alike born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God ; whence, as the sons of God and brethren of Christ, they become brethren to one another.

. . . The whole Christian Church is one by its incorporation into the mystical body of Christ, or as fellow subjects of that spiritual, heavenly kingdom, whereof Christ is the sovereign Head and Governor; whence they are governed by the same laws, obliged by the same institutions and functions, partake of the same privileges, are entitled to the same promises, and encouraged by the same rewards. So they make but one spiritual corporation, or republic, whereof Christ is the sovereign Lord." [Works, Oxford Ed. Vol. VI. pp. 497-499, and p. 597.]

8. And, without further addition to this catalogue of witnesses, the "incomparable pen" of Bp. Sanderson gives this as the first and most important of four senses in which the word, Church, is used : "The whole company of God's elect, actually made members of Christ by virtue of an inward, effectual calling to faith and godliness. This we commonly call the invisible Church, or the Church of God's elect." [Disc. on Visibility of the true Church. Hooker's Col. p. 213. Phila. 1844.]

Such are a few of the many citations which might be made from that noble company of great Chris-

tians and great Divines, who adorned the two principal periods of our English Protestant Reformation. They have made the present Chapter monotonous, in that they are but so many repetitions of one simple truth, or cluster of truths. Nevertheless, these truths are of sufficient importance to justify the attention which they have received, and to relieve the discussion of tediousness with all candid weighers of evidence. I have not thought best often to interrupt the testimony by prolonged comments of my own ; and I now leave them just as they stand, to tell their own story and to give in their own witness. I need to say no more than this: they touch sustainingly every point which I have made in my argument ; and in such a way as to show that the ages to which they belong were exceedingly familiar with the views which they exhibit ; and that they were considered as presenting cardinal points in the pure Protestant faith, which was then established and defended as well with the blood of the martyrs as with the pen of scholars.

The Seventeenth Century doubtless witnessed the maintenance of different views of the Church in England ; but they were mostly the views of what have been termed the “ Non-jurors ;” a name given to those, who, as adherents of the deposed and Popish James II., could not honestly take the oath of alleg-

iance to his Protestant successors on the throne, William and Mary ; views, therefore, suspected in their very source, and weighing nothing with scripturally enlightened Protestants against those of Cranmer and Ridley, Hooper and Nowell, Hooker and Perkins, Hall and Taylor, Usher and Jackson, Barrow and Sanderson ; to say nothing of the multitude of others, true and loyal children of the Reformation, who marched by their side, or followed in their train.

In making this appeal to concurrent testimony, however, let me not be misunderstood. It is, indeed, pleasant to find one's self in company which one likes. Nevertheless, the Christian teacher, provided he be sure of having Christ and His Word on his side, might well be content to march alone, with never so great a number of combatants arrayed against him. I have made the foregoing citations, not because they are the infallible authorities on which the argument for the Church, in her highest character, is founded, but because they are credible, or trustworthy witnesses to show that this argument is no novelty ; that I have not been broaching new and rash speculations of my own ; but that I have been moving in the track of a multitude of the soundest and holiest minds of the soundest and purest Churches of Christendom. There are those, who make tradi-

tion an infallible authority in matters of faith and doctrine, and who hold this authority to be a necessary interpreter of the Word of the living God. They set up this tradition as an infallible judge on the theological bench, and bow to its oracular decisions with implicit faith. Not such, however, is the rank which we have been taught to assign to this speaker. We place it, not as judge on the bench, but as evidence on the witness's stand ; and we receive its statements so far only as they are harmonious with the only infallible rule of faith and doctrine, the everlasting Word of truth.

Take this Word, then, to which our appeal has been made, and study it thoroughly. Take, also, the witnesses who have been called, and question them carefully. And then say, do these witnesses speak according to that Word in the matter of which they have been called to testify ? If so, give them your credence, not because they can add anything of certainty to that Word, but because they are the unimpeached sons of that Church, to which, as Episcopalian, we belong, and because they speak according "to the law and the testimony," which the Holy Spirit hath penned, and which secure to us the priceless heritage of the one true Saviour of "all faithful people,"—of all holy believers.

PART II.

THE CHURCH, AS A VISIBLE BODY.

THE CHURCH, AS A VISIBLE BODY.

CHAPTER I.

SCRIPTURE VIEW OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

TO the Church, as, in its largest, highest sense, One and Catholic, we have already directed our attention at considerable length. On the authority of the Bible, with the accordant testimony of our own standards, and of the standard writers of our own Protestant Reformation, we have seen it, in this sense, composed of "all faithful people," or true believers; of all who, by a living faith, "hold the Head" of the Body, which is Christ; and who, by the Holy Ghost, are, in that faith sanctified and saved. This is "the Church of the first-born which are written in heaven" even while sojourning on earth; and which, in the present life, do "come to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel." To this Church, made up of saints alive, and of the "spirits of the just made perfect," whose mediator and high priest is Christ, and whose

cleansing is in the precious blood of sprinkling, all true believers "come" the moment they are true believers ; they wait not for membership in this Church, but enter now into its holy oneness, its heavenly communion, its divine Cathólicism. This is the Church, in what I have termed its true, spiritual character ; or, what the old writers call "the invisible Church," because the bond of membership, which unites the believer to Christ, is invisible.

But, I have already said, there is a sense, in which the Church is visible ; and I now add, there is a sense, in which this visible Church is Catholic : and the question, upon which, in this Chapter, I propose to enter, is this : What is this visibly Catholic Church ? What and whom does it comprehend ? The COMPREHENSION of this VISIBLE Church is the theme now before us.

I am well aware of the difficulties with which this part of the subject is beset, and of the repugnance, which, in certain quarters, is felt to the view which I am about to present. Still, as I am constrained to regard this view as resting on the true sense of Scripture, and as being supported by the testimony of our own standards and standard writers, I shall present it with a consciousness of fidelity to the vows which bind me to our own Church ; and hope, ere I close, to satisfy all who will read with candor and with patience, if not of the de-

monstrable certainty of my positions, at least of their credible claim to the character of sound Protestant Episcopacy.

I begin by distinctly acknowledging, that the view which we take of what is essential to the being of the Church, in its spiritual Catholicism, must be expected to govern the view which we take of what is meant by the comprehension of the Church in its visible Catholicism. In other words, the view which we take of the Church as the Body of "the saved," in spiritual union with Christ the Saviour, naturally determines the view which we take of the Church as a visible organization of those who profess to believe in Christ.

All Christians, then, hold undoubtingly, that there are such realities as the gift of the Spirit, union with Christ, and the pardon of sin. These realities make up the infinitely rich legacy of God to man in and through Christ Jesus. Without them there can be neither Church nor Christianity. The Church spiritual is composed exclusively of those who enjoy this legacy as the earnest of their full salvation. The Church visible is organized for the better activity, and as an ordinary means of increasing the number of those for whom this legacy is reserved. The difference among Christians lies, not in admitting or denying this divine verity, but in settling the question how it is to be

realized or received, by the disciples of Christ ; that is, not whether God ever saves a soul without any outward means, but what are the ordinary way and means in and by which He saves ? To recur, then, to the second and third definitions of the Church, which I gave at the opening of this discussion ; if, on the one hand, we hold that an Episcopally constituted ministry is essential to the very being of the Church, indispensably necessary as a “ ministerial intervention ” between God and man, for the communication or conveyance of the gift of the Spirit, union with Christ, and the pardon of sin, then it will necessarily follow that the Church, as visibly Catholic, can comprehend none but those who are in subjection to an Episcopal ministry ; because, on this supposition, through this ministry alone the gifts requisite to salvation are to be sought and realized ; and because, without these gifts, there will be no members of Christ to be organized into a visible Church. On this theory, the visible Church and the Episcopally organized Body are identical, mutually bounding each other, and excluding all besides. But if, on the other hand, we hold that the gift of the Spirit, union with Christ, and the pardon of sin, are direct bestowments from God upon the individual soul, received by faith in Christ, without any other necessary intervention than that of the Spirit and

Divinely inspired Truth heard, read, or preached, then it will follow that the Church, as visibly Catholic, comprehends all those professing Christians throughout the world, under whatever form of ministry organized, among whom the Gospel is truly held, Christ truly confessed, and His sacraments really administered, and to whom God vouchsafes the gift of the Spirit, union with Christ, and the pardon of sin. All such Christian organizations will belong to the visible Church Catholic, not because all their visible members are partakers of these unspeakable benefits, but because, among them there may be partakers of these benefits to be embodied in outward, visible organization. The real partakers of these benefits, as we have seen, constitute the one spiritual Church by virtue of their living union with Christ by faith, through the Spirit. The Church, in this sense, is nothing else than the whole Body of members, thus spiritually united with their Divine Head. Wherever, then, these members are embodied in an outward, visible organization, with a true confession of Christ, a true profession of His Gospel, and a common union in His sacraments, there, according to this view, will be a portion of the visible Church Catholic. The main difference between the true spiritual Church Catholic, and the Catholic Church visible or organized, consists in this, that the former

is the Church, as God sees it, running through all time into great eternity ; while the latter is the Church, as man sees it, bounded by that little span of time to which he belongs. The organization of the visible Church is certainly a Divine provision or arrangement, designed to promote the best welfare, and the growing multiplication of spiritually live members of Christ ; but, from its very nature the application of that provision to the nature of man and to human society, results in this difference between the spiritual Church and the Church as made visible among men, that the former hath none but true and living members, while the latter may have, and generally has, many false and dead members.

Which, then, of the two views thus re-introduced, are we to adopt ? To which do the Bible and our own standards bear their testimony ? For myself I am prepared to answer, that they lead, and decidedly, to the adoption of the latter.

1. As bearing on this point, I think it quite significant, and, therefore, invite careful attention to the remark, that, when the Bible speaks of what is evidently the true and holy Church universal, "the Communion of saints," in which there are no unholy members, it speaks of this Church as ONE, without reference to times, places, or outward peculiarities, and in the most universal and unqualified

terms, as all holy and all in Christ ; but, when it speaks of the Church as a visible organization, it often speaks of this as many, as bounded by times and places, and as subject to all the diversities, mutations, and imperfections, which grow out of man's mixed and sinful state. Let me illustrate both parts of this remark.

The texts which I have examined in the former part of this Treatise, will show what I mean by the former part of this remark. In those passages, the Bible speaks of the Church as the "one fold under one Shepherd ;" "the whole family which is named in heaven and earth ;" the "one body" of Christ ; "the Bride, the Lamb's wife ;" the "holy Temple in the Lord," into which all, who are builded upon Christ by faith, do "grow." This is what Christ calls "My Church," against which "the gates of hell shall not prevail ;" the Church, to which "the Lord daily added the saved ;" the "Church which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all ;" "the Church in Christ Jesus" in which God is to be glorified "throughout all ages ;" "the Church which Christ loved," and for which He "gave Himself ;" "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth ;" the Church, whose members are all Christ's "brethren ;" "the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven." All

this language, it will be remembered, is not only thus absolute, and perfectly unrestricted to time, place and outward peculiarity, but constantly intermingled with the ascription, to all the members of the Church in this sense, of life, and growth, and holiness, and the certain inheritance of eternal glory.

And what I mean by the latter part of the remark will be seen by simply collecting together a few of the very numerous passages, in which the Church, as visible and organized, is mentioned. They will bring before us a very different view. Take the following specimens :

“ So ordain I in all the Churches.” “ Then had the Churches rest throughout all Judea.” “ If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God.” “ Let your women keep silence in the Churches.” “ As I have given order to the Churches of Galatia.” “ The Churches of Asia salute you.” “ Chosen of the Churches to travel with us.” “ Messengers of the Churches.” “ That which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches.” “ John to the seven Churches which are in Asia.” “ There was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem.” “ When they had ordained them elders in every Church.” “ The Church at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you.” “ I wrote

unto the Church ; but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preëminence among them, receiveth us not.” “The Church that was at Antioch.” “If, then, ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the Church. I speak to your shame.” “Cause that it (this epistle) be read in the Church of the Laodiceans.” “In eating, every one taketh before other his own supper ; and one is hungry and another is drunken. What ! Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in ? Or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not ?” “Unto the Angel of the Church in Sardis write : . . . I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” And “Unto the Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write : . . . I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.” [1 Cor. 7: 17 ; Acts 9: 31 ; 1 Cor. 11: 16 ; 14: 34 ; 16: 1 ; 16: 19 ; 2 Cor. 8: 19, 23 ; 11: 28 ; Rev. 1: 4 ; Acts 8: 1 ; 14: 23 ; 1 Pet. 5: 13 ; 3 John, ver. 9 ; Acts 13: 1 ; 1 Cor. 6: 4, 5 ; Col. 4: 16 ; 1 Cor. 11: 21, 22 ; Rev. 3: 1 ; 3: 14-16.]

Now, in reading these, (and a multitude of similar passages might be cited,) the exclamation instinctively rises : in what a very different at-

mosphere do we find ourselves from that which surrounded us while reading those before quoted ! There, all was absolute, universal, unqualified, in the language used. Here, all this is dropped ; and the language used becomes conditioned, limited, particular. There, we were evidently in the Church as it exists in Christ ; all calm, peaceful, holy, and full of the likeness and the foretastes of heaven. Here, we are unmistakably in the Church, as it exists IN THE WORLD, full of mixture and of conflict ; an impure and imperfect, an unresting and disordered, a changing and suffering body. There, we were in the Church as as ONE, without a shadow of multiplicity. Here, we are in the Church as MANY, with manifold shades of diversity upon it. Here, in short, we find this multiform Church sometimes at rest, at others in persecution ; bounded by times and places ; modified by custom and order ; choosing and sending messengers ; writing and reading, sending and receiving epistles ; ordaining elders ; doing things as mixed human bodies are wont to do ; and, withal, affected by the doing of them too much as such bodies usually are affected ; having judgments, or proceedings at law, about the things of this life ; troubled with ambitions and contentions ; abusing sacred rites to purposes of gluttony and drunkenness ; having, sometimes, a name to live though really dead ; frequently

engaged in things beautiful and commendable, but not always clear of things for which they were to be shamed, and on account of which Christ put them loathingly away from Himself!

All this, indeed, does not show us what the Church, as visibly Catholic, comprehends ; but it does show us how very different a thing it is from the Church, as spiritually Catholic, "the communion of saints," one and holy in Christ Jesus ; and it gives us a starting-point in our inquiries, and shows us what, in various respects, we are to look for in the Church as visibly Catholic ; that we may expect to find it existing in many places under separate, independent organizations, divided and corrupted, exposed in parts to extinguishment, and even liable to be utterly rejected of God.

2. Let us now look at another set of passages, and see whether we can gather any further light on the subject of our present inquiry. I refer to passages which speak of the Church as a "KINGDOM." These passages are numerous, and present the Church, apparently, both as a mixed body and as pure. I select two, which seem to present it in the former character.

In Matt. 13 : 47, 48, Christ compares "the kingdom of heaven" to "a NET, cast into the sea, and gathering of every kind ; which, when it was full, they drew to the shore, . . and gathered the good

into vessels, but cast the bad away." For the word "kingdom," in this passage, we may substitute the word "Church." The Church, then, is here likened unto a net, cast into the sea ; and this net is evidently the visible Church Catholic, the kingdom organized under outward ministry, worship, and sacraments. The sea, into which this Church-net is cast, is this human world, bounded by the shores of time. The "every kind," gathered by this net, are the countless multitudes, of all names, characters and conditions, the precious and the vile, which the visible Church gathers within its wide-sweeping organizations ; and "the shore" to which the net is drawn for the grand, separating process, is the limit, at which this world's time is bordered by eternity, and casts up its millions to the judgment—showing, at last, of what a strangely mixed multitude the Church on earth has consisted, and how different it is, as standing before the eye of man, from what it is as it lives "in the eyes and heart of God,"—to use Jeremy Taylor's strong figure.

Again, in the same chapter, Matt. 13 : 24–30, Christ compares "the kingdom of heaven" to "a man, that sowed good seed in his field ;" adding, "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." The wheat and the tares sprang up and grew confusedly

together until the harvest ; but then the reapers gathered the tares into bundles for the burning, but the wheat into the master's barn.

In sense, this passage is evidently identical with that just explained ; though in dress, it is different. The kingdom is likened unto "a man who sowed good seed in his field;" but whose enemy, "while men slept, came and sowed tares among the wheat." The explanation given, Matt. 13 : 37-43, shows that the sower is "the Son of man," the Lord Jesus ; that the field is "the world," the lost race of men ; that the good seed are "the children of the kingdom," the saved members of Christ ; that the "tares are the children of the wicked one," the sinful, unsaved among them ; that the enemy is "the Devil," the adversary of God and man ; that the harvest is "the end of the world," the day when our race is to be judged : that the reapers are "the angels," ministers, executive of the decision of the Great Judge ; and that the ensuing process is the result of the Judgment, the separation of the unsaved from the saved, and the assignment to each of their fearfully distinct lot in the age of ages.

From this explanation it is manifest that, in sowing none but "good seed," the desire of the Divine Sower is to gather from the world, and preserve in it none but a pure Church, and that the reason

why His Church in this life is not pure is, that through the drowsiness of His watchmen the enemy gets opportunity to sow tares among the wheat. In other words, the spiritual discernment of the watchmen of the Church was not long to retain the character of that early miraculous gift, the "discerning of spirits;" and that, under the ordinary dispensation of the Christian economy, this discernment is neither so penetrating nor so wakeful as always to detect the difference between true and false members of Christ. The purpose of the Adversary, therefore, succeeds, and the Church becomes mixed with lifeless members, hypocrites, formalists and self-deceived; members "having a name to live while they are dead." The visible Church is found to be a very different Body from that which its Divine Head desires to collect and preserve. The purposes of this Divine Head are not frustrated, but His desires fail in this life of their full realization. "The children of the kingdom" are gathered into the Church, but through the infirmity of our nature, the abuses of society, and the activity of the Adversary, others are gathered with them who are not partakers with them, and the Church of "the saved" waits a future life for its full, perfect and separate development.

Upon both of these parables, then, I remark: they plainly teach that the visible Church Catholic,

in its true comprehension, must include all, of every name and character, whom the outward agencies of the Christian Dispensation gather out of the great sea of time, and out of the wide field of the world, into an outward profession of the Christian faith. As visible, the Church is a strangely mixed and multitudinous Body. These parables require us to comprehend in it the whole mighty mass surnamed of Christ, and living in a profession of His Gospel and under the regulation of His institutes, from side to side of the earth, and from end to end of time. These parables permit us to leave out none among whom the real “children of the kingdom” are thus visibly professed and organized.

3. We shall bring the subject into fuller light if we look a moment at the definition which makes Episcopacy essential to the very being of the Church. This definition rests on the theory that this Episcopacy is “a necessary ministerial intervention” between God and man for the conveyance of the gift of the Spirit, union with Christ, and the pardon of sin. The thoroughly unscriptural character of this theory is settled by this one consideration: that it virtually puts two mediators between God and His creatures, while the Bible puts but one. The Bible says, “There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ

Jesus," (1 Tim. 2 : 5,) and when it says "there is one Mediator between God and men," it means that there is BUT one ; just as when it says, "There is one God," it means that there is BUT one. Against this text we may as well contend that there are, in any sense, two Gods, as say that there are, in any sense, two Mediators. But this the theory in question does practically say : First, it puts between men and God the one Mediator, Christ Jesus, and then it puts between men and Christ Jesus its second Mediator, the Priesthood of the Church, as a necessary intervention, without which there is no authorized way for the conveyance of the gift of the Spirit, union with Christ, and the pardon of sin. It does not call the individual who officiates in this Priesthood, a mediator in the full sense in which Christ is the Mediator ; but it does consider this Priesthood itself as a MEDIATION, offering, for the purpose of conveying, the same sacrifice with Christ, and constituting the only authorized way of dispensing the inestimable blessings which that sacrifice has purchased. If the theory admit that these blessings are ever received without this secondary mediation, it still holds that, without this secondary mediation, men have no right to look for those blessings ; that, to such those blessings come, not by covenant, but without covenant ; that they are, in fact, " uncove-

nanted mercies," such as possibly the heathen may experience.

This is, probably, one of the most unscriptural, as it is certainly one of the most dangerous tenets, ever held. The Bible everywhere confutes it, and history everywhere shows its perilousness. We might spend hours in showing how the Bible continually holds up Christ alone as the only "Days-man" between God and His sinful creatures, that needs to "lay His hand upon both;" how it as continually invites every poor, distressed, and broken-hearted sinner, to come immediately and directly to this Christ, whether in the recesses of the heart, in the stillness of the closet, or in the solitude of the desert; and how it calls every man to bow his head, by faith, beneath the one pardoning and Spirit-giving hand, which this true Mediator opens and stretches man-ward, while with the other He reaches and touches God-ward; so that thus, the really connecting links being joined, life and all the communicable fullness of the Infinite Father, through the life-giving, mediating Son, may descend and abide upon His repenting and believing child; they alone, with none and nothing between them! And, having shown all this from the Bible, we might then go on, and spend other hours in showing how history repeatedly and warningly reveals the perilousness of interposing a mediatis-

ing priesthood between the sinner and the Saviour, as a necessary, or as the only authorized, channel for the conveyance of spiritual gifts ; how this awfully arrogated power has been most awfully abused, and how, in the hands of such a being as man, it can never fail to be abused to the worst of purposes. We might go into all the details of this large branch of the subject, but it is not necessary ; a glance at it is enough. Both the Bible and history are against this theory. This theory erects, as necessary to the being of the Church, an intervention which the Bible does not necessitate, and against which history is a Heaven-recorded warning ; an intervention which, in the prerogatives claimed for it, the Bible sweeps clean away ; and of which, for the evils wrought by it, history will yet write the Heaven-inflicted extinction. The visible Church Catholic cannot be bounded by this theory. All that is necessary to give being to the Church,—the gift of the Spirit, union with Christ, and the pardon of sin,—may be obtained, is obtained, without any such intervention as this theory supposes. Wherever professing Christians, holding the true Word and Gospel of Christ, and organized under a visible ministry and sacraments in avowed obedience to Christ its only Head, are found, there a portion of the visible Church Catholic is present, though it be a

mixed society, existing under disadvantages more or less serious, and with the loss of some things in which the well-being of the Church might reasonably rejoice. In a word, and in its full comprehension, the visible Church Catholic may be thus defined : The whole company on earth of those who profess faith in Christ, maintain the preaching of His Gospel, are united by the common bond of His sacraments, and are infected with no heresy subversive of the Christian faith.

The mercy of a Saviour, the mission of the Spirit, and the message of the Word have been given for the great end of saving the souls of men from sin and eternal death. These infinite gifts, through a growingly full and distinct revelation, have been operating in the world from the earliest ages ; and the whole sum of their effects, in any age, the whole company of the saved and of those who profess the faith that saves, when outwardly embodied under necessary forms, constitutes the visible Church Catholic of that age. This Church is that whole company, existing at any particular time, under the forms necessary to their outward manifestation ; and these forms are, the profession of the true faith, the preaching of the true Word, and a common union in the sacraments, which Christ Himself hath ordained. These are the things in which their visibility, as a Church, consists. Their

persons may be made visible by flesh and blood ; but their Church-character cannot be made visible without these necessary forms. It must be borne in mind, however, that, under this its outward organization, the Church is no longer the one pure and holy Church of Christ, such as He desires it to be,—but the whole congregation of outward professors of Christ, mixed, imperfect, and more or less defiled with error, worldliness and sin. It is the “ net,” filled with “ every kind,” “ the good and the bad :”—the “ kingdom,” in a field thick sown and growing both with “ wheat ” and with “ tares.”

From all this it follows, that no one visible organization can, by itself, and to the exclusion of others, be called THE Church, the CATHOLIC Church. The Church of Rome is not the Catholic Church ; nor is that of Greece, or that of England, or all these together, the Catholic Church. This term, as we now seek its comprehension, covers the whole visible company of Christ’s professed followers on earth, so far as they hold and proclaim the true faith, and are united by the common bond of Christ’s sacraments. The very signification of the word, Catholic, points to this comprehension of the visible Church, and to nothing narrower. “ Catholic ” means, “ the whole,” not any part or parts,—“ Universal,” not particular,—and it is an unwarrantable assumption in any one organization, or in

any number of members, short of "the whole," to call itself, or themselves, "The Catholic Church." This comprehends the whole, the universal, company of Christ's professed followers, who hold to Him as Head, to His truth, in the main uncorrupt, and to His sacraments, in all things necessary to their being.

This, we think, is the doctrine of our Nineteenth Article, when rightly understood. That article defines "the visible Church" as "a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all things that of necessity are requisite to the same." The only difficulty in understanding the definition lies in the word, "FAITHFUL." It is the "VISIBLE Church" that is defined ; and yet it is defined as "a congregation of FAITHFUL men ;" which, in the language of the old writers, means, "a congregation of true believers." And if the definition ended here, it would evidently make the visible Church identical with the Church of "the saved." But the definition does not end here. It goes on to say : that this is a congregation, "in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all things that of necessity are requisite to the same." And these, it will be remembered, are the very things in which

the visibility of the Church, as a Church, consists. The article, then, must I think, be explained thus : "The Church," in the desire of her Divine Head, is "a congregation of true believers ;" but when organized and made visible under ministry and sacraments, then, through the infirmity of our nature and of human society, and through the evil activity of the Adversary, it becomes, as we see it, mixed, imperfect, and defiled with more or less serious errors ; the "bad" with the "good," the "tares" with the "wheat." The visible Church of any age has in it all "the faithful men" of that age ; and it ought to have none other ; but, through human imperfection in preaching the Word and applying the sacraments,—an imperfection intensified by the insidious malice of the devil,—it contains many others, who belong to it in its outward organization, while inwardly they are none of Christ's.

Some, indeed, would avoid the difficulty in this Nineteenth Article by explaining the phrase, "visible Church," as identical with that of the "communion of saints" in the Creed ; holding that all the members even of the visible Church are really regenerate and sanctified followers of Christ. But to sustain this view they are forced to hold another, viz : that impenitent, unconverted, and ungodly persons, though baptized and partakers of "the outward and visible sign" in the Lord's supper, are yet, in no

sense, members even of “the visible Church.” This Church, they contend, is “a congregation” of exclusively “faithful men ;”—in the sense of the article, godly believers.

This explanation, however, is opposed to the sense of our great Protestant divines. Even the citations, formerly made from these divines, though made for another purpose, show, nevertheless, that they considered baptized communicants, though impenitent and ungodly, yet as really members of the visible Church ; not, indeed, of the Church “in God’s sense,”—to use Bishop Taylor’s language,—but, of the Church “in man’s sense.” That there is a sense, in which these spiritually dead members do not belong to the Church, is very true. It is equally true, however, that there is another sense in which they do belong to the Church, at least until cut off by discipline. And this sense, according to the writers just referred to, is that of the Church visible.

Moreover, the explanation in question is evidently inconsistent with the teaching of Christ himself in His figure of “the Vine and the branches.” “I am the vine,” says He, “ye are the branches.” John 15 : 5. “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away.” John 15 : 1. In this language Christ and the Vine are evidently a figure of the Church. And the teaching

of the language can be nothing less than this ; that there is a sense, in which there are lifeless members of this Church ; dead branches on that Vine ; whose doom is—if they become not living and fruit-bearing—to be cut off and cast away. And this sense, again, can be none other than that of the visible Church. It is important to add, that this brings the teaching from the metaphor of the Vine and its branches into harmony with that already found in the parables of the “net cast into the sea,” and “the tares of the field.”

I see no good reason, therefore, for giving up the ordinary acceptation of the phrase, “visible Church ;” understanding by it, the whole mixed company in all the world of those who profess the faith of Christ, and maintain the preaching of His Gospel and the administration of His sacraments, in all things necessary to the same.

That our Nineteenth Article intends to give the visible Church this comprehension is evident from the fact, that it says nothing of what constitutes the essence of the ministry, or of what is necessary to “the due administration of the sacraments according to Christ’s ordinance.” It leaves both these points at large and undetermined ; and I suppose it is hazarding nothing to say, that it would be impossible to bring our Church up to the point of decreeing, through her authoritative councils, that

there can be no Christian ministry at all, other than that Episcopally constituted ; and no Christian sacraments at all, other than those Episcopally administered. Such a decision she has never, in any way, promulgated. Such a sentence she can never be made authoritatively to pass. She proclaims herself a true Church, and leaves others to the liberty of proclaiming the same for themselves, and, if they can, of proving what they proclaim.

CHAPTER II.

OUR STANDARDS AND STANDARD WRITERS ON THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

THE Christian Faith is exactly comprehensive of the Christian Church. The former is the true boundary of the latter. When this faith, true and sound, is received into the heart, and produces a living and holy union with Christ, it constitutes a member of the true, spiritual Church Catholic. And when this faith, in the main whole and uncorrupt, is received into the understanding, and carried out into profession under appropriate and necessary forms, it constitutes a member of the real visible Church Catholic. And thus, in both senses, the Christian faith is the only true comprehension of the Christian Church. This faith, or the substance of what Christ requires to be believed, is the all-essential thing in this inquiry. A renunciation of this faith is, to all intents and purposes, a renunciation of the Church. Hence, near the close of the last Chapter, in defining the Church, in its external Catholicism, it was said to comprehend the whole

visible company on earth, of those who profess the faith in Christ, maintain the preaching of His Gospel, are united by the common bond of sacraments, and are infected with no heresy subversive of the Christian faith. This last mark was added because a heresy, which subverts the Christian faith, may well be regarded as effecting a severance from the Christian Church. In the days of the Apostles, we learn from Acts, 16 : 5, that "The Churches were established in the faith." A subversion of the faith is the opposite to establishment in the faith. It is, so far as it extends, a subversion of the Church itself. For the same reason, a corruption of the faith, if it amount not to its subversion, is but a corruption of the Church. It amounts not to its subversion. Save the substance of the faith, in its outward profession, and you save the substance of the Church, in its visible Catholicism.

This, as I have already remarked, is the view of the visible Church, so far as we can trace it, in the teachings of the Bible. I add, this is the view, taken by our own standards and standard writers : a remark, to the illustration of which I now invite attention.

I. OUR STANDARDS.

1. In looking at our standards, then, we may refer again, though at the risk of a little repetition, to

our XIXth Article. It defines “the visible Church” to be, as to its essence, “a congregation of faithful men ;” and then, as to its visibility, a congregation “in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that, of necessity, are requisite to the same.” Wherever the great “congregation” exists in profession, under the preaching of the true Gospel, and a due administration of the sacraments in all things necessary thereto, there, according to this article, “the visible Church of Christ” exists. What is necessary to the due administration of the sacraments the article, indeed, does not decide. Individual writers may be found, in sufficient numbers, and living men, in numbers more sufficient still, who strenuously contend that, to the very essence of the sacraments, an Episcopal ministry is necessary ; so that, without this ministry, there can be no such thing as a Christian sacrament. But this decision our Church has not pronounced ; and, I repeat, cannot be made to pronounce. So far is she from the opinion, which such a decision would involve, that her highest authorities in England, as well as in America, following herein the voice of antiquity, have decided that even lay-baptism, however irregular, is, nevertheless, valid and not to be repeated. Her article, therefore, does not teach that

"the visible Church of Christ" is bounded by the limits of an Episcopal ministry and sacraments. It is one thing to say that non-episcopal bodies, as outward organizations, are, in the full sense, regular Churches ; and quite another to affirm that they belong to the one visible, Catholic Church of Christ. The former, an Episcopalian needs not to assert. The latter it behoves him steadfastly to hold.

2. But leaving the teachings of the Article, let us adduce other testimony. Following the order observed when speaking of the spiritual Church, I cite, first, from

I. OUR DEVOTIONAL STANDARDS.

1. In our communion service, is the prayer "For the whole state of Christ's Church militant." This I understand to mean, the whole Church on earth, visible and invisible, spiritual and mixed ; and I understand it to speak of this Church as militant, or warring, against those leagued foes without, the world, the flesh and the devil, as well as against those deadly enemies within, sin, error and superstition ; foes, that trouble the Church as spiritual ; and enemies that defile the Church as mixed. Of whom, then, according to this solemn and authoritative formula, does this "whole state of Christ's Church militant," so far, at least, as it is to be con-

sidered visible, consist? Hear the witness. It consists of all "who do confess His holy name;" not only of those who really and savingly believe in that holy name, but of all who profess to believe in it; though, in so many instances, their faith lives no where but in profession. For all these, and none less, the prayer goes up that they may, as "a consummation most devoutly to be wished," be "inspired with the spirit of truth, unity and concord;" or that they "may agree in the truth of His holy Word, and live in unity and godly love;" and that their "Bishops and other ministers may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth His true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer His holy sacraments." This testimony is very emphatic. The "universal Church" of Christ is expressly defined as consisting of "all who do confess His holy name;" and its visibility is here, as in the Article, considered as consisting in this confession, under the appointed forms of the preaching of the "true and lively Word," and of the "right and due administration of the holy sacraments." It is true, indeed, that more is expressed here than in the Article. There is here a distinct intimation that we, for ourselves, have adopted an Episcopal ministry, or a ministry of Bishops; but this is without any claim that such a ministry is indispensably necessary to the being of the sacraments. We ask

grace, not merely for “all Bishops, priests and deacons,” but for “all Bishops and other ministers ;” and I think that this peculiar turn of the expression must have been intended to include somewhat more than a simply Episcopal ministry. As a petition for “Bishops and other ministers,” it must I apprehend, be considered as a prayer for “Bishops and ALL other ministers,” even for ALL who minister to THE ALL “who do confess Christ’s holy name ;” to THE ALL who make up “the whole state of Christ’s Church militant.” This prayer, and the ancient liturgies, in which it stands, were doubtless framed in times, when there was none but an Episcopal ministry to pray for : but the remark is most important, that the prayer was adopted into our communion service, both in England and this country, at a time when our Church authorities had come to the knowledge and to the acknowledgment of the fact, that there were then, in the Church militant, many ministers of Christ, who had never been Episcopally ordained.

2. Indeed, this freedom of our Prayer-Book language from all particularizing, its large generalness of expression, is very remarkable. I cite a second instance of it from our last prayer at “The Institution of Ministers.” We there pray for “the Church, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cor-

ner-stone, that, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, ALL Christians may be so joined together in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace, that they may be an holy temple, acceptable unto God." This language is broad as possible. It knows no "foundation" to the Church narrower than "Christ," and no "temple" for the visible Zion smaller than that which contains "ALL Christians." In one sense, this is a prayer of sorrows. It looks sadly on this world-wide Church of Christ, and sees it agitated, divided, and, in many things, defiled ; and, at the sight, its petitions go up amid sighs and tears. In another sense, however, it is a prayer of faith. It looks on this Church universal through the sweet light of promise, and, in the power of strong, hopeful entreaty, sees the time when the true "unity," that "of the Spirit," and the true "bond," that of "peace," shall embrace and bind together in love "ALL Christians," "ALL who profess Christ's holy name ;" and when thus the Church visible shall, as nearly as earth will allow, become identical with the Church spiritual ; and, at the sight, its petitions go up, if amid sighs and tears, amid smiles and thankfulness as well. It becomes, truly, a prayer into which every large-hearted disciple of Christ delights to put his whole soul of believing, trustful, and fervent intercession.

3. A third instance of this same large general-

ness of language when speaking of the visible Church, may be cited from the prayer "for all conditions of men." We there "pray for the holy Church universal, that ALL, who profess and call themselves Christians, may, by the guidance and governance of God's good Spirit, 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." This prayer, be it remembered, was never in any of the ancient liturgies. It is of English and Protestant origin. And it was framed, it is alleged, by good Bishop Sanderson of Lincoln. His views of the comprehension of the visible Church are, as we shall presently see, well known ; and there can be no doubt, that, when this formula speaks of "the holy Church universal" as embracing "ALL who profess and call themselves Christians," it means to include not only all the ancient Episcopal communions, but also all the then modern Reformed and Protestant bodies, though many of these were not Episcopally constituted. It means, says our American Bishop Brownell, in his Commentary on the Book of Common Prayer, "The Oriental, the Greek, the Latin, the Reformed, with every denomination of Christians." When the English Church, and our American Episcopal after it, adopted this prayer into their solemn liturgy, they not only prayed, (with the heart of every true

follower of Christ saying, “Amen,”) that “the faith may be held in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life,” but also taught, (with whatever of authority they possess,) that “the Church Universal” includes, amid whatever of present agitation, division and corruption, still, in the hope of future peace, unity and purity, “all who profess and call themselves Christians.” The “profession” of the Christian faith ; the “calling themselves” of Christ ; the putting themselves forth before the world under the accustomed forms of Christian profession,—the preaching of the Gospel and a due reception of Christ’s sacraments, are here, by specially PROTESTANT witnessing, set forth as the true comprehending lines of the whole visible body of Christ.

4. A fourth instance, of this Catholicity of our Book of Common Prayer, is found, not, indeed, in its devotional language, but in its historic preface ; an official document of the highest consideration, set forth by authority of our highest Council, the General Convention of 1789, when publicly sanctioning the use of our devotional forms. The passage, to which I refer, is this : “When, in the course of divine Providence, these American States became independent with respect to civil government, their ecclesiastical independence was necessarily included ; and the different religious denom-

inations of Christians in these States were left at full and equal liberty to model and organize their respective CHURCHES, and forms of worship and discipline, in such manner as they might judge most convenient to their future prosperity, consistently with the laws and constitution of their country."

Here, the Non-Episcopal denominations of the United States are acknowledged to be "CHURCHES." It is not admissible to say that the word, "Churches," is here used loosely and by courtesy ; or that, while the term, Church, belongs exclusively to us, the phrase, "Religious Denominations of Christians," is the appropriate description of all the others. The language quoted, is not that of mere careless politeness ; it is that of strictly serious intent ; as might be made abundantly manifest from our Church literature at that period : particularly from the writings of Bishop White, and of Drs. William Smith and Charles H. Wharton, the most eminent divines in the General Convention of 1789. As to the other part of the suggestion, I know it has become fashionable in certain quarters to restrict the term, Church, to ourselves, and to apply that of "Religious Denominations of Christians" to others. But this is trifling with the subject. Our highest Council, that which first gave form to our Church in this land, applies this description to ourselves, as well as to others. When it says,

"The different Religious Denominations of Christians in these States were left at full and equal liberty to model and organize their respective Churches," it includes ourselves among the rest ; it calls us, as well as others, "a Religious Denomination of Christians." And therefore, when it declares that all these denominations "had full and equal right to model and organize their respective Churches," it admits that they are **ALL** Churches ; it asserts the essence of Church-character to the other denominations as seriously and as strictly as it claims the essence of that character for ourselves. I say, not that it concedes to them the same regularness and fullness of Church-character, which in other documents we claim for ourselves ; but that it asserts to them the essence of that character as seriously and as strictly as it claims the essence of that character for ourselves. Any other inference makes our Church an insincere, equivocating courtier, when speaking of the things of God in her highest, most dignified capacity, on one of the greatest, most solemn crises of her history. She hath not thus degraded herself. She is erect in high-minded integrity. She has seriously asserted to Non-Episcopal religious denominations of Christians the essence of Church-character. And this is one reason why, at least until she loses her Protestantism, she cannot be made to utter the author-

itative decision, that the Episcopacy is essential to the being of a Church, or that the Non-Episcopal denominations are no Churches.

So far, then, as our standards are concerned, the testimony may be considered sufficient, in favor of the view which I have given of the visible Church Catholic, as comprehending “the whole company on earth of those who profess the Christian faith, maintain the preaching of the Gospel, are united by the common bond of sacraments, and are infected with no heresy subversive of the Christian faith !” I proceed, therefore, to examine the testimony of

II. OUR STANDARD WRITERS.

This will be found luminous on the point, of which I am now treating. The standard writers, now referred to, belong, of course, to the country, in which our Protestant Reformation was effected ; but they flourished, not in the century which witnessed that Reformation, but in that which immediately followed ; they are the writers of the Seventeenth Century.

1. I quote, first from Dr. Thomas Jackson of New Castle, who wrote in the early part of that century, and who has already been mentioned as one of the most eminent divines of that prolific age. In his “Treatise of the Holy Catholic Faith

and Church," after defining "The Church in its prime," or spiritual "sense," he uses this language : "In a secondary, analogical sense, every present visible Church, which holdeth the holy Catholic faith, without which no man can be saved, pure and undefiled with the traditions or inventions of men, may be termed a holy Catholic Church." "Who they be which profess the unity of that faith, is visible and known to all such as either hear them profess it, *viva voce*, or can read and understand their profession of it given in writing." [Treat. on the Holy Cath. Faith and Church, p. 152. Phila. 1844.] And, to show that, by the phrase, "every present visible Church," he does not mean every Episcopally organized Church only, he proceeds to speak of "such a communion" as existed "between the Orthodoxal professors of the English or other Reformed Churches ;" [Treat. etc., p. 154,] and of "Luther, and Christian princes, by God's appointment, uniting the visible members of the holy Catholic Church into visible Churches." [Treat. etc., p. 158.] In those days, indeed, of close searching into the nature of things spiritual and ecclesiastical, this class of eminent divines had no thought of shutting the Reformed Continental Churches, though deprived of the Episcopacy, out of the pale of visible Catholicism. Hence Bishop Hall even while lamenting their want of Episcopal

order, yet, in view of their holding the true faith of the Gospel, affectionately terms them “The Church of England’s dearest sisters abroad ;” [Sermon on Noah’s Dove ;] meaning, by “sisters,” sister Churches ; for the sister of a Church must be herself a Church. Jackson’s definition, then, of the visible Church spreads itself over the whole ground which we have been surveying. To entitle the visible Church, indeed, to the name, “holy,” it must, according to him, hold “the Catholic faith” “pure and undefiled.” But, though a particular Church hold this faith more or less corrupted “by traditions and inventions of men,” and thus ceases to deserve the name “holy,” yet, so long as it does not, by heresy, subvert the foundations of the faith, it does not cease to be a portion of the visible Church Catholic on earth. This Church may and does exist in a state far from pure ; and can be called holy, for no other reason than because it holds the Truth which is holy, and is designed to minister to the spiritual growth of that hidden people who are holy.

2. I quote, second, Bishop Sanderson of Lincoln, whom I before cited as the alleged author of our “Prayer for all Conditions of Men,” and who furnishes a very apposite definition of the visible Church. Having given that, formerly quoted, of the spiritual or invisible Church. he immediately

adds : “ The whole company, of all those throughout the world, who, by their doctrine and worship, do outwardly make profession of the Name of Christ ; this we call the universal visible Church, or the Catholic Christian Church.” And then to show in what various conditions this universal visible Church may exist, and what utterly subverts it ; he says : “ A total and utter defection from the whole faith of Christ, in doctrine and in worship, destroys the very being of a Church, and maketh it no Church at all. But a defection from the purity of faith doth not take away the being of a Church ; (it remains still a true Church) but only maketh it an impure and corrupt Church, and, so far forth, a false Church. Corruptions in doctrine and worship, as they are greater or lesser, so they make a Church more or less, comparatively, corrupt.” [Disc. on Visibility of the True Church, pp. 213–215. Phila. 1844.] The same writer speaks repeatedly of “ the Protestant Churches,” by which he means that of England and those of the Continent, as standing together on the “ substance of faith,” being “ more or less reformed in doctrine and worship,” and constituting “ particular visible Churches.” [Disc. etc., pp. 222–224.]

It is needless to point out, by extended comment, the entire coincidence of this author with the view

which I have given of the visible Church Catholic. He makes a clear distinction between what is essential to the being and what is important to the well-being of this Church.

3. I quote, third, from Dr. Cosin, who became afterwards Bishop of Durham, and who, like Bishop Hall, was ever one of the "stauncest of Churchmen." He calls the French Protestants, in the middle of the Seventeenth Century, "Reformed Churches," and discountenances a refusal of their communion, when the plea urged for such refusal was, that, "for want of Episcopal ordination, they had no order at all;" that is, no ministerial orders. "If, upon this ground," says he, "we renounce the French, we must, for the very same reason, renounce all the ministers of Germany besides; . . . and then, what will become of the Protestant party? . . . If the Church and kingdom of England have acknowledged them," (as they have,) "why should we, who are but private persons, utterly disclaim their communion?" [Letter to Cordel, Hooker's Collection, p. 234. Phila. 1844.] This, considering the general views of the author from whom it comes, is perhaps one of the most striking testimonies to the truth, that though, in our judgment highly important to the well-being, yet Episcopal ordination is not indispensable to the being of the visible Church.

4. I quote, fourth, from "the judicious Hooker." In his Ecclesiastical Polity, he uses this strong language : "If, by external profession, they be Christians, then they are the visible Church of Christ ; and Christians, by external profession, they are all, whose mark of recognition hath in it those things, which we have mentioned, (one Lord, one faith, one baptism) yea, although they be impious idolaters, wicked heretics, persons excommunicable." And then, to the question, whether it be possible for such persons, belonging as they really do "to the Synagogue of Satan," to belong also "to the Church of Jesus Christ," he answers, in the very spirit of the present argument, "Unto that Church which is His mystical Body," it is "not possible" for such persons to belong : "because that Body consisteth of none but only true Israelites, true sons of Abraham, true servants and saints of God :" but, "of the visible body and Church of Jesus Christ, those may be and often are" members. [Eccl. Pol., B. III. § 1.] According to this authority, then, and with an emphatic *a fortiori*, they belong to the visible Church, who are neither "impious idolaters" nor "wicked heretics," but who, in their outward profession, hold the Truth in the main uncorrupt, and, in their outward lives, walk in becoming consistency with their profession ; albeit, in the order of their ministry, they lack somewhat

which we deem requisite to the fullness of the Apostolic pattern.

5. I quote, fifth, from Bishop Hall, whose language is equally strong. He says : “ It is not the variety of by-opinions, that can exclude them from having their part in that one Catholic Church, and their just claim to the ‘ communion of saints.’ While they hold the solid and precious foundation, it is not the hay, or stubble, which they lay upon it, that can cut them off from God and His Church.” And then, after lamenting, in the most impassioned strain, the numerous errors and dissensions which have crept in among Christians, he thus proceeds to assert that they do not destroy the real oneness of the visible Church : “ Notwithstanding all this hideous variety of vain and heterodoxal conceptions, He, who is the Truth of God and the Bridegroom of His Church, hath said : “ My Dove, my undefiled, is One ;” one in the main, essential, fundamental verities necessary to salvation ; though differing in divers mis-raised corollaries, inconsequent inferences, unnecessary additions, feigned traditions, unwarrantable practices. The Body is one, though the garments differ ; yea, rather, for most of these, the garment is one, but differs in the dressing ; handsomely and comely set out by some, disguised by another. Neither is it, or ever shall be in the power, of all the fiends of hell, the pro-

fessed make-baits of the world, to make God's Church other than one ; which were, indeed, utterly to extinguish and reduce it to nothing ; for the unity and entity of the Church can no more be divided than itself. . . . Those that agree in the main principles of religion, Christ is pleased to admit, for matter of doctrine, as members of that body wherof He is the Head, and if they admit not of each other as such the fault is in the uncharitableness of the refusers, no less than in the errors of the refused. If any vain and loose stragglers will needs sever themselves, and wilfully choose to go ways of their own, let them know that the union of Christ's Church shall consist entire without them. This great ocean will be one collection of waters, when these drops are lost in the dust." [Treat. of Christ Mystical, chap. vii. § 2.]

This language, like the prayer in our communion office, evidently embraces "The whole state of Christ's Church militant" in time, spiritual and mixed ; and it goes on the ground that there is a sense, in which this whole Church is one, notwithstanding its divisions and imperfections. "The Body is one though the garments differ : yea, rather, for the most of these, the garment is one, but differs in the dressing." In other words, even as visible, the Church is one, though it hath many parts, and though the various parts have various external

order and form ; or rather, most, though not all, of the parts have but one garment of outward order and form. Most, though not all, have an Episcopacy in the ministry, and a liturgy in worship ; an external development more or less beautiful and showy ; most, though not all ; some of the parts wear even a different garment, woven of the warp and woof, not of an Episcopacy and a liturgy, but of parity in order, and the extempore in worship. Nevertheless, all these are but parts of the one Body. These diversities touch not essentials. They “cut not off from God or His Church.” Such is Bishop Hall’s figure, turned into literal sense.

6. I quote, finally, Bishop Jeremy Taylor. Declaring in what sense the word, Church, is applied to the mixed and often rent Body of the visible congregation, he says : “The word, Church . . . may be and is given to them by way of supposition, and legal presumption ; as a jury of twelve men are called ‘good men and true ;’ that is, they are not known to be otherwise, and are therefore presumed to be such ; and they are the Church, in all human accounts ; that is, they are the congregation of all that profess the Name of Christ ; in which are the wheat and the tares ; and they are bound up in common by the union of sacraments and rites, name and profession ; but in nothing else.” [Dis-

susative from Popery, Part II., B. I., Sect. 1, and §§ 1, 2.]

To estimate rightly these testimonies from our old writers to the view which I have given of the visible Church Catholic, we must remember that they belong to the age which closely followed that of the Reformation itself ; that they write in presence of the great, outstanding fact that a considerable portion of the Reformed Body was, as it still continues, without an Episcopal ministry ; and that they were in the habit of speaking of this portion as “the Reformed Churches.”

This whole discussion about the visible Church might, under ordinary circumstances, be deemed uninteresting and even unprofitable. But it cannot be so considered when we remember that the circumstances of the times in which we live are very extraordinary. We live in a day when many are endeavoring to upheave the very foundations of our Protestantism, and to deprive of all claim to the name of a Church those whom our fathers have recognized as belonging to the great visible Body of Christ. This effort cannot succeed without putting in jeopardy our own integrity, if not our own existence, as a Church ; nor, what is worse, without undermining all that is most precious in the Gospel of Christ as we receive it from “the living Oracles” of God. Under such circumstances, every thing

touching right views of even the visible Church links itself vitally with the Christian teacher's grand theme, "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." We must lose our interest in this all-enlivening heart of the Gospel before we can become indifferent to the question, What is the true comprehension of the visible Church? or to the efforts which are made to exclude from it some of the deservedly valued portions of the professed followers of Christ.

I speak, not as an apologist of Non-Episcopalians, but as an advocate of true Church principles. That any part of the visible Church is without the Episcopacy is, to me, a matter of sorrow. But it would be a matter, not merely of sorrow, but of conscious wrong, were I to lay at the base of the visible Church a principle, which, in its operation, cuts off any who, by the laws of truth and right, belong to its great Corporation.

Other questions, touching the visible Church, remain for consideration.

P A R T I I I .

WELL-BEING OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

WELL-BEING OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE MINISTRY.

THE Church Catholic, both in its divine holiness, and in its actual visibleness ; what is necessary to the being of each, and what each really comprehends ; this is the subject, upon which the present course of studies has, thus far, been engaged. Christ and the members really united with Him by the inworking Spirit, in a living and sanctifying faith, this is the spiritual Church Catholic :—Christ and the members professedly united with Him by outward signs, teaching faith and holiness, this is the visible Church Catholic ; each in its essence, or what is necessary to its existence.

And here, if I were dealing simply with principles, with the truths of God's Word, and the essentials of His Church, I might leave the subject ; not because, even in this view, the subject is exhausted, but because enough has been said to clear the one point, at which I have been aiming, the true comprehension of the Church of Christ.

But, since it is evident that this subject concerns, not only principles, but also men and the working out of principles, it is also evident that we ought to understand not only what is necessary to the being of the Church, but also what is requisite to its WELL-BEING ; what is designed to secure its order, its permanency, and its prosperity.

The main requisites to the well-being of the Church are, doubtless, to be found in a faithful preaching of the Gospel, and in a due administration of the sacraments of Christ. But both of these, as reason may infer, and as the Scriptures teach, imply A MINISTRY, whose office it is both to preach the Gospel and to administer the sacraments. But, besides these functions, the ministry has more or less to do with the Government and Worship of the Church ; while, if we would really grasp all that is requisite to the well-being of the Church, still other things must be taken into our view, such as the Harmony of its parts, and the Unity of the whole. The topics, then, which are yet to occupy our thoughts, are these ; the Ministry, the Government, the Worship, the Harmony, and the Unity of the Church. And after touching upon these, not systematically and exhaustively, but as they relate presently and practically to our own times, and the times that are coming on the earth, it will not be amiss to look upwards, and see in what a divine

consummation all things are to end, when heaven shall have received the whole, and when Jesus and His saints shall show the universe what is meant by a perfect Church.

1. THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH.

1. In entering on this topic, my first inquiry is, What is the relation and connection of the ministry with the Church? And to this question, if I mistake not, we have an answer in a passage, which you will find in 1 Cor. 12: 28: "God hath set some in the Church; first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers, etc."

I refer to this passage, not on account of its numerals, "first, secondarily, and thirdly," but for two other reasons. It shows first, that the ministry is from God: "God hath set it in the Church." Whatever name this ministry may, at different times, have borne; by whatever varying forms it may have been successively modified; and through whatever outward channel it may, at its first beginning, have descended; it came from God, and not from man. Its authority is divine, and not human. And then, second, it shows that this ministry is not the Church, but only "some" whom "God hath set in the Church;" set, doubtless, in peculiar stations, and in special authority; and yet

set "in the Church." The Church is not, as some writers teach, set in the ministry ; but the ministry is set in the Church.

This distinction is very important. When certain writers speak of the Church, they speak as if they had nothing in view but the ministry ; as though, in its ministry, the very being of the Church were involved ; insomuch that, without this ministry, the Church itself would cease to exist. But look at the chapter from which the above passage is taken, and see what a very different view is there given. "As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body ; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit, we are all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles ; whether we be bond or free ; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member but many. . . . God hath set the members, every one of them, in the body as it hath pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body ? But now are they many members, yet but one body." [1 Cor. 12 : 12-14, 18-20.] Here the Church is presented under the familiar metaphor of a body, with its many members ; all constituting together one body. This Body, not its ministry alone, but this whole Body, with its many members, in subjection to its one Head, Christ, consti-

tutes the Church ; and in this Church “ God hath set some ” of the members in places of peculiar eminence and importance ; just as, in the human fabric, He hath assigned corresponding stations to the eye, the ear and the hand. Now, we may as well say that the human body consists in the eye, the ear and the hand ; or that it cannot exist without these members, as that the Church, the Body of Christ, consists in its ministry, or that it cannot exist without this ministry. Its ministry, indeed, are important members, whom “ God hath set in the Church ;” but they are not essential to the Being of the Church, any more than the eye, the ear and the hand are essential to the being of a human body. Suppose the eye were gone, or the ear wanting, or the hand left off, or all three absent at once ; still the body would be there. So long as there was a head, thinking, knowing and governing ; and a heart, living, pulsing and feeling ; and animal functions, receiving, digesting and distributing ; so long as head and heart and animal functions remain, the body would remain, though it wanted eye, or ear, or hand ; yea, though it wanted all these at once. Under this tripple want, and even under the first, the second, or the third part of this want, it would be, indeed, a maimed imperfect, suffering body ; still it would be a body with life, and soul, and action, and with more or less

of enjoyment. So, from the Church, suppose that a part, or even the whole, of its ministry were wanting, still, the Church itself would not cease to exist. So long as Christ, its thinking, knowing, governing Head ; and the Holy Spirit, its living, pulsing, quickening heart ; and the human members, its receiving, digesting, distributing organism ; so long as all these remained, the Church itself would remain, though deprived of its higher, its middle, or its lower ministries ; yea, though deprived of all these at once. Under this triple deprivation, and even under the first, the second, or the third part of this deprivation, it would, indeed, be a maimed, imperfect, suffering Church ; still, it would be a Church ; it would have life, spirit and activity, and somewhat of a divine joy.

(1.) These remarks show the difference between the ministry as being “set in the Church,” and the Church as set, or organized, in the ministry. It settles the question whether the members make the ministry, or the ministry the members, of the Church, by showing that the truth lies on neither side. Certainly the ministry do not make the members of the Church ; and as certainly the members do not make the ministry. Each, indeed, has somewhat to do in recognizing the other ; but neither makes the other. God makes them both, fits them for each other, and sets them both together in

Christ. Just as in the human organism, the eye does not make the ear, nor the ear the hand, nor the hand the foot ; but God makes them all and fits them all to serve and help each other, and sets them all together in the body. Practically, this truth is too often ignored. The whole Church, whether as spiritual or as visible, is God's work, not man's. True, He uses men in this work ; and He uses the common members in making the ministry, as really as He uses the ministry in making the common members. Still, the Work itself is His. The Church is "His workmanship." He sets "all the members, every one of them" in it, the lower as well as the higher. Without His authority and agency, the Church, whether as inward or as outward, as spiritual or as visible, would not exist ; and His authority and agency are the only things without which it cannot exist.

(2.) Moreover, the chapter on which these remarks are made, shows the distinction between the being of the Church and its well-being ; between what is essential to its existence, and what is needful to its fullness, perfectness, and comfort. The eye, ear and hand are certainly needful to the fullness, perfectness and comfort of the human body ; and yet, if each or every one of these were lost, the essence of the body would remain, so long as the head, heart and animal functions were left un-

touched in living action. It were folly to lose sight of the difference between what is thus necessary to the being and life of the body, and what is thus needful to its best, most effective, most happy being. It is most important to have a body with all its members, especially its chief members ; a body, full, perfect, strong, and able to do everything for which it was designed ; but, for the purposes of this world, it is better to have a body with the loss of some, even of its most important members, than to have no body at all. So in the things of Christ, a ministry is evidently needful to the fullness, the perfectness, the best welfare, of the Church : and yet, if a part, or even the whole of this ministry, as this term is ordinarily understood, should by possibility be lost, the being, the essence, of the Church would remain so long as Christ, the Spirit and the great organism of members remained in divine life and activity. It were equal folly to lose sight of the difference between what is thus essential to the being and life of the Church, and what is thus needful to its best, most effective, most happy being. We cannot overrate the importance of having a Church, with its whole organism of members, ministry and all, full, perfect, healthy, and able to do everything for which it was constituted ; but for the purposes of both worlds, it is better to have a Church with the loss of some, even of its chief

members ; of a part, or even the whole of its ministry, than to have no Church at all ; better than to lose Christ, and the Spirit, and the great “ Communion of Saints ” from off the earth and out of heaven ; better than to lose head and heart and the whole living organism from among all the offspring of the Infinite Father.

To all this, indeed, it may be objected, that if by possibility the ministry should be lost, though the Church would remain for a time, yet, by the death of its members, and for want of a ministry formally to initiate their successors in membership, it would, in the course of one natural generation, expire. To this objection, however, I reply : So long as Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and “ the Lively Oracles ” of Truth coming from both are in the world, God can raise up and ingraft a succession of members into the Body of Christ, which is His Church, even without the hand of a formally ordained ministry. True, a Church thus perpetuated would, as a visible Body, be esteemed a maimed and imperfect Church : still, it would be a Church ; and, for God’s purposes, unspeakably better than no Church at all.

However, this objection and reply relate to a mere abstract possibility ; and are intended to give the greater distinctness to the difference between the being of the Church and its well-being. We

have this to comfort us : the ministry is not lost ; nor while Christ's promise lives can it ever be lost. What is thus needful to the well-being of the Church, the Church has and will have, until Christ comes again and puts Himself finally in the place of all ministries.

2. Having now seen the relation of the ministry to the Church, we are prepared for a second inquiry : What is this ministry ? We have already seen that its origin is from Christ ; that God, not man, "hath set it in the Church," as "some" among the "many members" who are to serve and be served in the weal and working of the whole Body ; and that thus its place of eminence, whatever it may be, has been assigned to it by a Divine and not by any human authority. But, what is this eminence among the members which has been assigned to the ministry of the Church by its Divine Head ? or, what form and development has this ministry taken from the hands of those Apostles, with whom, at its origin, this ministry was lodged ? What shape did they give it when they came to transmit it to the ages of the Church then future ? This questioning leads us into a subject too wide for full survey in this Treatise ; and therefore, I must content myself with a simple confession of my faith, that it may stand as sufficient for my present purpose, instead of any long array of arguments.

I begin this confession, then, in the words which the Preface to our “Ordinal,” or form of ordination, puts into my mouth, and which I am prepared to utter from my heart. “It is evident,” says this Preface, “unto all men diligently reading holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles’ time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ’s Church, Bishops, Priests and Deacons. Which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined and known to have such qualities as are requisite to the same ; and also, by public prayer, with imposition of hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority. And therefore, to the intent that these orders may be continued and reverently used and esteemed in this Church, no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful bishop, priest, or deacon, in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined and admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following, or hath had Episcopal consecration or ordination.”

This Preface, it will be seen, settles for us several points :

First : that “from the Apostles’ time there have been in Christ’s Church three orders of ministers,

bishop, presbyters and deacons." It says not, "from Christ's time," but, "from the Apostles' time." The essential fact and being of a ministry it receives from Christ Himself, as left by Him "in His Church." But the distribution of this ministry into three orders, and three only, it traces no farther back than to the Apostles. Christ put His One commission upon them ; and they distributed that commission among three orders of ministers. In what this distribution consisted, what special powers or prerogatives were assigned to each of those three orders, and whether any of those powers or prerogatives were confined exclusively to any one of those three orders—these are points which the Preface does not touch. It merely asserts the fact of such a distribution, and the existence of this fact in the Church "from the Apostles' time."

Second : that for the exercise of any office under this three-fold ministry, it was "evermore" necessary that the incumbent should be "tried," found possessed of "the requisite qualifications," and "admitted by lawful authority." Where this lawful authority was primarily lodged, when the ministerial commission passed from the Apostles' hands, is also a point which the Preface touches not ; it merely decides, inferentially, that any entrance into this threefold ministry, save by the

door of such lawful authority, was “evermore” held to be irregular and presumptuous.

Third : that, “in this Church,” the three-fold ministry shall be perpetuated, and that the only lawful way of entrance into any of its three orders, shall be through our prescribed forms of trial and of ordination by bishops, or through some other equivalent Episcopal acts. Here Episcopacy comes out as our unalterable regimen. The Preface says, not that a trine ministry must, to the exclusion of every other form, be perpetuated in Christ’s Church, or in the Church, as necessary to its being, but that such a ministry shall, as a fact, be perpetuated “in THIS Church ;” not that there is no possible way of entering into the ministry of CHRIST’S Church, or of THE Church, save through our forms of trial and ordination, or their equivalents, but, that there shall be no other lawful way of entering into the ministry of “THIS Church.” In both these places that little word “this,” is brimful of meaning and importance. In the first paragraph of the Preface occurs the phrase “Christ’s Church ;” in the second paragraph, twice occurs the phrase “this Church ;” and the question naturally arises, Does the Preface, in its second paragraph, mean by the phrase, “this Church,” what it means, in its first paragraph, by the phrase “Christ’s Church ?” I answer, it does not, and cannot, mean

the same. If, by "this Church," the Preface had simply intended to repeat the terms, "Christ's Church," it would declare, what our Ecclesiastical authority has never elsewhere declared, and what, until we lose our Protestantism, that authority can never be made to declare, viz: that, without an Episcopacy, there can be no ministry in the Church of Christ. Let us, for a moment, put the Preface in this form. "In Christ's Church there have been always and everywhere, bishops, priests, and deacons; and, therefore, it is decreed that, in this Church, this Church of Christ, no man shall be accounted a lawful bishop, priest, or deacon, or be suffered to execute any of the said functions, unless he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereto according to our form, or some other Episcopal mode of ordination." We can see at once that this would make our Church declare, authoritatively, that there is, and ever has been, no Christian ministry, except such as has been Episcopally ordained; and that none but such shall be suffered to officiate in the Church of Christ in any part of the world; a decision which would not only make her, in theory, unchurch a considerable part of Christendom, but also, in practice, pledge herself to carry out the unchurching edict with a relentless vengeance, and this, too, after having formally acknowledged, in her Preface to

the “Book of Common Prayer,” that Non-Episcopal “denominations” are “Churches,” and have “full and equal liberty” with herself “to model and organize their respective Churches and forms of worship and discipline, in such manner as they may judge most convenient for their prosperity.” The truth is, that this Preface to the ordinal, after asserting the fact that there ever have been three orders of ministers in the Church, since the Apostles’ time, goes on to say and to intend, no more than this: that, in THIS “Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America,” in THIS Church, for which the following ordinal has been drawn up—the ministry shall always retain the three orders of “bishops, presbyters, and deacons.” Any man may hold, as a matter of private opinion, that there never was, and never can be, any Christian ministry without bishops; but our Church, in this Preface to her ordinal, teaches no such thing, and never can be made to teach such a thing, so long as she remains Protestant.

Fourth: that, as a matter of fact, there has, ever since the Apostles’ time, been a trine ministry in the Church, the Preface declares it to be “evident to all men diligently reading holy Scripture and ancient authors.” And this is a declaration to which I very heartily assent. The fact asserted is, I think, evident to all diligent readers of those

olden records. The Preface says, not that this evidence runs back unto Christ, but that it runs back to "the Apostles;" and that this evidence lies not in the Scripture alone, but in "the Scriptures and ancient authors." And I confess that I cannot impeach the Preface of a want of reasonableness in what it says. The fact is reasonably evident to all who thus read the testimonies cited.

Though the Scriptures alone may not "evidence" this fact to demonstration, yet, "diligently read," they show, by no equivocal marks, the progress which the Apostles made in the trine distribution of the ministerial office. Taking its full commission directly from Christ Himself, one of their early acts was, by prayer and the laying on of hands, to ordain a company of deacons, "men of honest report and full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." Another, of subsequent and more frequent occurrence, was the "ordaining of elders," or presbyters. And still another was the occasional appointment, as in the cases of Timothy and Titus, of general supervisors over territories of greater or less extent, who, whatever the powers or duties of the other orders may have been, certainly had for themselves that of ordaining to the ministry. Thus much is plain on the very face of the Scriptures. Whoever will "diligently read" them, will see that they make these things "evi-

dent." There must be a strange slowness to see, or a stranger dullness to read evidence, if thus much become not patent on a careful perusal of the New Testament. The evidence of what has been stated cannot reasonably be put out of sight or cross-questioned into self-contradiction.

And then, passing from the latest Scriptures, as the Writings of the Apostles, to the earliest of the "ancient authors," those who began to live before the last of the Apostles died—Clement of Rome, Polycarp of Smyrna, and Ignatius of Antioch—another thing is evident to all who "diligently read" them, which is, that to the three orders which we have seen the Apostles arranging in the distribution of the ministry, these "ancient authors" gave distinctive names. Whatever varying names had been used before, or however interchangeably some of those names may, at first, have been applied, these "ancient authors" had, in their day, settled upon three; and, having done so, used them with fixed and unchangeable application. They uniformly called those three grades "Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons." They speak of those three grades under these distinctively applied names, as one of the patent, out-standing facts of their time; and one of them, Ignatius, expressly declares that "there was no Church

without them ;” [Ep. ad Trall, Apostol. Fath., First Am. Ed., N. Y., 1810, p. 207] in other words, that, in all the Churches then known, there were Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Let any candid man “diligently read” the brief epistles of these three “ancient authors,” and I think it will be impossible for him to doubt their views of the Christian ministry as apostolically distributed and settled. Manifestly, no shadow of doubt rests on the point. These authors cast the light of a credible testimony back on the Scriptures, rendering unconcealably “evident” the fact, that the ministry, as arranged by the Apostles, was three-fold, and that its three grades had, in their day, come to be distinctively and fixedly known by the names of “Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons.” This is what the Preface to our ordinal asserts ; the “evidentness” of this fact to all “diligent readers” of those olden records—an evidentness which needs no argument to make it strike the eye. And this, with the other teachings of the Preface, makes up the confession of faith, on which I am prepared to stand, and which I here present instead of any long array of argument on the subject of the Christian ministry. I abstain from this argument, not because its difficulties would be embarrassing, but because one aim in this whole discussion is to avoid whatever might have the appearance of an

intrusion within the general department of Ecclesiastical Polity.

I close the present Chapter by stating and briefly answering two questions, which may arise out of what has been said.

(1.) If the Apostles distributed the ministry which they received into three orders ; and if their immediate successors received these three orders as the Apostolically arranged model of the ministry ; why do you not admit that this form of ministry is essential to the Being of the Church ; insomuch that bodies, destitute of this form of ministry, do not belong to the Church ?

To this question I reply ; I do not regard this form of the minitry as esssential to the being of the Church, first : because the Preface to our ordinal does not trace the threefold character of the ministry to Christ. It traces the distribution no farther back than to the Apostles. Second : because the Apostles themselves do not make it demonstrably certain that this threefold distribution was designed, by divine right, to confine the power of ordination to the FIRST grade, so that ordination by the second should, of itself, be null. And third : because some of the greatest writers, both Romanist and Protestant, have conceded that this power was not thus restricted by either Christ or His

Apostles. On this last point in the answer, a few references will not be out of place.

Dr. Cosin, then, to whom reference has already been made, as one of the most strenuous advocates of Episcopacy, writes thus: "I conceive that the power of ordination was restrained to Bishops rather by Apostolical practice and the perpetual custom and canons of the Church, than by any absolute precept that either Christ or His Apostles gave about it. Nor can I yet meet with any convincing argument to set it upon a more high and divine institution. . . . There have been," he adds, "both learned and eminent men, as well in former ages as in this, and even among the Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, who have held and maintained it for good and passable divinity, that presbyters have the intrinsical power of ordination *in actu primo*;" although, as he proceeds to say, in substance, "for the avoidance of schism, and the preserving of order and discipline in the Church," they have from the first "been restrained from exercising their power *in actu secundo*;" so that, now, the exercise of their power is irregular and uncanonical, though "not void simply" in itself "and in the nature of the thing." [Letter to Cordel. Hooker's Col. Phila. 1844. Pp. 230, 232, 233.] For this opinion he cites a catalogue of eminent Continental authors, both Romish and Protestant; and,

among the great lights of the English Church, Jewel, Field, Hooker and Mason.

Such, then, in addition to what runs through my whole argument, are my reasons for not regarding the Episcopal form of the ministry as essential to the being of the Church.

(2.) Why, then, do you receive and retain this form of the ministry ? If it be not essential, why do you not relinquish it, and thus be rid of one of the impediments in the way of a wider union among Protestants ?

To this question I reply : I do not relinquish this form of the ministry because the Apostles, in making this threefold distribution, acted as Christ's chosen agents, and in the exercise of the peculiar wisdom, which, doubtless, they derived from Him. The three orders, therefore, as to the fact of them, have the virtual approval of Christ. The fact of an Episcopacy, though not the extraordinary powers, with which some would invest it, has, ultimately, the approval of the divine Head of the Church. Although, therefore, a real necessity may have deprived some Christian bodies of the Episcopacy, without thereby putting them out of the visible Church, yet, a needless, voluntary relinquishment of this form of the ministry constitutes one of the forms of the fearful evil of schism. It breaks the order and discipline of the Church, and hazards

deeply much that is precious in the temporal and spiritual well-being of the visible body of Christ. The Episcopacy, though not essential to the very being of the Church, may yet be demonstrated by facts, as well as by arguments, to be important to the best welfare of the Church. Therefore it is, to say nothing of other reasons, that I do not relinquish the Episcopacy. Such an act, in me, would be a reckless wounding of the Saviour in the house of His friends.

CHAPTER II.

GOVERNMENT.

IN treating of the WELL-being of the visible Church, the subject of GOVERNMENT may, with propriety, be considered as following next to that of the MINISTRY. In entering on this subject of Church government, however, I wish to premise that I hope to discuss it in such a way as not to trench on the labors of those who are, or may be your teachers in the general study of Ecclesiastical Polity.

That there is such a thing as government in the visible Church, I need not argue. Government is as necessary to the well-being of the Church as it is to that of the State ; and the Word of God recognizes the fact, as well as the necessity, of this institute in the former as distinctly as in the latter. The Apostle's words, Heb. 13 : 17 : "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves," refer, not to Civil but to Ecclesiastical rule ; for, of those who hold this rule, he immediately adds : "they watch for your souls as they that must give

account." Civil rulers watch not for souls ; this watch is peculiar to rulers in the Church.

The language of the Apostle, moreover, refers to lawful, constituted rule ; not to rule accidentally acquired, or arbitrarily assumed. Those who hold this rule, hold it rightly ; as a rule, which the members of the Church may be called upon to "obey." As we saw in the last Chapter, "God hath set" his ministry "in the Church." The institution itself of a Christian ministry is divine ; as emphatically so, as that of civil government. If, in the State, "the powers that be are ordained of God," so especially are they in the Church.

But the rule here mentioned is vested, not in one, but in several. "Obey"—not him, but—"them that have this rule." The plain inference from this is—that, when Paul wrote, there was no one, recognized, temporal head of the Church. Its government was then vested in a greater or less number of rulers.

When we inquire further, however, whether the rule here recognized was vested in an order of ministers of superior grade, having under them ministers of lower grades, and governing the Churches under their care according to Christ's laws, as in an Episcopacy ; or was vested in a ministry, constituted on the principle of parity, having no inferior grades, and ruling the Churches

by their joint counsels ; as in Presbyterianism ; or was vested in each separate and equal pastor, ruling his own charge as a virtually independent Church ; as in Congregationalism : the Apostle's words do not decide. They simply decide that there is, in the Church, a divinely constituted government ; and that this government was administered—not by one, but—by a plurality of ministers. Our claim is that, “from the Apostles' time,” the ruling ministry of the Church has, as a matter of prevailing fact, had its base on an Episcopal platform ; and my purpose, in the present Chapter, is, to examine some of the chief advantages of an Episcopacy in the discipline of the Church of Christ, in promoting the WELL-being of this visible Body of our as yet Invisible Head.

Before entering, however, on this examination, I wish to throw off from the subject certain extraneous matters, by which it would be embarrassed.

Connected, then, with the Christian ministry, and originating in some fruitful source, there has, doubtless, been a tendency to augment its true power, and, at the same time, to diminish the just influence of the popular element in the Church : while, on the contrary, there has been, in connection with the popular element, and originating in some similar source, a tendency to enlarge its proper sphere of activity and to diminish the just influence of the

ministry. What we have heard of the usurpations of the Priesthood on the one hand, and what we have seen of popular extravagances on the other, render illustrations of this remark needless. It is more important to observe that, as to their fruitful source, both tendencies have sprung—not out of the Christian ministry itself, nor out of the true genius of a Christian people, but out of a corrupt human nature, and the circumstances in which it has been placed : and that, under these circumstances, those tendencies would have developed themselves under any form which the ministry could have assumed ; and under any type, short of a vastly higher sanctification, into which a Christian people could have been molded.

Again : looking at Episcopacy, as the Apostolical constitution of the ministry, we see that the later power of the Papacy, on the one hand, has tended to degrade Bishops below their primitive rank of equality with each other ; while, on the other hand, the popular element has tended to annihilate the Episcopal office itself. But, neither with these tendencies have I now any concern, save to disembarrass my subject of them at the outset. They are the tendencies of our corrupt nature under the the circumstances of which History takes note, and not of a true Episcopacy or of a Christian People in themselves considered. In treating the subject,

I must be allowed to rid myself of everything that belongs not properly and strictly to it. This subject has nothing to do with a Church MONARCHY as in Italy ; nor with a TITLED Prelacy as in England ; nor with CORRUPT and WORLDLY Bishops, as in various countries ; much less with here and there a MONSTER under a mitre, such as has occasionally been seen. These things belong not to Episcopacy itself ; they are but the historic incidents which, amid the changes of human society and out of the workings of a depraved nature, have been super-added to Episcopacy. Any form of the Christian ministry in human hands is liable to abuse. In such hands, Presbyterianism and Congregationalism may become as ambitious, as oppressive, and as corrupt as any other form of the ministry.

Why have we heard of such evils in an Episcopacy, so much more frequently than in any other form of the Christian ministry ? Because, in all ages since the Apostles, and in all countries throughout Christendom, the Church has, for the most part, had an Episcopacy in its ministry. There has been little but an Episcopacy, so far as the ministry is concerned, to meet and endure the deforming and corrupting influences of human society and of historic events. Episcopacy has come down to us through the struggles of the ages among the nations of the earth. It has come down through near two

thousand years of terrible experience ; through the disorders which attended the decline of the Roman Empire ; through the devastations which tracked the irruptions of the Barbarian hordes ; through the superstitions, heathen in origin, which sprang up during Mediæval darkness ; through the strange influences which molded it during the Feudal ages and under the Feudal system ; through the blood and fires and fearful excitements of the great Reformation ; through the fierce contests in England between a political Church Establishment, and strenuous Puritan Dissent ; and finally, in our own land, through the hot passions and keen prejudices engendered by our severance from foreign rule, as well ecclesiastical as political. As the union of the Church with the State at the conversion of Constantine, the introduction of heathen superstitions into the Christian body, the power of the Feudal system, and the influence of the Middle Ages, generally tended to corrupt the ancient Episcopacy ; so the terrible excitements of the Reformation, of the Puritan struggle, and of our American Revolution, have, doubtless, tended to confirm those corruptions, on the principle that what is fiercely and bloodily assailed, seeks, as men are naturally constituted, to defend and preserve itself ; and thereby takes deeper root in the soil from which its eradication is sought. Into all

these dreadful strifes and changes, then, of the ages and nations of Christendom, springing, as they have, out of the all-controlling movements of the world, Episcopacy has been carried by the resistless current on which all human things have been borne. Those strifes and changes mark the steps in the slow, sublime movements of Christian civilization towards a higher and more perfect ideal. They have, doubtless, stamped on the character and institutions of men some dark lines and features, so deep that centuries have not yet been able entirely to wear them out ; and I think it safe to say that any form of the Christian ministry, coming down through the same long ages, and through the same strange series of changes and of influences, would have developed evils and abuses, if not identical, at least equal with those which have been exhibited in the descent of the ancient Episcopacy to our times. Under any other constitution of the ministry nothing could have prevented the result but Pentecostal displays of grace, perpetuated from age to age, and making the Church the resistless molder of the world's character, instead of leaving the world to act in reality as a potent modifier of the character of the Church ; and with such Pentecostal displays of grace, had God seen fit to vouchsafe them, the ancient Episcopacy itself would have come down unabused, unharmed ; and the outcry

from the mouth of the world, and the record from the pen of history against the abuses to which it has been subject, would have been unheard, unwritten. From the close of the Second to that of the Eighteenth Century, Episcopacy has been subjected to the severest of tests, and carried through the most pernicious of influences. During the reign of those long ages, it was never, as a whole, in a position favorable to the development of its true character, and to the exertion of its true power, uncorrupt and unfettered.

We must, therefore, set aside from the subject all the considerations to which I have adverted, and look at Episcopacy in its own proper character, as a constitution of the Christian ministry on the basis of an imparity of orders, and securing to the highest of those orders—not the whole, but—a high place of rule in the Church. We must look at Episcopacy as it ought to be, as it was designed to be, and as in various times and places it has been; humble and holy, world-renouncing and laborious, and amid all, ruling the Church according to Christ's laws. I say, "according to Christ's laws;" for, though the Church has power to make other regulations for the outward order of worship, for the transaction of business, and for the management of temporalities, provided these regulations are harmonious, or not inconsistent with the

Scriptures, yet, any government, whether in Episcopal or in other hands, which attempts to rule the Church in spiritual matters, on the basis of any other laws than those which Christ has left, is a usurpation and a tyranny, unlawful in the sight of God. I repeat, then, we must look at Episcopacy as it ought to be, as it was designed to be, and as it often has been ; imbued with the mind of Christ, and ruling the Church according to the laws of Christ. It is no more than right to look at a thing in itself, separate from the abuses of which it has incidentally been the subject. When they fall into wicked hands, the best things have the worst abuses. Hence that best of rules, “do all to the glory of God,” has been made practically to sanctify the most dreadful enormities ; even to the blood and fires, the racks and brain-destroying tortures of the Inquisition !

In proceeding now to the subject of this Chapter, I do not propose to treat it in all its details, but shall confine myself to what I consider the two main functions of the Christian ministry, viz. : to rule the Church by the Discipline of ORDER, and to guide the Church by the Discipline of TRUTH. These two, Scriptural Order and Scriptural Teaching, are of prime importance to the WELL-being of the Church.

I. First, then, let us look at Episcopacy as a Discipline of ORDER :

In the visible Church, government is a necessary function. Although no one form or constitution of government can be used as a mark by which to determine the comprehension of the Church, yet as visible, no part of the Church has ever been without some such form, or constitution. The very fact of an ecclesiastical organization implies the existence, and rests on the necessity, of government in the Church.

The main advantage of a simple Episcopacy, as a Discipline of Order, becomes manifest in its UNITING power. In his true character, a bishop appears—not as a mere man in the ministry, who, by peculiar personal qualities, or by some accidental circumstances, has acquired superior influence, and is thus, perhaps, an object of jealousy or of envy, but—as the regularly constituted and cheerfully acknowledged superior of the clergy and people under his care. By their own choice he should be, and in our country he is, in an office which they regard as having come down from the Apostles, and around which, therefore, cluster their best sentiments of filial reverence and deferential regard. Their submission to his lawful rule is cordial ; free, so far as our earthly lot will admit, from the human feelings of jealousy and envy. In this character

the Episcopacy tends not to degrade the lower orders of the ministry, for they are its main helps in laboring for Christ ; nor to depress the just influence of the popular element, for on that it depends for concurrence and efficiency in those labors ; but simply to act as a uniting bond to both clergy and people ; enforcing the rules of law and administering the discipline of law, fraternally and wisely ; allaying dissentions and composing strifes, with the best prospects of cheerful acquiescence from both, and of keeping the whole body from the extremes of clerical encroachment, on the one hand, and of popular excess on the other. The best interests, as well as the high duty of such an Episcopacy, lie in the harmony, peace and love of the whole body of ministers and people under its care. Ambitions, usurpations, stretches of power, are possible evils : but they are possible under all systems in the hands of men ; and would be as possible in a Democracy of the Church as they are found actually to be in a Democracy of the State. They are the evils of our nature ; and no system can be kept wholly safe from their entrance. A simple, primitive Episcopacy is doubtless as safe from them as any system, committed to the guardianship of men ; while its power to promote harmony, peace and love in obedience to venerable and constituted “rule,” is manifold greater than that of any other.

The objection to this view, that the testimony of history is adverse to it ; that, according to this testimony, Episcopacy, from its own tendency, developed itself into the ambitions and usurpations and despotism of the Papacy, appears to me without weight. Let us look at this a little further.

What first transformed a simple, primitive bishop into an archbishop, the archbishop into a patriarch, and, finally, the patriarch into a pope ? Not, as I apprehend, the inherent tendency of the ancient Episcopacy itself, but the adventitious circumstances with which it became needlessly implicated. It is inconsistent with my plan to enter at large into the history of that development ; but I think it would be easy to demonstrate, from recorded facts, the following brief summary :

The development of the Papacy, it may be admitted, commenced at a very early period under those worldly and corrupting influences which, flowing in upon the Church from the ancient heathenism, and then acting both upon Christian doctrine and upon ecclesiastical polity, exaggerating the mystery of sacraments, and abusing the principle of a voluntary support to the ministry into a hoarding of enormous wealth to the Church, prepared the way for all that followed. The process, however, was mightily accelerated by the accession of Constantine the Great to the throne.

and his real or pretended conversion to Christianity ; and it was peculiarly favored by his subsequent transfer of the imperial government from Rome to Constantinople. That transfer was fatal not only to the State but also to the Church. While the imperial head was busy at his new and distant Capital, it left the ecclesiastical aspirant at Rome comparatively free to avail himself of the immense advantages which he found in the old metropolis of the world for pushing, unobserved and unopposed, his subtle scheme of spiritual despotism. Moreover, at his conversion, Constantine had brought in, not exactly the modern union of Church and State, but a sort of heathen patronage of the Church by the State. As was natural in his circumstances, he adopted Christianity as the religion of his, in the main, still unconverted Empire, and sought to make himself to religion in the State what the bishop was to religion in the Church. That political patronage was, not in the imperial intention, but in its perverted use, the great misfortune of the Christian ages. Yet it was a misfortune, incurred, not from the inherent tendency of the ancient Episcopacy, but from the abused policy of an emperor, hardly disenthralled from his once dark bondage under heathenism. One of the worst evils of the misfortune lay in this, that it gave opportunity to the intensified

working of the corrupting power already in action. Thenceforward, as the long ages rolled by, the political influences of the State, co-operating with those of the Church, both working in all the great cities of Christendom, especially in its powerful metropolis, and both instigated by the superstitions which had been previously engendered of heathen darkness, favored the rapid exaggeration of the simple, primitive Episcopacy, and expedited the passage of the once laborious and suffering Bishop of Rome, along his career from one grade and title to another, and from one degree of political power to a higher; until, finally, an office, which was at first held by a humble laborer and sufferer for Christ, came to be filled by a triple-crowned MONARCH of the Church, to whom even emperors were fain to pay homage.

That the corruptions of the Church, to which I have now adverted, were contracted from the lingering and scarcely latent heathenism of the Roman Empire, while becoming and after it became, nominally Christian, it will not, I suppose, by Protestants, be denied; and that it was through these corruptions that the simple Episcopacy of elder times was gradually perverted, and the Bishop of Rome finally enabled to enforce his claim to universal jurisdiction, is a truth as little likely, in such quarters, to be questioned. It was under

favor of those growing corruptions that the ambitious prelates of that wealthy and powerful city were able stretch prerogative after prerogative, to secure from weaker prelates concession after concession, and to take, by the side of temporal princes, step after step, until at last a fortunate successor reached the summit at which his predecessors had been aiming, and sate, **PONTIFEX MAXIMUS**, claiming to be acknowledged as temporal and spiritual head of the Christian world! Against this usurpation many bishops, from first to last, contended. The result was not an Episcopacy naturally, or of its own innate tendency, developing itself into a Papacy, but a pope, finally succeeding, through the power of his position, in lording it over a once simple Episcopacy.

The early decay of scriptural piety, consequent on the growth of these corruptions, must be regarded as the true secret of his success. Had the spirit of that piety continued to live, as in the first ages, it would have been impossible either to corrupt the ancient Episcopacy, or to place the foot of a Roman bishop on the neck of a subject Christendom. As a strong corroboration of this, it may be remarked that, so soon as the spirit of that piety, intelligent and scriptural, not superstitious and ascetic, began to revive at the dawn and the sunrise of the Reformation, the usurpations and

prerogatives of the Pope began to be questioned ; that, ultimately, his iron yoke was broken off throughout all Protestant realms ; and that, in England, where the Reformation was conducted with closest reference to primitive precedent, primitive Episcopacy at once came forward, if not wholly in its proper character, at least to its proper post ; abounding once more in wondrous laborers for Christ, and in wondrous martyrs for His Truth. The strength of this remark is increased by the fact, that nothing higher than Episcopacy was, or could be, retained in England, even while settling its ecclesiastical affairs under a royally-favored Protestantism. Had the attempt been made, while reforming the English Church of her doctrinal errors and of her corruptions in ceremony, to retain even the most modified allegiance or subordination to the Papacy in government, the religious spirit, which awoke and lived in the light of the Bible, would have been aroused to the extreme of resistance, and have swept away not only the Papacy, but all traces of the Episcopacy itself. The Episcopacy of England was the highest point, which the waters of that purifying flood could have left standing, so resistlessly does a scripturally enlightened piety set against every form and modification of the Papal system.

Moreover, with all the political and corrupting

influences, and with all the amazing wealth and power, which I have mentioned, and with which his mighty metropolis surrounded him, the Bishop of Rome did not succeed in fixing himself on that splendid pinnacle of his ambition, till after ages of desperate conflict with other Bishops of Christendom, in their resistance to his unscriptural claims. And even when he did finally succeed, in despite of such resistance, it was not because he was BISHOP, but because his see was ROME, the metropolis of Christendom,—the central heart of the wealth, and power, and, for a while, of the civil influence, of a fatally corrupted Empire. The idea, that ancient bishops, prompted by an inherent tendency in their office, conspired either openly or secretly, either consciously or unconsciously, to lift, or be the instruments of lifting, one of their own official equals, step by step, and age after age, to a throne and a tiara, is, to my mind, the wildest of chimeras. They struggled long and earnestly against the strides of a mammoth power, in which Christian office had become blended with a strange concentration of all the baleful influences of this world. Suppose that the Bishop of Rome had been but a presbyter among presbyters, with no bishops on earth ; yet, by virtue of his position, a kind of successional moderator over his brethren, a successive “*Primus inter pares*,” or first among equals ; I

hold that the mighty influences of the ages, through which his office passed down, would inevitably have made him a Pope, if not in name, yet in fact and effect. The truth is ; in their real, spiritual independence, as official equals, bishops are, and ever have been, the most strenuous opponents of Popery. If, then, they, with all the authority and influence of their ancient and venerated office, were unable to resist the strides of the Politico-Ecclesiastical giant in Rome, what could a less influential band of Church-officers have done in their struggle with that evil genius of Christianity ? No : this tendency to an augmentation of power, and of the abuses of power, sprang not out of the ancient Episcopacy itself. Had the Church never been married to the State ; had political and pecuniary influence, favored by the corruptions of a darkling age, never submerged that simple and primitive institute in the depths of their own dead sea ; the Papacy had never existed. Most of all things, and with the best of reasons, the Popes fear a spiritual, independent Episcopacy, filled with official equals. Hence, that partial approach to such an Episcopacy, which the restored English Church exhibits, has ever been an object of State-jealousy to the Church monarch at Rome. Were there no such Episcopacy in the world, Rome, I fear, would reign in comparative freedom from solicitude ; and her

hope would sensibly brighten of once more wield-ing the sceptre of a universal dominion.

I think it then safe to say : that Episcopacy did not, from its own, original and inherent tendency, develop itself into Popery ; and that it is not now, from itself tending back to that extreme. Enough has been said to make us receive, with confidence, the conclusions ; that unsanctified human nature, under all circumstances, and especially under such as history records, does tend violently to the Papal corruption ; that political influence, when married to the Church, tends most forcibly to the same result ; and that superstition and doctrinal error, as we have seen with our own saddened eyes, may run, with unmatched velocity, along the beaten track both of our straying nature and of a merely baptized political ambition : but, that simple, primitive Episcopacy itself is not plagued with this tendency more than any other pious and exemplary Christian ministry. In ruling the Church, such an Episcopacy is a happy mean between the Papal tyranny on the one hand, and popular misrule on the other. Its character happily fits it for such a uniting position. Popery accumulates and absorbs power into itself ; the unrestrained popular element disperses and finally destroys it : a simple Episcopacy represses both extremes, and binds together the body of Christ's members in as much of har-

mony, peace and love as are compatible with the lot of Christ's religion in the hands of our common humanity. Both in individuals and in society, our nature tends to extremes ; and when, with an enlarged and enlightened view, we look upon the ruinous character of the extremes, into which, on either hand, it has actually run, it must be evident to all judicious minds, that the Church needs just such a binding influence in its ruling authority as that which resided in the ancient Episcopacy, before blind, worldly policy, aided by the baptized superstitions of heathenism, gathered around it the trappings of earthly power and place and wealth ; and while, like its Master and from simple love to Him and to the souls of men, it was willing to walk on its rounds of labor, and to be, in temporal things, more unprovided than the foxes in their holes and the birds of the air in their nests. God hasten the day when the spirit of the ancient institute shall return, not only in here and there a humble, holy bishop, but in all who bear his office ; and when, under their wise and paternal sway, the Church shall be ruled in harmony, peace and love, according to the simple laws of Christ, and in all the prosperousness of spiritual life and growth.

II. I pass now to the second point in the subject, viz : Episcopacy as a discipline of TRUTH.

The influence of the ministry in doctrine, preaching, and example (for in all these it becomes a TEACHING institute), is the most important which the Christian Church-ruler can exert. It is Christ's chief instrumentality in saving lost men, and, in using this instrumentality for the well-being of the visible Body, a scriptural Bishop occupies a post of special advantage. In his true character, as humble and holy, laborious and Christ-like, a teaching Bishop comes in contact with all classes in the Church, clergy and people, old and young, under most favorable circumstances ; not merely as a good man in the ministry, but clothed with the authority and surrounded with the reverence which attach themselves to his ancient and peculiar office ; the recognized and venerated teacher, not of a few, but of the whole flock committed to his care ; the grave and honored expounder of the doctrine of Christ to the widely-spread clergy and people of his charge. Taking the Church as a whole, the comparatively small number of Bishops, and the greater publicity of their teachings and example, keep them more strictly in the eye of scrutiny, and render it more easy to compare their doctrine and conduct with the standards of truth and duty, than, in the case of a numerous body of clergy, each confined, ordinarily, within the limits of a narrower and more private sphere,

would be practicable. It is true, that even a Bishop may teach error and practice wickedness ; but so, with even greater facility, may any other minister. This, therefore, makes nothing against our view. Take two preachers of the Gospel, equally able and learned, equally holy and exemplary, in all essential respects alike, save that the one is a Bishop and the other not a Bishop, and it would be impossible so to extend and diversify the labors and influence of the latter as to make them equal in power and efficiency on the spiritual well-being of the flock of Christ, with the equally extended labors and the equally diversified influence of the former. He has not the same point of advantage from which to act. He carries not with him, in the peculiar genius of his office, the same silent but living and deep-felt power for good. And this is said, not by way of depreciating the blessed power of the able and holy man of God in any Non-Episcopal ministry, but to show that it is simply impossible to clothe him with that peculiar power for good, which invests the equally able and equally holy man of God in the office of a Bishop. In his doctrine and in his teaching, in his example and in his active measures for the extension of religion, there is a peculiarity of influence in such a Bishop, which no other minister of Christ can attain ; a peculiarity

which grows, not out of the man, but out of his office, and out of the adaptedness with which that office meets certain great and permanent susceptibilities of our common nature. Say what we will, we cannot take out of our nature the salutary feelings of deference and respect, with which it stands in the presence of just and fitting and rightly-constituted superiority of official rank ; "salutary," I say, provided it be a superiority, not so high as to inspire an awful and painful sense of distance, nor yet so low as to seem a mere gift from the people, to be treated with familiarity, if not contempt. In spite of theories, our nature dreads the monotony of an unbroken level. A beautiful and harmonious ascent of being and of orders marks all God's works in Heaven and on earth, and it is impossible to extinguish the feelings which spontaneously spring up in the manifested presence of this Divine constitution of things. A pure Gospel and the religion which it embodies, spread to the best advantage from such a Bishop as I have described. He has the best opportunities for impressing the holy character of Christ and His Gospel on wide masses of men and upon all the living institutes and permanencies of the Church. The point of influence from which he acts gives him the best means of "driving away from the Church all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word" He

is not so far from his clergy and people as that he cannot see and measure error and its evils with his own eyes, and remove them by such means as are wisest and best ; nor yet so nearly on an equality with them in point of conceded authority, as to strip his discipline of its just power for effect. Both in teaching the truth and in repressing error, he wields the happiest instrumentality for good. He concentrates confidence, veneration, love ; he awakens respect, reverence, obedience ; he promotes harmony, zeal, action ; and he does all with a peculiarity of success, to which no one, under other forms of the ministry, can attain ; to which no one in the lower orders of an episcopally constituted ministry can attain ; which springs from the fact that there are lower orders in this ministry, and which, in truth, is partly but the power of these lower orders working upwards, and becoming manifest in the results of this benignly effective Presidency.

It will be well, before closing this Chapter, to notice a modification to the objection against Episcopacy, which has already occupied so much of our time. It may be thus stated : The office of a Bishop has too much power, too strong attractions, for the mere worldly heart in its love of authority and official consideration ; and, therefore, Bishops are more apt to be worldly in spirit and corrupt

in doctrine, and hence, more baleful in their influence on the cause of spiritual religion, than a ministry constituted on the basis of official parity. To the objection in this shape I reply : if the Episcopal office were, indeed, and intrinsically, identified with the pomp and circumstance, the wealthy endowment and political power, which, in England, have been associated with it, there might be weight in the objection. But this is not so. These corrupting attractions belong not to the office, but to the circumstances with which a false policy has surrounded it. The love of power is innate, ineradicable, and, unless under the control of divine grace, inordinate. To the human heart office is nothing, save as it is a means of acquiring, and an instrument for exercising, the power, which it loves ; and even as such means and instrument, it is, perhaps, of less importance than many suppose. The main sources of power lie within a man, and when the spring is deep and copious, if it do not find, it will force, a channel for its gushings ; if it do not meet, it will make, an office, into which it may vault and ride on high among the people. And when human ambition makes an office for itself, it is apt to make it somewhat higher than God, in His wisdom, has seen fit to ordain. As I have already shown, Archbishops, Patriarchs, and Popes, are not naturally developed

Episcopacy, but man's aspirings, vaulting above primitive order ; and, had that order been Presbyterial only, the leap upwards would have been quite as possible, and perhaps somewhat higher. So far as the theory of the Episcopal office is concerned, it may be said, that, where no due gradation in the ministry is established and conceded, the ambitions which live deep in our nature, and the difficulty of maintaining simple equality among masses of men of varying abilities, tastes and opportunities, will be more likely to engender strifes after superiority of place and power, than where such gradation in the ministry is established and conceded, and where the very fixedness of institutions tends, so far as anything can tend, to generate a spirit of quiet submission and contentment of mind under the reign of lawful and acknowledged order.

The best illustration both of the theory and of the working of true Episcopacy may be gathered from the early ages of the Church. What, then, was a Bishop designed to be ; and what was he in the pristine days of his office ? Why, simply, the most conspicuous follower of Christ, as well in poverty and sufferings, as in the abounding of his toils for the souls of men ; the very front mark, in the Christian army, to the arrow of the destroyer and the sword of the persecutor ! “ *Nolo Episco-*

pari" was then the utterance, not of a counterfeit modesty, but, of an honest heart, speaking out of its deepest sensibilities, and meaning just this: that, "if the Master would mercifully excuse His servant, he would prefer laboring in some less perilous post of duty." The Episcopal office was not sought by the worldly or the ambitious then. It could not be urged successfully upon any but those, who were "constrained by the love of Christ" and the souls of men to "count all things but loss," and to be counted but as "the offscouring of all things." Then, the influence of the office was not corrupting but purifying. It drew into that front ministry none but the choicest of the fine gold; and it drew that gold thither but to refine it still more perfectly, even as in a furnace of fire! Those days will never return; but the time may come,—God send it soon—when the office of a Bishop shall have nothing to attract the heart but superior opportunities for doing good in the salvation of men amid more abounding toils, privations and hardships, endured from love to the dear Saviour of our souls, and to those for whom He so freely shed His own precious blood. The idea that this office must be dignified by surrounding it with an adventitious array of wealth, and titles, and places of honor, seems like an imputation on the lowly Jesus; a mere earthly conception of the true dignity of a

Bishop ; as if the work of Christ and the office of one of His chief ambassadors did not shine brightest and most heavenly when seen, like the stars, at night ; surrounded, if need be, by the darkness of poverty, and of a wicked world's frown ! True Bishops need not court either poverty or persecution ; neither should they ignobly shun them ; and, least of all, should they covet equality with the great of this world in the external circumstances of wealth, place and power. Their influence will be most extended, most benign, when, in character and labors, they are most like Christ ; and when they partake most largely in the spirit of that Apostle, who "rejoiced in his sufferings for the brethren, and in filling up what was behind of the afflictions of Christ for His body's sake, which is the Church."

Such, then, is the Episcopacy which a scriptural teacher may well dare to advocate ; an Episcopacy separated from what belongs not to it, save in common with other systems ; from what springs out of a corrupt nature and corrupting historic influences. It is as proper to limit our views to such an Episcopacy, as, in estimating the value of other forms of the ministry, to suppose those who fill them to be good men. In estimating the value of any constitution of the ministry, no one would go on the

supposition that its incumbents were bad men, or needlessly embarrassed by obstacles hostile to their proper usefulness. We have viewed Episcopacy as it ought to be ; as it was in its pristine age ; as it has been since, in numerous happy instances ; as it is now, in many instances not less happy ; and as we doubt not it will be every where, when the abuses of the ages shall have been all swept away, and when the Episcopacy of elder times shall be seen opening its rich stores of spiritual blessing and pouring them into the lap of a thankful Church and of a once thankless world ; pre-eminently good in both its offices, that of ruling the Church by the discipline of ORDER, and that of guiding the Church by the discipline of TRUTH ; ruling the Church on the middle ground between the two extremes of papal tyranny and popular misrule ; and guiding Christians into the way of life both by “driving away hurtful and strange error,” and by giving its best effect to saving, divine Truth.

We have taken but a partial view of a great subject ; leaving the details of Church government, as distributed between the ministry and the other members, to be treated under the more general head of Ecclesiastical Polity, and confining ourselves to the single topic of the advantages of

Episcopacy in ministering to the WELL-being of the Church ; and even on this single topic we have said but little, though, I would hope, enough to commend this institution to the favorable regards of all spiritually enlightened minds.

CHAPTER III.

WORSHIP.

AFTER what was said in the last Chapter of Government, as necessary to the well-being of the visible Church, we may next turn our thoughts to WORSHIP as needful to the same end.

Worship, in its outward manifestations, like government in its various forms, has always and everywhere been a function of the visible Church. No one form of worship, indeed, can be used as a mark for ascertaining the true comprehension of the Church ; nevertheless, no part of the Church has ever been without worship in some form ; though it were a form without words. The Church, in truth, is essentially a worshiping Body.

The requisites to all acceptable worship are stated with admirable precision by Him who spake as “never man spake.” “The true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.” All acceptable worship must unite these two qualities. It must be “in spirit,” as distinguished from mere outward form and ceremony, mere external

offerings and sacrifices ; and as implying an inward and spiritual act, an earnest engagement of the mind and heart, the strong spiritual action of the soul itself. It must also be "in truth," as involving sincerity, and as opposed to hypocrisy and to all mistaken or artificial excitement of the mind ; as being aided by the Spirit of truth, and based on right views of Him who is the Truth, and of His Word as a revelation of His truth. All who thus "worship the Father in spirit and in truth," are accepted of Him, and none others can be. "He seeketh such to worship Him," and with none others can He be pleased. All outward forms of worship, if vacated of this spirit and this truth, are as smoke in His nostrils, an offense to His eye, and an insult to His ear. He "is a Spirit," and looketh right through all outward acts and forms, and seeth at a glance whether they are, like Himself, filled with spirit and with truth ; or whether, like the hypocrite, the formalist, or the visionary, they are full of the empty mockery of the knee, the lip and the eye, or but as the glare of a false, deceitful fire.

The forms in which worship is offered are not unimportant. The silent worship of the soul is, indeed, a sublime offering, and goes up to God as an "incense of a sweet-smelling savor." Nevertheless, in the action of the Church visible, it can

never reasonably take the place of a worship expressing itself in some appropriate outward form. It is, therefore, an inquiry of some interest, in what form this worship may best be offered? Unless we adopt the practice of a silent worship, some outward form the Church must necessarily have. Which form, then, conduces most to the well-being of the Church, the Liturgical or the Extemporaneous?

I rest the subject on the ground of comparative merit, because the Bible does not, by explicit precept, enjoin either the one or the other of these forms. This absence of binding Scriptural authority for any one form of public worship is so manifest, that the American—following herein the English—Preface to the Book of Common Prayer, has laid it down as the ground of one of its rules, that “the particular forms of Divine Worship are things, in their own nature, indifferent and alterable, and so acknowledged.” Any organized visible Church, in settling the question for itself, may adopt either form; and, having so done, may alter or change the one for the other, provided, in such alteration or change, it act, as our Preface expresses it, “by common consent and authority.”

Following general custom, our Church has enjoined worship by a Liturgy: and until, “by common consent and authority,” this form be altered

or abolished, it is not admissible for us, as a Church, to use any other form than that prescribed.

It is needless to say that worship by such a form may be offered, as God requires, "in spirit and in truth." This no candid mind will deny. The fact that the worship of the Temple and of the Synagogue was by such a form, and that the holy Jesus was in the habit of joining it in both places, forever settles this point; and should satisfy all who object that worship by a prescribed form is opposed or unfriendly to worship "in spirit and in truth." Either such a form is congruous with these interior requisites, or Christ has sanctioned by His example what by His words He has condemned.

In comparing the two forms now in view, it is not necessary to sympathize in many of the strictures which are passed upon Extemporaneous Worship. We may even freely admit that, following simple nature, taught and aided by the Spirit, the heart is strongly inclined to pour forth its emotions and desires, its faith and love, into the bosom and upon the ear of God in the unstudied language of gushing earnestness and affection; and that worship thus offered is highly acceptable to Him "that looketh on the heart." We may take this view without touching the real merits of the question whether, in the public worship of the Church, the advantages of a previously enjoined mode prepon-

derate over those of an extemporeaneous form ? This question must be settled—not by reference to what simple nature, influenced by divine grace, would prompt the heart to do by itself, but—by reference to what is demanded by the complex and, in its simplest form, artificial structure of the visible Church ; by the involved and multiform interests and influences of its social organization.

In examining this point, the view generally taken—as in the treatise of the philosophic Paley—virtually supposes the mind of the Church to be, in the main, at rest ; in a state of religious repose, which renders it a fit subject for the just development of the comparative excellences of the two modes of worship. And if the mind of the Church could always be, and be kept, in such a state, this would be the true light in which to study the subject. But, the mind of the Church is not always, nor when it is can it always be kept, in such a state. From within itself, and from without, it is often excited, put in motion, and driven, if not into progress, at least towards a change. In these states of mind, too, it may happen that, so far as the majority are affected, theological views are shifting, doctrines are in transition, faith is unsettled, and customs are upheaved. These, therefore, are the periods most proper for testing the comparative value of the two modes of public worship

in the Church. I shall look at the subject in the light of such a state of things. Such a state now exists, and has long existed ; and it has affected, not one part only, but the whole of Protestant Christendom. We may add, that—except when its spiritual life has either become stagnant amid the corruptions of error, superstition and worldliness, or been raised to a point of purity and power seldom if ever realized on earth—the Church is never free from such a state in the agitations and tendencies of what may be termed its general mind.

In approaching now the point of comparison before us, let us endeavor to get a distinct view of the true attitude of the devotional mind in all public worship.

When engaged in such worship, then, the devotional mind is—not in the intellectually critical, but—in the spiritually receptive state. In its devout longings after heavenly things, it is like a hungry, confiding babe, longing for nourishment and “opening its mouth wide” that it may be “filled.” In relation to the leader of its devotions, it is not disposed to pause and criticise his utterances, but rather inclined to follow and speed them upwards with its heartfelt “AMENS.” The really praying mind instinctively shrinks from the metaphysical difficulty of carrying on two distinct, simul-

taneous trains of thought, the one devotional, the other critical. It cannot stop to question each successive utterance of its leader, to compare each with the standard of truth, and then to judge whether or not it cover a heresy. It is inclined to repose with confidence on his soundness, to catch his utterances as they flow warm from his heart and his lips, and with a constant and impulsive, though silent, "Amen," to wing them upwards to the Throne on the swelling importunity of united prayer. This, in all public worship, is the true attitude of the devotional mind. Any other attitude is unfitting the occasion. It would turn what should be the offering of a pure worship into a training of the mere critical intellect. I say—not merely that such should be, but—that such is the attitude of the devotional mind ; the attitude which that mind seeks and maintains in public worship. When it changes this attitude for some other, it ceases to be a devotional, and becomes a critical, speculative, or discursive mind ; or a mind in some other attitude, equally foreign from the subject of true worship.

I. As acting, then, on this attitude of the devotional mind, let us look, first, at the tendency of an EXTEMPORANEOUS mode of worship during such a period of movement in the mind of the Church as that which we have been contemplating.

A deep, perhaps a silent and unnoticed current of speculation and threatened change is running through the ecclesiastical mind. The minister of a congregation, worshiping extemporaneously, falls into this current, moves with it, and is, in fact, one of the few who, either intelligently or by sympathetic influence, directs its course. If, now, he be conscious of the change which is taking place in the mind of the Church, and in his own mind, and if withal he be an honest and a bold man, he will utter his new convictions in his public devotions ; and thus, if those new convictions belong to what his Church-standards deem heterodoxy, he may be detected ; and, unless his congregation sympathize with him, he may, by an act of discipline, be removed from his post of influence. But, if he be at first without any distinct consciousness of the change which is passing in his own mind ; and if, though an honest, he be yet a timid man ; or if, as it may possibly happen, he be a man of unscrupulous conscience, who knows what he is doing, and who intends, so far as his influence can go, to lead the Church away from its fixed and ancient landmarks of faith and doctrine ; and who, in the strength and fervor of his new convictions, deems it right to effect his great and, as he regards it, good end by politic and artful means ; in any of these cases a plain and easy way lies open for his

entrance. While his people are in the attitude of the devotional mind, looking upon their leader in worship as also their teacher in doctrine, confiding in his guidance of their devotions, unsuspectingly drinking at the stream of worshiping thought as it flows from his lips, appropriating his utterances as their own, and sending them up with their silent "Amens" to God ; while they are waiting upon him in this spirit, he at first, either unconsciously or by design, omits, not only in teaching, but especially in worship, all reference to those old and distinctive truths of Christianity, in which the ancient doctrinal standards of his Church had been set up.

What follows ? In a few years these distinctive truths lose, by simple neglect, their practical importance and hold on the mind ; a strange dimness comes over the spiritual perceptions of the flock, and all that once constituted, in their view, the peculiarity of the Christian faith, lies, at length, as if under a dense and distant fog. And now, as his own convictions deepen and strengthen, and fill him with the impulses of their new-born power, or, as he observantly finds the way prepared for further movement, he yields to those worshiping convictions, and begins to advance the new views to which he had been led ; not, at first, in a full and startling dress, but in a softened and unsuspicious form. The devotional mind has already become

accustomed to the absence of the old forms of faith and doctrine : it now becomes familiar with the presence of the new phase of theology, exhibiting, as yet, much that is plausible and apparently compatible with accredited views. The way is thus prepared for a still further movement. Under the growing change which has seized it, the mind of the people becomes distinctly conscious of a positive dislike of what it can recall of the old orthodoxy. It therefore endures, with something like a relish, the fuller and bolder invectives against that system which began to be hazarded even in teaching, and which, perhaps unconsciously, partake somewhat of the extravagance of caricature. In this state of mind, the full result of the movement has approached its birth. The work of change becomes complete, and both minister and people finish their transition by passing, openly and avowedly, into some one of the new, erroneous, and perhaps fatal theologic systems of the day. A minority, it may be, remain steadfast in their old faith ; but, this only insures a new division in the Church, the organization of a new and feeble congregation, and, peradventure, an embittered legal contest about the temporalities, which such a division involves. Which way soever this contest ends, the body of the congregation is led off from its former faith ; and if the change be from truth to

error, the Christian doctrine is either partially, or totally subverted, and the living efficiency of the Gospel, either seriously, or totally nullified.

This view makes—not against the private liberty of any man to form, or to alter his personal faith on his personal responsibility to God, but—against the stability of the public and settled faith of the Church. It is intended to show the operation, under given circumstances, of the extemporeaneous mode of worship ; and it explains a large class of facts, familiar to multitudes of the past and present age. If the faith of Churches, organized on the Congregational or Independent basis, have been more frequently overthrown by the influence, or co-operation, of this mode of worship than that of other bodies worshiping in the same mode, it is, as I infer, simply because the Congregational or Independent system of government makes each organized, worshiping assembly a separate Church, with the powers of government and discipline complete in itself, and subject to little or no controlling, or even advisory oversight from other and similarly organized bodies. The tendency, or liability, to such a subversion of the faith evidently exists wherever this mode of worship is adopted ; and the results of the tendency, or liability, are exhibited, with more or less distinctness, through all the spreadings of the system.

II. In the second place, let us look at the tendency of public worship by a FORM, previously settled and enjoined, as acting on the devotional mind of the Church, during the same period of excitement and threatened change.

By way of preparation for such a view, it is but right to state the only ground on which an enlightened Christian will attempt the defense of such a form. For a form, in the abstract, such a Christian can have no over-weening fondness. His defense must rest on the character of the particular form adopted. He will demand that such a form, besides being constructed on just logical principles, and in conformity with those of a simple, pure taste ; besides comprehending all the ordinary wants of a worshiping assembly, and providing reasonably for all special occasions of public petition and thanks to God ; besides being filled with true and ennobling, attractive and inspiring views of the Most High, and with the very spirit of humble and reverential, fervent and affectionate devotion from man, shall embody all the great and essential, unchanging and saving verities of the Gospel, free from any dangerous admixtures of human error. A Liturgy need not be filled with dogmatic theology, nor be modeled on the ordinary forms of instruction, nor consist of prayers turned into preaching. It need not recognize doubtful, or

unessential points in divinity ; nor present even the essential, fundamental verities of the Gospel in a systematic, or controversial dress ; but it should be based on all these great varities as its foundation ; it should use them all devotionally ; it should work them all into its confessious and petitions, its thanksgivings and intercessions, its ascriptions and adorations, its anthems and hymns ; in the power and savor and prevalency of them all, it should ascend, and seek to make the worshiping heart ascend, to the throne, and the ear, and the heart of Him who loveth the truth, as well as heareth His true people's prayer.

A Liturgy, too, should thus embody these living truths, free from all dangerous admixture of human error ; because, if it exclude these truths, or if, while retaining, it overlay them with a covering of such error, the very reasons which commend the use of a Liturgy, rightly constructed, would legislate against it and banish it utterly from the devotions of a redeemed and worshiping flock. A Liturgy, thus defective, or thus infected, would either want the soul of true Christian worship, or stereotype error, in its most imperishable forms, on the hearts and the habits, the memory and the mind, of far-reaching generations. Were the use of such Liturgies as might be named to become universal in the Church, it had been better for “ the faith once

delivered to the saints," had the printing art lain undiscovered, had the pen never traced a prayer beyond those recorded on the inspired page, and had the true servants of Christ been left, with nothing but the Bible and the Spirit to teach, and with nothing but their own hearts and tongues to tell out, their adoring thoughts and their in-felt wants to God.

Whether the Liturgy, which we use, be constructed according to the principles just stated, I cannot stop minutely to inquire. For our form we claim not perfection. We may, however, safely leave the question of its character to all fair and candid minds, even among those who prefer, or continue to use, an extemporaneous worship. From many of the most enlightened and pious of evangelical Christians of other names, our Liturgy has received the highest and most eloquent commendations, on the ground of its conformity with the principles, which I have stated ; while some, if not all of the faults, which the eye of Paley detected in the English Book, were removed from the American, when we came to adapt it to the altered political condition of our country, as it took its stand among independent nations. With these remarks, then, I assume that our Liturgy is remarkably full and rich in the saving truths of the Gospel ; that it is free—not, as some too idolatrously ween, from all

human error, but—as we may safely claim, from all dangerous admixtures of such error ; that it is constructed on the justest principles of logic and of taste ; that it is copious in its provisions for all the general and for most of the special wants of a worshiping people ; and that it abounds in such lowly and self-abasing acts of confession and supplication, and in such fervent and sublime strains of devotion and praise, that the most broken-hearted penitent may well pour out his heart in the former, while glorified angels, were they visibly present, might cordially utter their loud “Amens” to the latter. I proceed, now, with the subject.

Let us, then, suppose that a minister of a particular congregation, worshiping by such a form, is in the same condition of mind as that before instanced. He has fallen into the current, which is setting so deeply and strongly through the general religious mind ; he moves with that current ; he reaches the result to which it tends ; he becomes an **ERRORIST**, perhaps of the most dangerous kind. What, then, is the position in which he finds himself as one who may wish to change the faith of the Church into a conformity with his newly adopted views ?

If he be a dishonest man, or a man of unscrupulous conscience, who thinks it right to effect what he deems a good end by means which others would

regard as of questionable morality, he cannot take advantage of the devoutly responding spirit of his worshiping congregation. He cannot make his people drink at the stream of his errors through the confidings of a mind, ready to follow with its impulsive "Amens" the utterances of a trusted and warmly earnest leader. Though he himself be steeped in heresy, yet that to which they say "Amen" is full of the richness and life of God's truth. If, therefore, he attempt to disseminate his errors, he can do so nowhere save in the pulpit, or from the press, or by conversation ; and the moment he makes this attempt, whichever medium of influence he adopts, he must pour his doctrine—not into the heart of their worshiping confidence, but—into the ear of his people's CRITICAL INTELLECT. In this enterprise, he has before him—not a body of trustful, adoring, appropriating minds, but—a congregation who feel that the reason and the understanding which he addresses are their own ; who have a right to judge him by his acknowledged and sworn standards ; and who, in their jealous watchfulness over those standards will not be slow either to detect or to arraign the adventurous delinquent. Examples of the operation of this principle have not been wanting even within the limits of our brief history as an independent ecclesiastical organization. The case of Menzies

Raynor, of the diocese of Connecticut, who attempted to teach one of the forms of heresy from his pulpit, but who, notwithstanding the cautiousness of his attempt, was detected and removed from the ministry, was one in point. And if our Church should ever fail to detect and cut off such errorists, it will be—not because she wants means to detect them, but—because she will have proved unfaithful to her Master, and to her work ; an unfaithfulness for which she would deserve the chastening, which detected but allowed corruptions can never fail, sooner or later, to ensure.

But, suppose a case of more frequent occurrence ; that the minister, though an errorist, is yet an honest man ; strong in his convictions, yet with a live conscience in his bosom. As his convictions gain strength, we will suppose them to settle in the direction of the RATIONALISTIC extreme. It is evident, now, that he cannot continue in the use of our Liturgy. This embodies and is based on truths, or, as he will consider them, errors, which will make his head ache every time he utters them on his knees against his new convictions and amid his people's hearty "Amens." What, then, shall he do ? A hypocrite's part he cannot play, for he is an honest man, and has a conscience whose fair answer is of more value to him than millions of wealth and pinnacles of honor ; and a wound upon

which he more dreads than poverty, and obscurity and rags. There is but one thing which he can do. He must retire from his ministry. A resistless voice within commands the movement. He obeys. And thus, so far as his influence can directly and officially reach her faith, the Church is safe. Examples of the operation of this principle are familiar to all who are familiar with the recent history of our Church ; and the entire absence of cases, in which an Episcopal congregation has been led away from the faith of their Church, speaks, on this point, a strong language.

To this remark, the case of "King's Chapel," Boston, is no exception. In his history of that Chapel, Greenwood says, indeed, that this, "The first Episcopal Church in New England, became the first Unitarian Church in the United States." But this is an incorrect statement. That was not a case in which an Episcopal Church became Unitarian ; but a case, in which an edifice, once occupied by an Episcopal congregation, subsequently passed into the possession of Unitarians. The building, virtually vacated by the incidents of our Revolutionary War of its Episcopal occupants, passed at length into the hands of a congregation mostly new and Unitarian. No sooner, however, was this transfer of the building effected, than it was resolved to alter the Liturgy, by striking out

all references to the great doctrine of the Trinity. It was equally impossible for the new congregation, as honest men, to worship with the old Prayer Book, and for Dr. Freeman, their lay-reader, as an honest candidate for our ministry, to obtain Episcopal ordination. Had the original congregation of King's Chapel never been dispersed by the hand of war, and the use of our Liturgy never been interrupted by the hand of mutilation, that venerable edifice and that ancient congregation would doubtless have remained to this day in our communion ; the people as sound in the faith as the Prayer Book is loyal to the Truth of the Son of God.

But, suppose the convictions of the minister to have settled—not in the direction of the rationalist, but—in that of the RITUALIST extreme. In this case, he is met by an opposite, but scarcely less operative, characteristic of our Liturgy ; its blank vacancy of all that can minister to the longings of that peculiar taste, which accompanies, perhaps induces, the adoption of Romish dogmas and observances ; which accompanies that adoption as uniformly as the shadow follows its substance ; which may induce that adoption as naturally as any cause induces its own effect. In continuing the use of our Liturgy, such a minister finds no penance for the post-baptismal transgressor, no

mass for the worshiper of transubstantiated elements ; no trace of a confessional, no eulogy upon human merits ; no prayer for the dead, no help for patients under purgatorial discipline ; no note of wonder at the miracles of the Church, no viaticum for the distressed "*in extremis*;" no pæan to celibacy, no laud to virginity ; no shrine for a consecrated relic, no receptacle for an anointed picture ; in short, not a single ceremony designed for pomp, nor a solitary contrivance for inspiring awe ; but all plain and decent in posture, all simple and beautiful in order ; all sound and scriptural in signification, all rational yet fervent in devotion ; nor can he introduce into the forms which he uses anything to awaken in others the longings which are consuming himself ; not a word of truth can he leave out, nor a syllable of error bring in, while conducting the worship of the Church ; nothing can he do towards the end at which he aims, beyond a few poor changes of posture and of costume, which, by their very meagreness, fail to satisfy himself, while, by their dim pointing towards something more startlingly significant, they displease most others, and betray the secret errors which would beguile them from their faith. His position, in truth, becomes one of serious embarrassment. The cravings of his secret appetite are left in unfed, painful hunger, and the steps of his

half-timid movements are watched by a thousand reproving looks, until, even if he succeed in screening his errors from ecclesiastical censure, his conscience, as an honest man, and his feelings as a self-respecting man, compel him to abandon a ministry to which he can no longer be comfortably loyal, and thus to deliver the Church from the beguilements of his example and from the influence of his teachings.

In truth, the pressure of this negative character of our Liturgy, at one time, stimulated the efforts of some in England to restore to credit and use the long discarded Romish Breviary. Amid what it deemed the ceremonial poverty of the Anglican forms, the ritual spirit felt a painful sense of want not easily to be endured. It therefore sought elsewhere its necessary food ; first, by endeavoring to bring that food to itself in the English Church ; and finally, when that was found impracticable, by going after it to the Church of Rome. Verily, then, the ritual spirit, so far as it finds entrance into our American Episcopal Church, must be in a most famishing condition amid the more severely simple forms in which its worship is set forth. These forms are, indeed, rich to those who love the manna, and beautiful to those who admire the simplicity of Divine Truth ; but they must be poor to those who long for the splendid ornaments, and

common to those who sigh for the imposing pomps of Rome's gorgeous ritual. It can be no matter for wonder if such should be incessantly studying change. Our Liturgy cannot satisfy their cravings, nor can they ever use it in diffusing through the Church their peculiar theology and their unsatisfied tastes.

The view now taken, illustrates still further the influence of our scriptural Liturgy, when operating—not only on a single congregation during the ministry of a single man, but also on the whole ecclesiastical body, and through a long succession of ages. In this view, its influence is eminently conservative of the true faith of the Gospel. Full, as it is, of the marrow of Divine Truth, correct and chaste in style, fervent and often sublime in spirit, it is also a composition, with which we become intimately familiar. It lives in our earliest and latest, our fondest and holiest associations. It furnishes much of our worshiping language, and many of our worshiping thoughts, in social and even in secret prayer; and though its public use fill not our prayers with sermons, yet its remembered strains fill our hearts with doctrines, and that in their most valuable forms; not laid up as sharp weapons in the armory of our critical intellect, but preserved as living truths in the spirit of pure devotion. Thus associated, imbibed, and em-

balmed, the truths of our religion operate on the heart and mind of imitative childhood, of receptive youth, of digestive manhood, and of ruminating age ; and thus become, as it were, inwrought into the substance of the Church, and live and act as elements in her enduring constitution. The process may give to our ecclesiastical temperament less of the excitable, the impulsive, and the fitfully strenuous ; yet it probably imparts to that temperament more of the contemplative, the healthful and the long-lived.

Thus far, we have been looking at the two modes of worship in their comparative action on the devotional mind. If we were to examine that action on the unworshiping mind, we should possibly find the comparison somewhat modified. If the devout mind, by listening to a set form, learn to repeat by rote what it cares not to ponder ; by listening to an extemporaneous form it may learn to listen with incredulity to what it cannot appreciate, or with idle curiosity to what offends its tastes. Under such a set form as ours, if the indevout mind learn anything, it learns nothing but God's truth. Under an extemporaneous form, while it may learn God's truth, it will prove quite as susceptible as the devout spirit itself both to the absence of such truth and to the presence of the opposite error. And when the hour of change comes, the indevout and

careless mind will be found even more ready than that which has seriously and thoroughly digested its errors, for the deciding movement which is to follow : since, with error, in all its forms, the natural mind has a stronger affinity than the spiritual ; while the spiritual mind has something, but the natural has nothing, to restrain its inborn aversion to the self-mortifying strictness of Christianity.

III. The two forms of worship might be compared on a few other points ; but the design of this Treatise does not call me to discuss them fully. It may not, however, be amiss to give them a brief notice.

The principal objections, then, to worship by a previously enjoined form are two : 1. The use of such a form tends to formalism. The tongue, in its familiarity with the sounds, repeats language, which an untasked attention fails of carrying significantly to the heart. 2. Such a form is incapable of adaptation to many of the most interesting exigencies of times, places and circumstances. It is not effective in awakening the religious sensibilities, and in cultivating the religious affections, amid the ceaseless and often impressive providential incidents of life.

In each of these objections we may freely con-

cede that there is a certain amount of force ; and yet, I think, they admit of a fair reply.

1. Though a candid mind will not hesitate to concede the tendency of forms to formalism, yet a discriminating mind can see that the tendency is stronger in the sound of words than in the experience of Christians. But, whatever be the strength of the tendency, it is not irresistible. The life and spirit of religion, as ordinarily attendant on an earnest and faithful preaching of the Gospel, will keep this tendency within as narrow limits, under the use of set forms of worship, as under that of the extemporaneous mode. We must not forget that the tendency to formalism in worship is not limited to the use of set-forms of worship. It is the tendency of our nature, even when partially sanctified, and worshiping in the least formal way. Safety from it, under all circumstances, is the gracious reward of nothing but strict and unsleeping watchfulness over the state of the heart and over the spirit of its devotions ; and, on these conditions, that safety is as well assured to those who worship by a prescribed, as to those who use an extemporaneous mode. And this is as true of those who lead, as it is of those who follow, in the stated worship of the Church.

2. While it need not be denied that a prescribed form of worship is incapable of minute and perfect

adaptation to the ever changing exigences of life ; it may be claimed that this disadvantage is, perhaps, more than counterbalanced by accompanying safeguards against the evils to which, through its very capabilities in this respect, extemporaneous worship is exposed. In the use of prescribed forms, the officiating minister cannot make his own feelings and experience, private and often peculiar, jar upon the common and often dissimilar feelings and experiences of his fellow-worshipers ; nor can one minister ever be praying for what another is, at the same time, deprecating. Neither can our officiator ever fall into the painfully embarrassing hesitations, mistakes and improprieties of expression, which so often mar the public devotional exercises of ungifted minds ; nor can he ever follow the eccentricities of his own genius, or the habits which grow out of custom, and thus be led into irreverent familiarities, rash extravagances, startling expressions, flights of oratory, informing narratives before God, or virtual sermonizing before men. Of our forms no one can ever say, what, on a special occasion, was once said of the devotional exercise of a popular minister, and what, if intended as a grave compliment, was yet an awful sarcasm,— “That was the most eloquent prayer ever addressed to a Boston audience.”

When these and like things are considered, it

will be evident that prescribed forms of worship have some peculiar advantages, and are free from some special disadvantages ; and that, if extemporeaneous worship be, at times, and for an occasion, remarkably impressive and effective ; it is, at other times, and on other occasions, embarrassingly lame, or disturbingly eccentric ; often unprofitable in its matter, and more often didactic, rather than devotional, in its dress ; while worship by a prescribed, and scriptural form is always decent and dignified, devout and solemn, elevated and edifying ; uniformly fit to be offered by sinful and penitent, believing and adoring mortals, at the footstool of that throne, whereon is seated the High and the Holy, the all-knowing and the all-gracious Immortal.

It would be easy to enlarge on these and similar points of comparison ; but my purpose leads me no further in this direction. My main object has been to present the subject in what seems to me one of its strong lights ; and, having done so, to leave it for contemplation in the hours of still and quiet thought. The points, thus briefly noticed, show that each of the two modes of worship has its peculiar advantages, and its peculiar disadvantages ; and that, as these advantages and disadvantages are brought before different minds by the forces of education, amid the circumstances of life and the varieties of human temperament, it is not

strange that some should strongly lean to the extemporaneous, while others as strongly incline to the pre-composed form. Allowing, however, that the general argument on either side were more evenly balanced than it appears to be ; still, the special view which I have presented, comes, in my judgment, with a largely preponderating weight upon the question, and moves the balance decidedly in favor of public worship by a scriptural, prescribed form.

Some, I doubt not, would turn my argument in favor of an opposite conclusion. The fact that such a form of worship tends to stereotype the faith and doctrines of the Church on the minds of the people, as well as on the parchment of their records, furnishes, with them, the very reason why all such forms should be rejected from the worship of the Church. They hold not to this fixedness of faith and doctrine in religion. They are believers in PROGRESS, in development, in this as in other subjects. They consider religion, like philosophy, IMPROVABLE ; not only capable of more and more perfect comprehension, and tending to improve human character in the individual and in the mass ; but also, admitting of changes and new discoveries in its own elementary principles. They would, therefore, take away forms, creeds, reverence—everything that can stand as a barrier against full

and perfect liberty of change and progress. Unchangeableness in the Church's faith and forms is to them an offense. It gives no chance to their improvements upon what is commonly regarded as the divine plan and wisdom. The argument, therefore, here urged, instead of convincing, sets them more firmly than ever in their opposition to all prescript worship, even by the best of forms.

With such minds, of course, I have no hope of prevailing ; but, with those who adopt another view, I may hope the argument will have weight. Those who believe that revealed truth, as it came from God, has in it fixed elements ; that Christianity has a settled and unchangeable base ; that God has spoken all His mind concerning the way of salvation, and distinctly intimated His design to "add no more ;" and that the faith of the Church should ever answer to its divine Archetypes, "as in water face answereth to face ;"—those who believe that the Church's progress and development should be from grace to grace, and from faith to faith,—not by changing one grace for another, or an old faith for a new, but by carrying every grace to its highest attainable perfection, and by developing from the one faith of the Bible its richest fruits in the holy civilization of the individual and of society ;—those who hold that we should seek—not for repeated changes of faith and doctrine, but

—for a better practical as well as intellectual apprehension of the one immutable faith and doctrine of God's holy Word ; those who regard the Church—not as a subject upon which this world's spirit of curiosity and love of novelty may make their experiments, but—as God's instrument for operating on this world in the blessed work of reclaiming it unto a just allegiance to its Eternal King ;—those who thus believe and hold will, I apprehend, feel a peculiar force in the view which I have taken, and realize somewhat of its weight in deciding the question upon the comparative value of the two great forms of public worship in the Church. The Scriptural and edifying character of a Liturgy being secured, nothing further is essentially needed, save a faithful preaching of “Jesus Christ and Him crucified,” and the full effusion, promised to such preaching, of the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, in order to bring into the Church and to perpetuate her highest life and her holiest efficiency ;—a life serene as it would be enduring ; and an efficiency blessed as it would be powerful.

CHAPTER IV.

SCHISM.

WE are still engaged in treating of the WELL-being of the Church. The Church is the Body of Christ. As true, holy and Catholic, it is His spiritual, or mystical Body. As developed under needful forms, it is His visible Body ; so called from analogy and from the serving of the outward to the inward.

The visible Church, of which we are now treating, has its being and its WELL-being. In its being, it comprehends essentials only ; in its well-being, it comprehends with these essentials what is requisite to their best condition. Those essentials are—Christ, the Spirit, and the body of members under the true Gospel and Sacraments. What is requisite to their best condition is—the “setting of all the members in the Body,” each in his proper place, the higher and the lower, the ministry and the people ; so that none shall be wanting and none dislocated ; all the parts put rightly together, and all sustaining, helping, and perfecting all in com-

fort, growth and action. This is the visible Church in its well-being ; in its best health as well as in its essential life.

This distinction between the being and the well-being of the Church, between the Church itself and the ministry of the Church, is, as I have before remarked, all-important. The visible Church is the whole outward Body of Christ. The ministry is but a service of members "set in the Church" to aid in promoting its best health and action. The Church may have this ministry, perfect or imperfect ; or, so far as the human hand of ordination is concerned, it may, by possibility, have no ministry at all ; and according as it is in one or another of these conditions, it will realize more or less perfectly its true welfare ; but, in its worst condition, so long as it has Christ, and those who profess the true faith of Christ, it will be still—the Church, the Church of Christ visible in all the earth. This distinction between its being and its well-being, is important in settling the question of the true comprehension of the visible Church.

Of the ministry of this Church I have already spoken. For the fullness of this ministry, two things are to be regarded as requisite—the inward gift and the outward commission. The inward gift is always and immediately from the Holy Spirit to the ministering man. Its bestowment needs no

human hand. No human hand conveys it. It is indispensable in constituting the true minister of Christ. It never fails to reach him to whom it is sent. It never falls by chance on the wrong head. With the outward commission it is somewhat different. This came originally from Christ: but mediately, it has passed through the hands of His first Apostles, and of those to whom they committed it; and coming thus through human hands, and amid human fallibilities, it is not always accompanied by the necessary inward gift. The outward commission often falls on the wrong head. Nevertheless, it is Christ's commission in its external sign; and though many bear it who ought not, yet none bear it rightly but such as bear it lawfully. As it has been committed to the Apostles' hands, it should, as to general practice, be transmitted according to the Apostles' rule. There are, indeed, those who deny the necessity of any external commission to the ministry, and who claim that the internal gift is common to all true Christians; or rather, that all on whom it is conferred may and should, even without any outward commission, perform all ministerial acts whenever and wherever they list. With such theorists, however, the present argument has no concern. It is addressed to all who, like ourselves, admit the necessity of the outward commission, as well as of the inward

gift, in order to the fullness of the Christian ministry.

In a former Lecture, I professed my faith in the following points, viz : that, in transmitting this outward commission, the Apostles, for order's sake and discipline, distributed it over a ministry of three grades ; that thus Episcopacy became every where, from the Apostles' time, the actual form of the Christian ministry ; that thus, though not of the essence of the Church, yet virtually it hath the approval of Christ, and that, therefore, voluntarily and needlessly to abandon it is rashly to incur the hazard, and insure the fact, of the fearful evils of schism.

Schism may be defined as the opposite of true Church harmony. It is opposed to the well-being of the Church. Hence, in treating of this well-being, it becomes desirable to know what is meant by this true harmony and what by schism, as a violation of this harmony. This, then, is the topic on which I now enter—CHURCH HARMONY. What is it ? By what is it violated ? What are the evils of its violation ? And how may these evils best be cured ? We take up these questions in their order.

1. What is the true harmony of the Church ?

In the abstract, harmony is a due agreement between all the parts of any whole. In the Church,

perfect harmony is a perfect agreement of all its parts in the one whole of Christ's Body. In this sense, harmony is an attribute of none but the spiritual Church, and even there can be developed in its perfection no where but in Heaven. In the visible Church on earth, harmony may be defined as an agreement of all the parts, so far, at least, as to avoid all open, organized breach of Christian love and of ecclesiastical order. There may, indeed, be among the different parts of the Church visible, a stinted measure of Christian love, and a feeble realization of ecclesiastical order, consistently with what may be called the general harmony of the whole. But, when the agreement of the parts is disturbed by an open, organized breach of Christian love and of ecclesiastical order, there Church harmony is lost. The parts are in discord,—not merely by a partial lack of Christian love, and a feeble realization of ecclesiastical order, but—by a positive violation of both. And this suggests the answer to our second question.

2. By what is the harmony of the Church violated?

I reply: It is violated by the open, deliberate, needless act of a body of professed Christians, banding themselves into a separate organization as a visible Church. In other words, it is violated by SCHISM. In this respect, among others, schism

differs from heresy. Heresy may be the sin of an individual. Schism requires the combined act of a greater or less number of individuals. A single person, unconnected with others in his peculiar course, can scarcely be called a schismatic, or said to be guilty of schism. But, when he gathers other persons around him, and proceeds, deliberately and without necessity, to organize a separate Church, in violation of the love and order of the whole Body, then each individual in that organization, as well as the organization itself, becomes a schismatic. There schism exists.

On this point we need clear ideas. Bad as the evil of schism may be, it embarrasses all inquiry to make it worse than it is. Some write and speak as if they thought that schism cuts off from the Body of Christ, and leaves the excinded part to die, to perish, as something utterly out of the Church. None, indeed, would say that every individual, involved in schism, is necessarily left to perish everlastingily. They mean no more than this: that the mass of individuals, thus involved, is actually left to perish ecclesiastically, as something no longer in, or of, the Church. This idea of schism sometimes comes out in print. Even Chillingworth, in his immortal work, writes so as, on the whole, to leave the impression that if certain ancient and modern Churches, existing separ-

ately from that of Rome, could be shown to be actually and really in a state of schism, it would be tantamount to a confession that they thereby ceased to belong, as parts, to the one visible Church Catholic. It seems to me that his great argument amounts mainly to this, that those separate Churches were and are parts of the one Catholic Church, because they were not, and are not in a state of schism. That those Churches were not, and are not all in a state of schism we rejoice to believe. Still, there has been and there is, such a thing as schism, and it is well for us to know clearly what it is. The idea that schism cuts off from the Church, though it sometimes comes out in print, yet, among us, is rather, in general, the practical inference of unthinking minds from the extravagant colors in which their teachers are in the habit of painting the sin of schism. But, in whatever shape it comes, it is a false idea. Schism separates not from the Church. To see the truth of this, let us look at the thing itself. What is schism? In what are we to find its essence?

If possible, this question must be settled by reference to the Scriptures, and not by a search among the doctors of any age, especially not among those who leave the Scriptures out of view. Looking, then, at the Scriptures, I think we shall see that schism is—not a loss of Church essence,

but—a breach upon Church love ; not a severance from the unity of the Church, but a violation of the order of the Church.

(1.) I refer, first, to 1 Cor. 12 : 25. “That there should be no schism in the body.” Schism, then, exists “in the body,” instead of cutting off from the body ; in the Church, instead of putting out of the Church. And what this thing in the body is, which Christians are to avoid, we may learn from what follows the words just cited : “That there should be no schism in the body ; but, that the members should have the same care, one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.” Schism, then, is the opposite of this mutual care, this loving sympathy, of all the members for and with each other. It is a non-intercourse, a lack of mutual care, a loss of loving sympathy, among the members of the same body. It is, as I have said, a breach upon the Church’s love, a disturbance of the Church’s harmony. As such, it is in and of the Church itself. And this is one of its saddest features. It is in the Church, whose highest law should be love ; it is among brethren, between whom all should be harmony. In the Church, “if one member suffer” by persecution, or otherwise, “all the members should suffer with it,” or there is a breach of love :

"or if one member be honored," by promotion to higher office, or other distinction, "all the members should rejoice with it," or there is a violation of harmony.

This is the essence of schism : and all that can be wanting to make it a fact, cognizable in ecclesiastical discipline, is, that this spirit of the evil should embody itself in overt organization, as a separate sect in the Church. The spirit of the evil is bad enough as a breach of love and a violation of harmony ; but by organization it becomes an organized sin. I speak, now, of ecclesiastical organizations, properly so called, the formation of separate Churches ; and not of social organizations, the formation of societies for allowable objects in the same Church. Schism becomes a breach of Church love, and a violation of Church harmony, as a cognizable fact, by the voluntary and needless formation of separate Churches ; while yet, the act leaves these separate Churches still parts of the one visible Church Catholic. It is thus that schism is "in the body," and that, by schism, no part is cut off from the body. To illustrate this view, let us take a wider survey of Scripture, as bearing on this point.

(2.) Matt. 27 : 51. Here the word is in its verbal form. At the Crucifixion, "the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bot-

tom." That veil was in a state of physical schism. It was "rent in twain." Or, to make the phrase more Greek, it was "schismed." And yet by that fact, neither of the parts ceased to belong to the one veil. It was still one veil, though in two parts ; and these two parts were capable of being closely reunited.

(3.) Mark 1 :10. Here also the word is in its verbal form. At the baptismal scene, Jesus, "coming up from the water, saw the heavens opened ;" literally, "schismed ;" rent, like the torn curtain. And yet there were not two heavens. It was but the one heavens ; schismed for a moment, and in a moment closed again in one ; and not even for that moment, putting either part out of heaven.

(4.) Matt. 9 :16. In this passage the word is in its substantive form. "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment ; for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse." Literally, "the schism is made worse." And yet, at the worst, it is but a schism in a garment. It is not a casting off of a part, so that it ceases to be a part, of the garment. The garment may be mended by skilfully sewing the parts together.

(5.) John 7 :43 ; 9 :16 ; and 10 :19. These passages come nearer our subject. On several occasions, Christ and His Discourses had set the

Jews at fierce reasonings among themselves. Once, they differed about the place of Christ's birth ; and then it is said, "there was a 'division,'" schism, "among the people because of Him." Again, they differed about the morality of His healing on the Sabbath day ; and then again it is said, "there was a division," schism, "among them." And still again, they differed about His Discourse on the sheepfold, and His laying down His life for the sheep ; and still again it is said, "There was a division, therefore, again," another schism, "among the Jews for these sayings." And yet, on all these occasions, the schism was among the Jews ; neither party was cut off from the other, or from the Jewish body at large. Their harmony of opinion was broken ; and perhaps their bond of love was for the moment injured by their hot disputings ; but neither party ceased to be Jews, or to belong to the great Jewish commonwealth.

(6.) 1 Cor. 1 :10 ; 1 Cor. 11 :18. These passages come still nearer our subject. In the former, St. Paul beseeches his Corinthian "brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they all speak the same thing ; that there be no divisions," schisms, "among them ; but that they be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." And in the latter, he says : "I hear that there be divisions," schisms, "among you."

Here, the meaning of the word is quite manifest. The Apostle was addressing a part of the Church, which was full of the seeds of schism, and of schism of the worst kind ; schism right under the eye of an Apostle, and in the young heart itself of the Church. He was rebuking those who had already begun to set up, some for Paul, some for Apollos, some for Cephas, and some for Christ ; who were already getting up a non-intercourse, and losing their mutual care and forgetting their loving sympathy, for and with each other, in their unholy jealousy and zeal for building up Paul's party, and Apollos's party, and Peter's party, and Christ's party ; and striving to see which could make their own most popular and most powerful. And yet, he addressed them all as "brethren," and besought them all, by the dearest of names, that they would heal their incipient schisms, and live in the oneness of all-cementing love for the common truth and for their common Lord. He spoke of their young schisms as being "among them," and not as cutting off Paul's party, or Peter's party, from Christ, or from His Church, and leaving the part so cut off as no longer a portion of the Saviour's Body. He treated schism as a thing which was "in the body," which belonged to the body, and in which every part of the body was most tenderly concerned. It was a direful evil, even in its earliest development ;

and, so far as his labors and his prayers could go, he would not have it in the Church of Christ.

From this examination of various passages, then, we rest with confirmed confidence in our definition of schism. It is a rent, a wound, in the visible body of our Lord, Christ. It is a breach upon Church love, and a rupture of Church harmony. It is one of the ways, in which the one Church has been divided and made many Churches. Separate Churches may, indeed, be formed without schism ; but schism is one of the forms of separation. The spirit of schism may exist where the fact of schism has not become cognizable. It generally arises out of too curious disputes about disputable, perhaps trifling matters of opinion and judgment ; though sometimes out of the heats of personal preferences, and party ambitions ; and it ends in organized non-intercourse, the jealousies and strifes of sects, the internal dissensions of that great Christian family, which ought ever to “live in perfect love and peace together.”

Such, when brought out into cognizable fact, is schism ; a melancholy rent, a sore festering wound, in the visible body of Christ. One of its worst characteristics is, that it is “in the body ;” and yet this worst reveals its best ; it is not fatal to the body ; it may be healed. Individuals may, peradventure, perish everlastinglly for fomenting the

causes and the progress of schism ; but schism itself destroyeth not the body of the Church, or the separated parts of which it is composed. Those melancholy rents in the veil of the outer temple, in the garment of the visible body, may, by the deft skill of God's true workmen, under the teaching of God's good Spirit, be mended so as never more to appear. Those deep wounds in Christ's outer flesh may, by divine medicaments, be all healed, so that, in the outer, as in the inner Church, there shall be nought but soundness, a life in every part, a helping for each from all the members. The schismed firmament of the Church's peace may, by the realized power of Her Head, be perfectly closed, so that nothing shall ever rend, or pass it again ; but the dove-like Spirit of God, having entered in olden times, shall once more be felt, in its revived marvels, dropping silently and everywhere, the dews of sweet, gentle, all-baptizing love. Every passage, which has been examined, demonstrates, or favors, the truth that schism may be healed ; and that, therefore, it is and must be, a fact in the body, and not a severance from the body. The disturbed harmony of the parts may be restored, and thus the well-being of the whole made finally complete.

3. What are THE EVILS of this violation of Church harmony ?

As we have seen in what this violation consists, we may look at its evils by way of motive to attempt its cure, and to bless God that it is curable.

(1.) And first, something of the evils of schism will be manifest on considering it as a breach of the Church's love. The bond of sacred brotherhood broken ; intestine broils, jealousies, divisions, oppositions ; love starved and dwarfed, and the unloving spirit nursed to a giant ; and all this among a household of members, who have one Gospel, the living oracles of truth ; who hold one Head, Christ Jesus the Lord ; and who hope to be saved by His death from one hell, and to be raised by His life to one heaven ; here is a text for the greatest sermon that man ever preached ! And yet, the text itself is, perhaps, greater than any sermon on it that could be preached. Some things seem lessened by all attempts to make their greatness more than self-evident. Look at it, then, and mourn ; that broken bond of brotherhood in the family of Jesus !

(2.) Second : another view of the evils of schism presents itself when we regard it as a wound inflicted on the visible Church. The body of Christ wounded in the house of its friends ! Which of us would like to drag about a wounded, bleeding, almost fainting body ? Who could do his day's work well, in such a state, lame, weak, tottering ? Life-blood is flowing from the body of Christ. It hath

not half its proper strength. It moves feebly and slowly. It doth not well transact Christ's day's work on the world's great harvest-field. It is sad to think of the wounds in this body of Christ!

(3.) Third : we have another view of the evils of schism, when we reflect that it feeds infidelity. This, indeed, is an indirect effect of schism ; still it is certain to follow, as our eyes too often see. The mere natural heart loves not to coin, or to pay, much money for the Gospel. In a single village, one thousand souls feel but lightly the care of one true minister of Christ ; but, if divided and called to care for three or four, of jarring names, the burden presses heavily, and the natural heart eases itself by stepping out from under that weight, and leaving it to press more heavily still on those who remain. Thus, in time, many natural hearts, who, might otherwise have been reconciled and saved, ease themselves by stepping aside and walking in none of the ways of the Church. Then steps in among them the specious, covert infidel, who preaches for nothing, poisons them with his nothingisms, and, at last, gathers and bands them into a synagogue of Satan, and trains them in the inexpensive ritual of hell ! Behold the source of much of the rampant infidelity of the world and especially of our otherwise favored country !

(4.) Fourth : a still further view of the evils of

schism meets us in the fact, that it throws great advantage on the side of religious error and superstition. Theological error, in the great, overshadowing Babel of the seven-hilled city, flourishes while the friends of simple, scriptural truth are rent asunder by divisions ; and her superstitions grow up in open day, while that truth is so nearly hidden amid the dust of sectarian contests. Such is the present condition of the Christian world. Errors thicken and grow rank under the vast shadow that shelters them, and superstition, with its serried ranks never broken, draws thousands from our divided hosts. Men love repose ; and naturally feel little horror of either religious error or religious darkness. If, therefore, truth shine not clear and calm ; if there be always dust and strife and separations about it, they indolently seek refuge in notions which are quietly false, or sentimentally shelter themselves under superstitions which are tranquilly dark. The quiet and the tranquillity allure them ; while the falsehood and the darkness are not terrifying. False religion imposingly draped in the pomps of superstition, is more agreeable to the natural heart, than the true, though simply robed in the garments of light ; incomparably more so, when the true is disfigured in garments, rent by the hands of division and smeared with the blood of contention. If Christians stay

not the spirit of their schisms ; if they consent not to live together in love, and in the heart of their great, common truths ; it is manifest that nothing but miracles revived can keep victory from the side of error and superstition ; or save the Church from being covered once again with the double pall of falsehood and of darkness !

This is but a glimpse of the evils of schism ; but, it is enough for my purpose. Out of these evils God doubtless brings some good ; perhaps He will yet bring the greatest. Contest and even divisions about the truth certainly show that some minds at least are alive and earnest in their thoughts about it ; and this may be supposed to prognosticate the final victory of truth. And then, the various divisions in the Church may doubtless be set to guard each other, so that none shall hide, corrupt or mutilate the Gospel. Moreover, they do oft “ provoke one another,” if not “ to love and good works,” at least to zeal and great works. Still, let the wise God make what use of them He please, schisms, in themselves, are unspeakably evil, and by the Bible itself we are taught to seek their cure.

It is not difficult to see the connection of these views of schism not only with the well-being of the Church in general, but also with the ministry and government of the Church in particular. If Episcopacy and its mode of government were the

models left by the Apostles, and at first everywhere received in the Church, and if, having such an origin, they have thereby Christ's virtual approval, then needlessly and voluntarily to abandon those models is rashly to incur the hazard of all the evils of schism. I say—not that the mere lack of Episcopacy and its mode of government is, in and of itself, or independently of its cause, a schism ; but—that the voluntary and needless abandonment of those models endangers, nay, inevitably produces, schism. Such a setting up of new and diverse models of ministry and government, unavoidably puts as many diverse masses of members upon saying again, “I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ,” and, out of these contents, it breeds all that I have spoken of as mischievous and full of evil. A loss of Episcopacy, or of all ministry, so far as the ministry comes by the hand of human ordination, is not a loss of the Church itself, for the ministry is “in the Church,” and not the Church in the ministry ; but, Episcopacy having Apostolic origin, adherence to it where possible consistently with the higher claims of Divine Truth, is not a matter of mere expediency ; it is a matter of duty due to the cause of peace and order and the Church's rule.

4. How may the evils of schism best be cured ?
Upon the importance of this question it will not

be necessary to dwell. Nor will it be necessary to go back with the inquiry, who, or what has made all our schisms? We may take these evils as facts, and it will be enough to know that they have been made by many hands, and with many motives, and that a departure from Episcopacy is but one among many of this evil's springs; that, in many, if not most, of the schisms which have happened, both sides have been more or less in fault; and that, in some cases, the separation has been so far justifiable as it has been forced on the separating party, not only as the less of two evils, but as the only resort this side of a traitorous abandonment of truth, of conscience and of Christ. It is enough for us to know these things. Our main business is with the facts themselves, and not with their causes. The facts exist. They are evils. And yet, they are curable evils. How may they best be cured? This is the only reasonable question now before us, and to this question I reply:

(1.) These evils are not to be cured by any attempt to obliterate all the dividing lines which have been drawn through the Church. These lines are possibly too deep ever to be obliterated in this world. These evils must be cured by out-living, overcoming and extinguishing the bad spirit in which they were engendered, by which they are still cherished, and from which they draw their

chief power for mischief. In the view which the Bible gives of schism, as a rent, a wound, in that Body of Christ, which is the Church, it is plain that, if we hope for a cure of its evils, we must cease to regard and speak of Non-Episcopal communions as not belonging to the visible Church. It is not by pronouncing this decision over them that these deep-seated evils are to be cured. This decision, however fond some may be of uttering it, is unfounded, and does but embitter those whom we ought to win. They are not out of the Church. The very schisms between them and us are IN the Church. They are but wounds in this visible Body of our Redeemer, and the spirit in which some treat these wounds, does but inflame them, and make them bleed more profusely. We must quit this policy, or consent to see the spirit, as well as name of schism, indelible! In looking at the visible Body of Christ, all wounded and weakened as it is, some act as if they thought its cure were to be effected by continually thrusting into its wounds the rough and rusty probes of their exclusive and excluding claims. Manifestly this is a fatal course. It can but aggravate the evil and bring on all but death!

(2.) Were I required to prescribe a remedy, I should confess my inability to do anything beyond the following brief directions. If these wounds

are to be probed at all, let it be with the Spirit's soft and cleansing ray of Life. For the rest, let a mollifying preparation of kind offices and peaceful deeds be laid on, to remove all inflammation, and to induce a healing state. Then, lay across the wounds as many as possible of the adhesive bands of love ; draw the parts gently but closely together, and leave the inward, healing life of the SPIRIT to perfect the blessed work. Then the still remaining scar-lines from the name of schism would not be disfiguringly deep, while the poison virulence from the heart of schism would all be gone ; the Body of Christ whole and sound again ; its many parts and many members, bound in living harmony, each helping each, and all made one in perfect, generous, holy sympathy. God send His Spirit from on high to speed this divine recovery of His Church !

This mode of cure recommends no indifference to important distinctive truths and principles, even though they be not fundamental ; no blending of other outward institutions with our own, and no breaking down of our own by way of showing our respect for those of others. It means simply this : that every part of the Church should freely acknowledge that all the other parts belong, as really as itself, to the visible Body of Christ : that each should then fill its providentially assigned lot with

peacefully and toilfully active love ; and that all, with consenting prayer to God, should seek, in its fullness, "the residue of the Spirit," and labor to "grow up into Christ in all things which is the Head." This, it may be believed, is God's way of healing the wounds of His Church ; and, in this way alone, we may safely assume, can "the whole Body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, make, in the measure of every single part, an increase of the Body unto the edifying of itself in Love."

This gracious consummation the Writer may never live to see ; but it is not a chimera—a thing to be talked of, but not hoped for. It is God's purposed blessing to His Church. It waits to descend. And we may labor, and should seek to hasten or to realize its down-coming. In doing so, we are drawing in a line with all God's plans and influences, and not at cross-purposes with both His Gospel and His Spirit. In all main, essential truths, all Christians may, as the Apostle expresses the idea in a passage already quoted, "Speak the same thing, and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Perfect uniformity of opinion in all things, especially in all things touching outward institutes, was never intended of God, and can never be enforced or secured by man. The great, vital sun-truths of

the Gospel, these are the only ones that can be made to shine, in the main, on all minds alike ; and it is by feeling the shining of these alone, made quickening by the Holy One, that all Christians can be melted into the oneness of love, made fruitful in the effects of Truth, and sped on their way to Heaven amid all the blessings of peace.

CHAPTER V.

UNITY.

ONE of the most universal definitions of the Church, whether in its inward and spiritual, or in its outward and visible being, is that given by the Apostle Paul, when he calls it “**MANY** members, yet but **ONE BODY.**”

In the last Chapter, I spoke of the harmony of the Church, and of schism as a fact, existing in the Church, and sadly disturbing that harmony. It would not be right to dismiss the consideration of the well-being of the Church without speaking of **UNITY** also, as a blessed and binding fact, co-existing in the Church, and incapable of being destroyed by even so bad a thing as heresy. Unity is as easily distinguishable from harmony as heresy is from schism. Harmony, as a due agreement of parts, may be disturbed ; but unity, as the consistency of a whole, cannot be destroyed. Schism may disturb the harmony which ought to reign among the parts of the Church ; but heresy cuts off from the Church, so that the excinded member

ceases to belong to it, leaving the unity of the Church untouched, just as we may cut off a dead limb from a tree and yet leave the unity of that tree unharmed. A thing which is ONE, cannot, at the same time and in the same sense, be two. Unity is involved in the very idea of the Church. Locally, the Church of Christ is distributed into many Churches ; yet, really, Christ hath but one Church : " Many members," or parts, " yet but one body." In His great intercessory prayer, Christ prayed for this unity, when He asked for His disciples, in all places and through all time, that they all may be ONE ; as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." That prayer has never returned into His bosom void. It went up to be answered, not denied ; and it has been answered, and to the end shall continue undenied. This unity belongs to the whole subject, the true comprehension of the Church. In this comprehension the Church necessarily includes her own unity.

But, what is this unity ? This is one of the great questions of our age. And it is a question, upon which, as it seems to me, some discussions bring darkness rather than light. I pray God that some one may bring it, if not into perfect light, at least out of the thick darkness. If the present effort should contribute even a little towards such a re-

sult, the Author will not have labored wholly in vain.

UNITY, then, belongs to the Church, both as inward and spiritual, and as outward and visible.

1. It belongs to the SPIRITUAL Church ; that true and holy Church Catholic of which I have said so much. And this, we may believe, is, in its highest, fullest sense, the Unity for which Christ prayed on the occasion, to which reference has already been made. It is that unity which, in the one living body, the one "communion of saints," binds every true believer to Christ, the Divine Head, by the bond of one true scriptural faith ; a faith that shows its vitalizing life in one holy, universal love. This blessed unity can never be broken. It lies above the reach, and therefore beyond the touch, of earth's disturbing causes. In its very essence, this unity is indestructible. In the spiritual bond, by which it unites the soul to the Saviour, and the Christian to his brother Christian, it is as intangible to the hand of outward events as the soul herself is to the hand of death. It is out of the reach of all such disturbing causes. It is linked with the life, that is "hid with Christ in God." This unity is like the one wide-starred heaven, above the clouds and storms of earth. Get above these mundane elements, and what do we see ? The one vast ether, thick studded with separate star-worlds,

looking down, in the blendings of one, sweet, noiseless, and most pure brightness, upon our dark state ; that one, shoreless, upper deep, lying calm, silent, moveless, unbroken, above the earth, its clouds and its storms. The winds, and lightnings, and thunders, and volcanic fires, and earthquake throes, which appal our senses, may, at times, agitate the airy shallows below that high, blue ether ; but they have no power to roll up and invade that one eternal calm of heaven-light, in which it lies ! Great emblem of the Unity of Christ's "One holy Catholic Church :" " many members yet but One Body ;" many lights in but One heaven ; a realm of life, whose clear depths penetrate heavenward unto God, and whose earthward aspect can never be more than superficially disturbed by the mistakes, and misunderstandings and consequent unharmonies of true Christian brethren !

This Unity, because thus spiritual, is not, therefore, unreal. Every true believer lives in it daily, and daily enjoys its verity. Ask him whether the controversies, agitations and schisms, which make earth so unquiet, ever break or touch the bond which binds him to Christ, or the tie which ties him to any known brother in Christ ? And he will answer : " Thank God, this is a thing which no hand can reach but God's hand, and which His hand never reaches but to strengthen and to per-

fect." Wherever, and to whomsoever, among the great company of the faithful, that question is asked, this will be the answer ; and in this answer comes a living demonstration of the truth that Christ's great prayer went up to be answered, has been answered, and shall be heard and answered ever ; "that they all may be ONE, as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us."

Upon this Unity, however, after what has already been said of that Holy Church, in which it resides, it is not my purpose to dwell. The difficulty of this part of the subject lies elsewhere, as we shall see when I come to illustrate the second remark.

2. Unity, then, belongs to even the visible Church. This unity, however, bears but an analogy with that of which I have just spoken. That it exists we may firmly hold. Christ's prayer has been answered to even His visible Church. This Church, too, though it consist, emphatically, of "many members," is "yet but One Body." To see the truth of this, it becomes necessary to explain in what this visible unity does not consist, and then to state in what it does consist.

I. In what the UNITY of the visible Church does not consist.

(1.) It does not consist, and was never designed to consist, in the subjection of all the parts, or members, to ONE TEMPORAL head.

The Romanist's plea for unity, here denied, is but one great, baseless assumption. Even if the fiction of St. Peter's primacy in the college of the Apostles could be converted into a fact, it would make nothing towards the conclusion that the unity of the visible Church comes out in acknowledging him, or any other human being, as temporal head of that Church. This Church is a Body, and as a Body it has but one head, in heaven or on earth. It is not a two-Headed Body, with one Head in Heaven and the other on earth. The Apostles have eminence among the members of the Body ; but they are themselves in the Church, only because they are members, "set in the Body," and, with all the other members, similarly "set," constitute one whole, united to its ONE HEAD, which Head is Christ. If, therefore, there were such a thing as a primate among the Apostles, this would not constitute him temporal head of the Church, but only chief of the Apostles. Nor would it make the unity of the Church to consist in being united to him ; for the members of the Body Ecclesiastical are no more united to the Apostolic eye than they are to the plebeian foot. Its unity consists in this, that it is, in all its members, one Body, under

one Head, Christ. The first Christians, indeed, "continued in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship," and so must all Christians. To reject the Apostles' "doctrine" is to reject the whole Gospel, and to renounce their "fellowship" is to renounce "the communion of saints;" and he who does either the one or the other of these is no Christian, and therefore not in the Church. But we may "continue in the Apostles' doctrine," and in their "fellowship," too, without acknowledging any one of them, or any alleged successor of that one, as temporal head of the Church, even on the supposition that that one was Primate over the rest. But there was no such Primate. The Apostles were official equals. Whatever may have been their personal inequalities, officially they were on an equality. The theory, therefore, of a temporal head of the Church is based on a double fallacy; and the Romanist's idea of unity is a double fiction. Such a visible unity never has been and never will be. The theory on which it is based is irreconcilable with fact no less than with argument. The visible Church never has acknowledged one temporal head, and it never will. Nearly two thousand years of Christian history have put the realization of the idea among impossibilities. Once, indeed, such an external unity came near being realized; but the nearer it came, the more corrupt and dead grew

the Church ; until, at length, it became a great kingdom of this world, whose manifested life was but intense spiritual death ! Could such a unity be ever effected, could Rome's dream be ever made a reality, permanently and over all the earth, analogy suggests the fear that it would virtually give " the god of this world " a life-lease of its kingdoms in Christ's name. The worst evils that have ever fallen on the temporal state of the Church, have resulted from Rome's attempts to force an external unity in the form of an universal submission to her one temporal head. Blood and fire and earth-embroiling contests have certified to the ages that the Church was not made for such submission. Even Christianized humanity, as the best visible hand of God, fights against such a unity, and hath broken its begun fabric in pieces, like a potter's vessel, whereof the sherds cannot be put together.

(2.) The Unity of the visible Church does not consist in subjection to ONE universal form of Church government and ecclesiastical law as administered by men.

The only supreme government in the Church is Christ's, and the only supreme law is His Word. All other government and law are not of the Church's being, but only of her greater or less well-being. They may, therefore, be modified or changed, without touching the essential unity of

the Church. As a nation may have different forms of government in different ages, or different forms at the same time over its different parts, and yet be all the while one nation, by the acknowledgement, in all its parts, of one supreme authority ; so also is it in the Church. The central and supreme authority of Christ and His Word preserves its unity, notwithstanding the diversity in the forms of subordinate government which prevail. Change of government may amount to revolution, and revolution may be fraught with great evils ; but they destroy not the Body, whether secular or religious, civil or ecclesiastical, in which they occur. It remains true, therefore, that what constitutes the Church one, what makes its unity, is not a universal submission to one form of ecclesiastical government and law.

(3.) The unity of the visible Church does not consist in universal submission to one form of the Christian MINISTRY.

The ministry itself, as we have seen, is not of the essence, but only of the fullness and order of the Church ; even as the eye, the ear, and the hand are not essential to the being, but only to the completeness and perfectness of the human body. The universal prevalence, therefore, of one form of the ministry cannot be that in which the unity of the visible Church consists. It cannot be that

which constitutes this Church “One Body.” It may be requisite, or desirable, to the harmony and the best welfare of this Body ; to that state in which there shall be “ no schism in the Body ; but not to the existence of the Body itself. The Body may really be one, though in a very wounded and a very weakened state. Rejection of what we believe to have been the Apostolic model of the Christian ministry may possibly prove the severest wound which the visible body of Christ can receive compatibly with its continuance in life ; and yet, that such a wound may be received, compatibly with such continuance, we see by what many regard as sad, melancholy experience. The Protestant Reformation on the continent of Europe, one of the greatest facts in the history of the Church since the Apostles’ days, would be an insoluble enigma on the contrary supposition. By what may be considered an unavoidable necessity, in the order of God’s sovereign Providence, that Reformation resulted, among other things, in a local loss of the Episcopacy from the ministry. To say that God was concerned, not merely in permitting, but in producing that Reformation ; that He produced it by the agencies of old sent down to the earth—His Holy Spirit and His Holy Word ; and that He did it to give a new era to the whole Church by reviving her almost extinct spirit-

ual life, and by giving action to causes which may and doubtless must finally throw off all error and all superstition from the heritage of Christ ; to say all this is but to assert what is as plain as that God had an agency in creating the worlds, or that He still has an agency in upholding and governing the worlds. That Reformation was God's own work upon His own Church, and with His own instrumentalities ; as much His own work as was the first gathering of the Church ; and as truly with His own instrumentalities as when He wrought amid primitive "signs and wonders." And yet, as I have said, that Reformation resulted, among other things, in a local loss of the Episcopacy from the Christian ministry ; and it may result in the loss of some portions of Protestantism even from the visible Church. That is, some portions of Protestantism may yet go so far, if they have not already gone so far, as to reject the whole "doctrine and fellowship" both of the Apostles and of Christ ; and thus to die off from the Church, as a branch sometimes dies and drops from the tree on which it grew. But, as a tree may still live, and even grow all the more beautifully, symmetrically and luxuriantly, after the dead branch has dropped and mouldered in the soil beneath ; so would it then prove with the live trunk and branches of the great Continental Reform. Non-

Episcopal Protestantism is already spreading over the wide earth, and carrying with it some of the best life and activities of Christ, His Spirit and His Word ; it is part of the one visible Church and body of Christ ; and it furnishes a living proof that the Oneness, the Unity of this Church cannot consist in a universal subordination of all the members to one form of the Christian ministry. The loss of Episcopacy we consider a great loss ; for what purpose permitted we pretend not to divine ; but to say that it has cast Non-Episcopal Protestantism out of the visible Church, is to be a bold man in charging God, and in overstepping our own highest standards.

II. In what the UNITY of the visible Church does consist.

Having thus seen in what the Unity of the visible Church does not consist, we are now ready for the question, in what, then, does this Unity consist ? And to this question I reply :

The Unity of the visible Church consists in its PROFESSED subjection to CHRIST, the ONE DIVINE HEAD of this Church. It is thus the one universal body, or company, of Christ's professed followers in all the earth. The unity of the visible Church lies in the outward profession and maintenance, every where, of that which really constitutes the

unity of the true, spiritual and holy Church Catholic. The unity of this spiritual Church lies, as we have seen, in truly having “ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism :” “one LORD,” Christ Jesus, the living Head ; “one FAITH,” the whole revealed word, believed with the heart, the vital bond which unites every believer with that Head ; and “one BAPTISM,” the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that which puts the breathing of a divine life into the whole body so constituted and so united. The unity of the true spiritual Church lies in really having these divine things. The unity of the visible Church lies in outwardly professing these things, though, in reality, not all the members have them. The visible Church is one body, because it every where professes the “one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,” without which there is no Church, either spiritual or visible. Whoever, as an individual, or as an organized community, utterly casts off this “one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,” is in HERESY ; and thereby is cut off from even the visible Church : and whoever, as an individual, or as an organized community, professes this “one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,” is thereby incorporated into this Church, and thus makes a part of the ONE visible BODY of Christ. The spiritual Church really has and enjoys these things, and is thereby ONE. The visible Church outwardly pro-

fesses the same things, and is thereby ONE, though some of its members neither enjoy nor have the reality which they profess. The Unity of each has reference to the same elementary, constituent principles, without which there can be no Church, spiritual or visible. The Unity of the one is divine and perfect. The Unity of the other is analogical and imperfect.

With this conception, then, of the oneness of the visible Church, it is obvious that many things may disturb, and even deeply wound, its harmony, or union, without thereby destroying its unity. This is the difference between unity and union. "The unity and entity of the Church," says Bishop Hall, "can no more be divided than itself." To destroy the unity of the body would be to destroy the body itself. But the union of the Church may be broken. This is not infrangible. This may be broken without destroying the Church. Unity is that which makes a thing ONE. UNITY is that which makes several parts agree in one. UNION is the harmony of parts. In the visible Church, therefore, it is easy to see how this union, or harmony, may be broken without thereby destroying that Church's unity, or oneness. By schism it has been broken, sadly broken, until this Church has become like a family, agitated by intestine broils. But its unity remains. It is still the one, great, visible family of Christ

scattered over the earth : and, what is more, its union also—its broken harmony may yet be restored. Perhaps, when we consider the passions and interests of men, and the mixture of all things human in this visible Church, the wonder ought to be that its discords have not been greater, rather than that they have been so great.

And now, let us gather up a few things from that part of the subject which we have just been discussing, and from the subject at large.

(1.) The view which has been taken throws light on the question of returning to the unity of the Church ; or, as the question should be stated, about returning to the union, the harmony, of the Church.

Christians are not to return to visible unity—or rather, let us discard the term, once for all, and say they are not to return to visible UNION, under one temporal head. There is not and never has been such a union ; not even in Apostolic days. Nor are they necessarily to return to visible union under one form of ecclesiastical government and law. Such subordination is not essential to the oneness of the body ; and, considering the diversities of human character, social condition, and political institutions, in various parts of the world, and under various influences of education, we may doubtless say, with safety, that such a subordination is not desirable to the best welfare of the

Church. Nor, however fervently we, as Episcopalians, may pray for it, are they necessarily to return to visible union under one form of the Christian ministry. In the good Providence of God, this subordination may, or may not be restored. At any rate, this subordination is not likely to be hastened by continuing to insist that Non-Episcopal organizations do not belong to the visible Church. If any thing can retard and finally defeat the universal readoption of an Episcopal ministry, it is likely to be a passionate persistence in such a transparent untruth. As men, and even Christian men, are constituted, they are not strongly attracted towards that which perseveringly seeks to fortify itself behind a loveless unreality.

To what, then, are Christians to return? If not to union under one temporal head, nor to union under one form of Church government and law, nor, necessarily, to union under even one form of the Christian ministry, then, to what must they return? I reply, in the idea of our "prayer for all conditions of men," they must return to the "Unity of the SPIRIT in the bond of PEACE." This is the union which has been violated. This is the union which must be restored. It is necessary to the welfare of the Church. Without it, piety will remain stinted, and never grow to half its proper stature. Without it, prayer will continue weak and

never grasp half the divine promises. Without it, the Church itself will live on, a dwarf, and never compass half its destined heritage. The world, in its wants, calls for this return to union. The Church, in her distractions, calls for it. And God, in His Word, calls for it. Aye! And the three shall yet have what they ask. The gracious power of God, by His Spirit, shall give it to the world, to the Church, to Himself. The old world's jeers at the visible Church's broils are beginning to make Christians sick with sadness; and Jesus inspires the faith that the healing of this sickness will come in the restoration of that sweet harmony, the violation of which is so painfully felt.

The questions, What is the Church? Where is it? How may I find it? are often suffered needlessly to disturb the tender conscience. These questions are often artfully pressed, as though there were a thousand rival claimants to the character of the Church, to one only of which it rightfully belongs; and as though, amid their conflicting claims, each individual Christian must decide, or allow others to decide for him, which among them all is the true Church, the only Church, the Church in which alone salvation is to be found. But this, as we have viewed the subject, is an utterly false position. No soul, thank God, has such an awful question as this to answer. The comparative

claims to consideration of different Christian denominations are far from being unimportant ; but they can never grow to such a tremendous weight as this ! It is a weight, which, were it fully felt, would press unnumbered souls into despair, or into a reckless embrace of the most ruinous errors. The simple, but all-sufficient direction, for every one, is this : find the Bible ; find your own sins ; find Christ ; find the Holy Spirit ; find the baptism of the heart into the life “ hid with Christ in God ;” and then, confessing your Saviour before men in the accessible way of His appointment, you have found His Church. His Church covers all Christians. You find that Church in finding Christ by a faith which “ works by love,” “ purifies the heart,” and “ overcomes the world.” For necessity of salvation, you need look no further.

(2.) The question, however,—what is the true Apostolic ministry of the Church ? is one of a different order. We believe this ministry to have been Episcopal. Ignorance, unintentional mistake, education, unavoidable Providences, may render others blameless in living without such ministry ; but nothing would make us blameless in renouncing it, so long as this ministry itself, neither renounces Christ and His Gospel, nor imposes on our consciences terms of communion which are clearly unscriptural. If this ministry should ever assume

either of these positions, the duty of submission to it would be lost in the higher duty of loyalty to Christ and His Truth. It is on this ground that our best writers have ever justified the separation of the European Continental Protestants from the Church of Rome, even though, in that separation, they were unable to carry with them a scriptural Episcopacy. The ministry was "set in the body" for its health and welfare. Subserving these, it must be held. Subverting these it must be renounced ; though it be Episcopal in form ; for the body, with Christ its Head, is more than any member thereof, however eminent in place. If even the eye offend incurably, it must be plucked out.

(3.) The view which has been taken teaches another thing. While it is our duty as Protestants, to mourn over the evils which rend the harmony of the outer Church, and to seek to enter livingly into the sorrows, with which these evils inspire the heart of Christ ; it is also our privilege as Christians, to rejoice in the true and holy unity, which pervades and binds all Christ's living members in His one spiritual Church Catholic ; to cultivate, moreover, that "unity of Spirit in the bond of peace," which should pervade and unite even His outer Church ; and to live, labor and sacrifice, each in his proper sphere, to spread the pure Gospel, the knowledge of the true Saviour, over all the

world. In this way, we shall do our best in bringing again the full mind of Christ upon all his followers ; till, as the light of the sun cometh down and maketh a shining garment for the earth, so that mind, descending, shall enrobe His Church and make even her outer vestments glorious. Already “is the King’s daughter all-glorious within ; and it is a cheering thought that we may aid in bringing forward the time, when her very “clothing shall be wrought gold ;” shining in the sweet harmonies of peace and love and truth.

(4.) Finally ; all that has been said from beginning to end of this whole subject, comes to this one point, as an enduring lesson to every single soul ; the Church, in her best estate, can save no man. If any man be ever saved, he will, it is true, be saved in the Church, and by the instrumentalities, which Christ hath put into her hands for use. Still, the Church does not, cannot save him. He is saved, and he must be saved, for himself individually, by Christ, His Spirit and His Truth ; with as much of personal responsibility and watchfulness and care, as if he were alone in the world, with nothing but Christ His Spirit and His Truth besides him. One of the grand heresies, which the present day has, at times, seemed intent on bringing back upon Protestantism, is, that, somewhere in the abstract being of the Church, there is laid

up a deposit of spiritual life and grace, which she has power, of her own will, or by her own activity, to dispense ; and that to be a member of the Church is, somehow, wittingly or unwittingly, to become a sharer in her rich treasure. It is a fatally perilous delusion. The Church has just so much spiritual life and grace in her, and no more, as her members, each for himself alone, draw from Christ, the Living Fountain, through the channels, which Christ has opened, or which He keeps still hidden with Himself. The spiritual life and grace of the Church can never be greater, or other, than the simple aggregate of what each member thus brings into it from the Fountain-head of all. Happy would it be, if every man would remember this truth ; if he would carry it with him everywhere, sleep under it, wake with it, live in it. The Church cannot save us. Jesus Christ must save us. Thousands, it must be feared, of the members of the visible Church have perished. We shall perish, if we never attain to more than reputable membership in this Church.

And now, in dismissing the whole subject of the comprehension of the Church, a word, personal to the Writer, may perhaps be permitted.

He is not, then, indifferent to what may be said, whether of himself, or of what he has essayed to teach. Yet, has he not been governed herein by

any reference to such notices. He has spoken because he felt it his duty to exhibit what he believes to be, at all times, and especially at this present, very important truths. Those, to whom, in the course of a ministry not short, it has been his privilege in divers places to preach the Gospel, will bear him witness that it has not been his habit to dwell with much frequency on the special subject of the Church. Ordinarily, "Christ and Him crucified" has been and must ever be, so long as a ministry on earth is allowed him, his main theme. The present, however, are no ordinary times. Our Church, both in our own, and in our mother Country, has had, and, it must be feared, still has, in her fold, those who are openly or covertly seeking to put out the light of her Protestantism. Under such circumstances, every minister, within her pale, is bound, in some way, to speak out honestly and fully, and to let his fellow Churchmen know where he stands, and towards what he is driving. If they are to be led away from the Protestant faith of their fathers, it is no more than right that they should be led with their eyes open and with their own consent. Regardfully of these obligations of the clergy and of this right of the people, the Author has acted in what he has now, at some length, propounded. To his Master and to his conscience he could not feel justified in withholding what he has

spoken. Those who have been or may be, to any extent, under his influence, if not the Church at large, have a right to know his mind on this subject. The grave charges, so often urged against those who speak as he has spoken, may perhaps, justify him in the egotism of saying that he is, by conviction as well as in affection, an Episcopalian. He was born and nurtured in the full discipline of the American Episcopal Church. He loves it, and doubts not that he shall love it until death. But he humbly hopes that, "by the grace of God," he bears a still higher designation. He, at least, professes to be a CHRISTIAN; and, as such, he can never sink, in the mere Churchman, the regards which he owes to all who belong to the Saviour of us all. He is also, a PROTESTANT; and, as such, he can never look, without feelings of unfeigned regret upon every step, which our Protestantism may take in retracing its way, even though it should be unconsciously towards the errors, which were renounced, before heaven and earth, on the morning of the great Reformation. He wages no personal contest. He denies to no man the right of forming and of spreading his own judgments on the points discussed. He stands on principle; and claiming the same rights, which he allows, on his own principles he must stand openly. If others can stand with him in the main, he will rejoice; but, with many

or alone, so he stands ; and, with his best prayers and labors for this our Zion upon earth, will hope so to stand till called to share the glory of the true Zion in heaven.

Oh the glory of that upper Church ! To all, who are named of Christ, be that the home of their highest, holiest love. In longings for it let all live ; and to the language of one of its sweet, anticipative hymns, let all train the daily utterances of their hearts :

“ Mother of cities ! o'er thy head
Bright peace, with healing wings outspread,
Forevermore shall dwell ;
Let me, blest seat ! my name behold
Among thy citizens enrolled,
And bid the world farewell.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN.

I CLOSED the last Chapter with an allusion to the Church in Heaven. In the present, I propose no addition to the arguments with which this discussion has been concerned. In bringing the whole to its final close, my object is, so far as may be, to give a holier power to what has been said, by carrying the whole subject which has been discussed up to that future and finished result, wherein all that is imperfect in the Church on earth will be swallowed up forever in the perfections of THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN. If, in what has thus far been said, there have been too much of a taint from secular and earthly influences, it will be pleasant to the Writer—and he hopes it will be no less so to the reader—to close the series with something that shall serve to remind both of the purities of a better world.

We are taught by an Apostle, Heb. 9 : 23, that there were, under the ancient dispensation, “patterns of things in the Heavens.” Some of these

“patterns” are enumerated in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Thus, the sacrifices and sprinkling of blood, observed by the Church under that dispensation, were “patterns” of the one great offering and of the true “blood of sprinkling,” which Christ, our “High Priest forever,” is continually presenting in heaven. Heb. 9 : 24. Thus, too, the most holy place in the temple of the ancient Church was a “pattern” of the “true” Holy of Holies in heaven into which Christ hath entered with that one perfect offering of Himself. Heb. 9 : 8, 12. In heaven there is continual Worship, as we learn from the visions of him who spake in the Apocalypse. The elders, who “worship Him that liveth forever and ever”—“rest not day and night, saying: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty; which was, and is, and is to come.” Rev. 4 : 10 ; 8. Worship on earth is one of the acts in which the Church manifests her life. This worship on high, therefore, implies the existence of a Church in heaven. Moreover, he who had the visions of the Apocalypse saw in heaven “the BRIDE, the Lamb’s wife;” Rev. 21 : 9 ; one of the mystic symbols of the Church in her divine Union with Christ her Head; while the Apostle speaks of “The General Assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven,” as one of the glorious things to which, in the anticipations of a faith, clothed with something

of the ubiquity of its Ghostly giver, the true followers of Christ are represented as “coming” even while yet lingering within the dark confines of the flesh.

There is, then, A CHURCH IN HEAVEN. It is “The General Assembly of the first-born.” To this Church, indeed, Christians “come” even while on earth, with something more present than the anticipations of faith. They come to this Church on earth, because a part of it is still here. And yet, the language of the Apostle is most happily descriptive of, and was doubtless intended, in its full sense, to describe, that part of this Church which is already in heaven ; and it is only when the whole shall have been gathered up and glorified, in that perfect upper world, that our coming to it will be finally and fully realized. So again, “Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” The Church, it is true, is presented to Christ on earth ; and it is, even here, “a glorious Church ;” still, not yet “without spot, or wrinkle,” —not yet “holy and without blemish.” This state of the Church, and this presentation of the Church will never be literally and fully realized, until the whole shall have been gathered up into heaven,

and the marriage of “the bride, the Lamb’s wife” shall be celebrated in solemn state, and with heavenly pomp, before the throne of God.

I repeat, then, there is A CHURCH IN HEAVEN. Heaven itself, considered as a state of being and relations, and as made up of those who fill that state, is a Church. In that Church, JESUS Himself is the great BISHOP, and “shepherd of souls.” Its MEMBERS are “the first-born,”—the choice ones of God,—the first and best fruits of His creatures. Its BAPTISM is the full affusion of “the Holy Ghost and of fire,”—the spirit of glowing, heavenly love poured abundantly upon all hearts. The “names” of its baptized “are written in heaven,” on the registry of life. And its HIGH SACRAMENT, its eternal EUCHARIST, is a feast on more than “Angels’ food”—the manna of immortality ; a feast—not on the PLEDGES but—on the POSSESSION of that, as yet deep mystery—LIFE EVERLASTING in Christ our Head.

If, then, there be a Church in Heaven, it much behoves us to become familiar with its characteristics and partakers of its spirit. For, by so doing, blessings from the inner—upper—sanctuary shall be won and shed down most abundantly, both upon ourselves and upon our fellow members in this cuter, lower congregation—“the Church in the wilderness” of time.

To promote, then, this desired familiarity with things so sacred, so divine, let us proceed to enumerate, so far as we may be able to learn them, the CHARACTERISTICS of the Church in Heaven.

1. It is characterized by UNION.

I say UNION, rather than UNITY, because of the two, UNION is the higher and more perfect state. There is unity in the senseless rock. There is union only between parts capable of agreement and disagreement. There may be unity where union does not, as a greater, include unity as a less. This is illustrated in the Church. Here, there may be unity, while union is broken ; but there can be no UNION which does not include and presuppose unity. In the Church PERFECT UNION is UNITY EXALTED, GLORIFIED. In the Church, perfect union is the intelligent, voluntary agreement and fitting of parts, once capable of deliberate sinful disagreement and discord, but, at last, reconciled into a deliberate, holy harmony for eternity.

On earth, the uniting principle acts feebly and inconstantly between the parts of the Church. In heaven, it operates powerfully and constantly ; so that the very basis of the Church in glory is—UNION—a perfectly harmonious condition of the innumerable parts and members of the glorified body. There are no SCHISMS in the Celestial Church. The members of Christ, there, look not at one another

with the sickly eye of prejudice, till brother learns to hate his brother. They call not one another by odious names there, till at length the very sound of some two-edged epithet, wounding the heart both of him who utters and of him who receives it, stirs to action most unholy tempers. There are no rival SECTS in heaven, each striving to build its own and to pull down the other's house. In that upper Church, are no DIVIDING WALLS, so high as to hinder Christians from seeing each other, and so thick as to keep them from talking with each other. Nor are there any SEPARATE STREAMS OF CHARITY there, kept by artificial dikes from flowing into one common channel ; but LOVE, mighty love, melts down all barriers, leaves heart open to heart, and sends the mingling tide around, till, in one vast charity, the harmony becomes divine. Or, to take a similitude from the Bible, love, there, is the true "BOND OF PERFECTNESS ;" it is a bond never broken ; it leaves not a soul out of its sacred zone ; and it holds all in blest, eternal UNION. In the upper Church is presented the literal fullness of that for which the Saviour prayed : "That they ALL may be ONE ; as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be ONE in us." "And the glory, which Thou gavest me, I have given them ; that they may be ONE even as WE are ONE : I in them and Thou in me ; that they may be made

PERFECT in one." This union is the perfection of the heavenly organization, as love is the perfection of the heavenly individual.

2. The Church in Heaven is characterized by PURITY.

I use this term now, not as synonymous with holiness in the children of God ; but as opposed to mixture among them of such as belong not to them. Pure wheat is the grain, without any mixture of tares. Heaven is a PURE Church because it contains no false members ; no hypocrites, or intentional deceivers of others ; and no formalists, or careless deceivers of themselves. All who are admitted to membership there are admitted under the inspection of the All-seeing Eye ; an Eye that looks through all outward forms into all secret motives. Membership there is a vital reality. About that Vine there are no dead branches, whose only claim to be called branches lies in the fact, that they are found within the enclosure of the Church Vineyard. All there are living branches, grafted into Christ, "the true Vine," and growing out of Him as the real "Tree of Life." In heaven are no "tares" among the "wheat ;" for no enemy finds the divine Husbandman asleep while he essays to sow them. "The Net," which is "let down" from heaven into the broad sea of time, gathers not good and bad, but good only, on the eternal shores. In heaven

it is never said of professing Christians, "They went out from us because they were not of us ;" for all there are regenerate in heart as well as in outward relation ; all are baptized with the Spirit as well as with water ; and all, not only sit down at His table, but also feast on life with the Living Saviour.

It is impossible fully to comprehend the difference between the Church in its best estate on earth, and the Church in this state of PURITY in heaven. Here, fellowship is, at the best, but a feebly-burning fire ; often it is a fire virtually extinguished under the cold reflection that all are not what they profess or appear to be. Each true Christian knows not who, besides himself, is certainly true ; and sometimes he is afraid that even himself may be deceived. Hence, what fears and tremblings, what doubts and distrusts, what damps and chills creep in and trouble Christian fellowship on earth ! Blessed indeed this fellowship often is, but when most blessed it is full of experiences not half-born, and has but here and there something that seems like an experience half grown. But in the Heavenly Church how different ! Oh, the clear shining of that light in which all is certainty ! in which all are known to be what they profess and appear to be ! where each first knows himself to be true, and then knows all others to be true ; where God's seal

is upon every one, certifying that, upon unerring inspection, every one has been found genuine ; and where thus, certainty shines into every heart, and out from every heart ; and all fear is gone, and all tremblings are still, and all doubts are dispelled, and all distrusts are banished, and nothing more is left to damp or to chill the fellowship of the perfect ! GOD'S CERTAINTY beaming everywhere ; the certainty that I am what, to myself and to others, I appear to be ; and that all others are what, to me, to themselves and to God, they profess to be ! Since the first sin was sinned, earth has never known what such a fellowship means. In heaven that sweetest of mysteries will once more be opened.

3. The Church in Heaven is characterized by SANCTITY.

All the members of that Church are not only set apart from common and profane uses, but also separated from every form and degree of sin ; not only consecrated as "vessels of honor" but also "meet for the Master's use." They have no longer anything wrong in their natures. It is true that they feel not like angels, who can look up to God in the silent consciousness that they have never offended Him. Nevertheless, they feel, as even angels cannot feel, like redeemed ones, who can look up to their Father with the uttered yet unut-

terable joy that He has delivered them from all their offenses, and made them once more and forever perfect in His sight. They hear when it is said : "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." These were "redeemed from among men, being first-fruits unto God and the Lamb. In their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God." To use the Apostle's phrase, "In the body of His flesh, through death," Christ hath finally "presented" them to the Father "holy, and unblamable, and unreprovable in His sight."

Here is another marvel of difference between the Church on earth at its best estate, and the Church in Heaven at its final glory. As sinners here, we can know nothing of the bliss of sinlessness. We can only know the blessedness of pain, and struggle, and chastening, with mingled love, and tenderness, and faithfulness ; giving us experience of alternate defeat and victory, and of deep solicitude and hopeful watching over the beginnings and the progress of our sanctification ; the whole interspersed with here and there a glimpse, a foretaste of something like the coming fullness ; but, of absolute sinlessness and perfection, of being "holy, unblamable and unreprovable." even in

the sight of God ; not merely unblamed, but “unblamable,” not merely unreproved, but “unreprovable ;” not only fit for use, but “fit for the MASTER’s use ;” of THIS state we as yet know nothing. The difference between being holy and perfect in intent and endeavor—which is the state of all true Christians here—and being sinless and spotless in realized fact and effect—which will be the state of all the saints in heaven—THIS difference we cannot know until we get among the experiences of the upper Church ; not till then can we know what a mystery of blessedness and glory awaits us as flowing from those experiences. I MUCH WONDER what will be the feelings of a SINLESS soul among sinless souls, and in the presence of GOD !

4. The Church in Heaven is characterized by LIGHT.

I speak not of the light which visits these poor, feeble eyes of flesh, but of the true light, the shining of TRUTH, the light of the SOUL. In heaven there is no error, nor any to teach error, concerning either God or His ways, concerning either man or his destiny. There is no ignorance in heaven, as growing out of the disuse of the faculties of the mind ; nor any mistake, as originating in that feebleness, which cannot always use those faculties aright. These and all other forms of dark-

ness are dispersed, and “the true light shineth.” Heaven is full of TRUTH, of KNOWLEDGE, and of CERTAINTY. There are no HERESIES to be cut off from that Church ; no “seeing through a glass darkly ;” all is “face to face ;” no knowing but “in part ;” all “know even as they also are known.” In heaven, TRUTH is like a great SEA ; though shoreless and fathomless, yet transparent throughout ; and the Christian there is like one who, from the cliffs of some beautiful isle, looks down into the clear depths, as they reveal to him all their wonders, and rejoices that there are no limits to his discoveries but those which lie in the very boundlessness of the transparency. Is not this the mystery which John saw in the Revelations, when the Heavenly City appeared to him “as pure gold, like unto clear glass ?” Was it not the gold of SIMPLE TRUTH, translucent to the eye of the spiritual man ? And was not a similar mystery brought before his mind, when he saw, beneath the light of the seven mystic lamps burning “before the Throne, a sea of glass like unto crystal ; and in the midst of the Throne, and round about the Throne, four living ones full of eyes ?” Was it not the transparent sea of TRUTH spread out beneath the light of God’s all-illuminating Spirit, into whose clear depths the eyes of the holy ones are ever looking to wonder and adore ?

And who, as yet, can tell me the glory and the blessedness of living in the LIGHT of such a life ? The bliss of knowing ! Our nature is brutish, even here, if it taste not something of the joy. And yet, the fullest light, the highest knowledge here is but “in part ;” it is all “through a glass darkly.” O for perfect TRUTH, perfect LIGHT, to show us all that we desire to know, and to stimulate our desires to know all that an ever-unfolding eternity can reveal, with the certainty that every new step in knowledge will be a new degree in glory and in joy !

5. The Church in Heaven is characterized by SEPARATENESS.

This is near of kin to sanctity, and yet, the term brings up a somewhat different train of thought. On earth, even true Christians are more or less “conformed to the world ” in their tastes, habits and intercourse. In heaven the spirit of such conformity disappears. The Church there is separate from the world—not because walls of adamant and gates of brass have been built between them, nor because measureless space has been interposed to prevent their association, but—because the desire to associate is unfelt. Moral differences there are seen in the light which reveals all things ; and being seen are also felt ; and the seen and felt difference between the holy and the unholy, be-

tween the worldly and the unworldly, THIS is the wall that separates their destinies. THIS constitutes the measureless distance which is interposed between their eternal abodes. The voice of God, which separates between the wicked and the righteous, is not a sound that falls on the ear of sense, but a conviction that is uttered into the heart of conscience. His segregating power lies in the light of His Truth, shining up and showing all moral and spiritual things just as they are, and, with its revealings, sending home into the souls of the holy and of the unholy a consciousness of eternal dissimilitude. Nowhere but in the world of spirits is that great truth, which Jesus taught, felt in its full power : “ Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved ; but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.”

The mingling, now referred to in the Church on earth, as opposed to SEPARATENESS in the heavenly Church, is not that of true and false members in the Church, but that of the true members of Christ with an ungodly world. And who can estimate the discount, which is thus forced upon the real dignity and self respect, and upon the true happiness and usefulness of the visible body of Christ ? Every one knows, indeed, when he reflects, that

this conformity to the world is incompatible with either the real dignity or the proper self-respect of Christians ; and experience, if they would consult it, might convince all, as it has convinced myriads, that such conformity is fearfully ruinous both to genuine Christian happiness, and to desired Christian usefulness. Well, blessed be God ! in heaven all this will be unknown. There the saints will be cured, at last, of all their fond longings after the hurtful things which they have left behind ; and infinitely, then, will they be satisfied with the new state of separateness, into which they have been introduced. What a felt grandeur will invest their new dignity ! What a taste of sweetness will live in their divine self-respect ! What a happiness will they realize in their final and perfect freedom from all that is incongruous in their associations ! And what an immensity of power will they have acquired for doing, as immortals love to do, the work of God through all His worlds ! No pride, or superciliousness at the thought of being greater, or better than others, but a glorious sense of perfect freedom in being and in doing what, as the saints of God, they were designed to be and to do ! This, I think, will be a pleasing wonder in the future Church !

6. The Church in Heaven will be characterized by SOCIAL FELLOWSHIP.

This fellowship is intended to characterize the Church, even upon earth ; and what is more, it was intended to characterize even the visible Church in this world. It may be added, that, in some poor measure, this intention is actually realized ; and that, as realized, this fellowship is incomparably better and more satisfying than any which the wicked ever know. But how poor is it, at the best, in comparison with what it ought to be ! How unspeakably poor in comparison with what it will be hereafter !

In heaven, the members of the Church have “fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ,” in all the perfection of that mystery. “The Communion of the Holy Ghost” also is with them in its divinest fullness. But, what I more particularly intend in this place is—the SOCIAL fellowship which characterizes the Church in Heaven ; the fellowship of the saints with ONE ANOTHER. They have fellowship with apostles and prophets, with martyrs and confessors, with patriarchs and all the holy men of old ; and they have this fellowship without alloy. “The Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven,” is called “the general ASSEMBLY.” It is a company ; and it exhibits the perfection of SOCIAL LIFE. It admits of no dis-social grades. Diversities of rank, office, and station may, and doubtless will, exist there ; for heav-

en is not a monotonous human level ; its idea is not that of a forced democratic equality ; it is a monarchy, whose monarch is God ; it is an Episcopacy, whose "Bishop of souls" is Jesus ; and it is full of the diversities of ever varying character and attainments in perfection. But, whatever may be its diversities, the wonder of the heavenly state is, that they excite no separating feeling ; they oppose no bars to freedom and cordiality of intercourse. That unmasterable difficulty of earth is perfectly mastered in heaven. There are no senseless conventionalities, no artificial restraints, no stiff formalities, no haughty coldnesses, in the society of "the saints in light." The loftiest spirit there feels no embarrassment in holding open fellowship with the lowliest follower of the Lamb ; but delights to sit in sacred converse and communion with him at the feet of Jesus. And why should he not ? Jesus holds fellowship with them all ; Jesus, the Lamb, the lowliest, yet the loftiest, on high ! In His presence, in His service, and in His Church, there are and can be no rivalries, no jealousies, no clashing interests, no great families to be built up, and enclosed, and kept guarded from the poor, the obscure, the unknown. Nothing among His followers represses the indulgence of mutual sympathies. They are all as He requires them to be, "like little children ;" and like little children they

act just as they feel, and feel just as they act. Mere earthly titles, earthly wealth and earthly prejudices are left down in the grave, side by side with the obscurity, the indigence, and the depression of the once suffering children of God. Differences of race, of color and of clime are unknown ; and the worshippers in the heavenly sanctuary, the guests at the sacrament above, having laid aside these their incumbrances, and dropped all their badges of earthly distinction, stand up, in a nobler fellowship than earth can know, the fellowship, in all their heavenly ranks, of “ the spirits of just men made perfect.”

Is there not something in our souls which longs for such a fellowship as that ? And is it not possible for us to do something towards bringing down a little of it to ease and limber the poor, straightened, manacled state of our present SOCIAL Church life ?

7. The Church in Heaven is characterized by GLORY.

When presented in heaven, it is to be presented as “ a GLORIOUS Church ;” and its glory will be the clustering around it of all the perfections which have been named, together with the shining on its brow of a crown, made up of the light and the likeness of God and the Lamb. But there is a still further glory in the heavenly Church ; a glory by

which our present sympathies may be more easily touched. There is a glory in the REST, in the JOY, and in the ACTION of that Church.

There is a glory in its REST. No sorrow, no suffering, no tears, no death can darken, or dim its radiance. Its rest, however, is not listlessness, nor dreamy sleep. It is like the calm, which surrounds the moveless throne of God ; a living, waking calm ; a repose fearless of interruption, and full of power.

There is, too, a glory in its JOY. It is a beaming of "all the fullness of God" through that living sanctuary. The joy of the Church in heaven is the sunlight of eternal happiness shining into the souls that worship there. It is the everlasting light of God's love in their hearts, streaming out and around, like a forth-shining divinity, upon all in heaven ; till Jesus and His saints seem one in its illimitable brightness.

And there is glory in its ACTION. All right and good and great action is glorious. In heaven this glory is complete. The action of the Church there combines the strength, the intelligence, and the harmony of one perfect Body, governed by one perfect Head, moved by one perfect Will, and tending to one perfect good. The members of that Body are unfainting spirits. "They rest not day and night" in their divine employ. No clogs of

sense, no burden of the flesh, no dull and weary and earthly affections weigh them down. In their worship they never flag ; in their search for knowledge they never tire ; in their “ labors of love ” they never grow heartless. Energies worthy of the redeemed are alive there. Whether they sing the song of those who have been saved, or study adoringly into the wonders of the Divine Character and plan of Redemption ; or wander discursive amid the boundless works of God ; or trace the streams of knowledge up to their fountains in the eternal hills ; whether they do one, or another, or all of these things, they alike put forth the activities of free and noble, sinless and mighty spirits. Their activities are all-glorious.

How little can we know on earth of such glorious rest, filled with such glorious joy, and kindred with such glorious action ! Yet, Lord, send down upon Thy poor Church, even here, somewhat of the rich glory that awaits her !

8. And finally, the Church in Heaven is characterized by SAFETY.

She is past all disastrous change. The “ Father’s House of many mansions ” is her eternal home ; His Kingdom of exhaustless richness is her eternal heritage ; and His fidelity, of infinite tenderness, is her eternal keeper. In this she has passed quite beyond all present experience of the Church on

earth. This Church is still “militant,” and many of the chequered incidents of “the holy war” lie still before her. Through battles and sieges, reverses and successes, defeats and victories, she still holds her course. Security she may at times perilously indulge, but SAFETY she can never really enjoy, until she reaches the home, the heritage and the keeping of her heavenly Head. This SAFETY is the special portion of the Church in Heaven; and how divinely full it is of blessedness; what emphasis it gives to “the peace of God which passeth all understanding!”

The Church in Heaven, then, is past all disastrous change. It wades not through the blood and fires of successive Pagan persecutions. It passes through no night of Darkling Ages. It whets no sword, prepares no torture, and contrives no death, for those servants of God, who refuse to bow their necks to the yoke of error. It quakes amid the throes of no violent Reformation. It languishes not amid returning slumber, declension and decay. It dips no pen in the gall of controversy to stir up strife and teach brethren how to hate. It wars not against the Word of God. It cloaks no infidelity and no sensuality under the forms of cumbrous and unmeaning ceremony. It commits no mistakes by attempting to fashion or facilitate the providences supposed to be necessary to the fulfilment of unful-

filled prophecy. Nor does it lie asleep while the Bridegroom is really coming to that fulfilment. But, past all such historic sadnesses, purified from all defiling mixtures, and made perfect by the discipline of the Ages, it rests on immovable foundations a Heavenly Church, full of God, of His light, of His love, and of His praise !

Such is the Church in Heaven ! “The King’s daughter is all-glorious within ; and her clothing is of wrought gold.” In describing her, I have dealt in no vain imaginations. The gold of which her vesture is wrought, is dug from the eternal mines, as laid open in the field of inspired truth ; of truth inspired by Him to whom all secret things in heaven and earth are visible. The characteristics of the Church in glory are all characteristics of the Church in humiliation ; only they are but imperfectly manifested in this world, or are seen only in possibilities, as foreshadows of their coming reality. Their perfection is seen nowhere but in that world, where God appears unveiled to the eye of His “ saints in light.”

And now, could I suppose these thoughts addressed to any who have heretofore been thoughtless and careless of their souls, I would ask of them one parting question. Will you go and join that “glorious Church” at which we have been looking ; the Church “without spot or wrinkle ;”

the Church which is “ holy and without blemish ? ” If you hope to live in heaven, you must become willing, nay, fit, to become members of the CHURCH in Heaven. But how is this ? Multitudes hesitate. Multitudes are not ready to join even the Church on earth. They do not feel prepared, or fit, for fellowship with the saints in this their comparatively imperfect state. How, then, can they go and join that “ glorious Church ” above ? And yet, join it they must, if they are ever there. There is not and never will be, a human soul in heaven who is not, at the same time, a member of the Church in Heaven. Would to God men were ready for Church-membership even here, sincere, believing and affectionate membership with the true, though as yet but partially sanctified disciples of Christ ! On such a readiness the benevolent Father, God, would smile, and ripen it, as His sunshine ripens our swelling fruits into a rich and perfect meetness for what awaits His own in heaven !

But the subject, thus carried up to its final issues, respects, specially, those who are already members of the Church on earth ; and the principal thought which it should keep alive in their minds is this : the members of the Church on earth ought to regulate their whole course of life, association, habit, and feeling, with reference to future membership

in the Church in Heaven. The true Church here is more than a type of the glorified Church there. This earthly is more than a “pattern” of that heavenly thing. They are but parts of one and the same “communion and fellowship.” The earthly passes into the heavenly. The one is a school for education and discipline ; the other, is the society of alumni, graduated into an endless life of action and enjoyment. The one is the porch ; the other, the great temple itself. The one is youth, tender and impressible ; the other, manhood, firm and vigorous. If, then, the child should carefully train and fashion himself for the duties and the destiny of the man, so should the Christian on earth regulate his whole course of life, association, habit and feeling with strict reference to his future standing as a member of the Church in Heaven. He should do everything here which he would approve there, and nothing here which he would there condemn. Imperfect light and knowledge here may prevent his always seeing what he would there either approve or condemn ; and the feebleness of nature amid the powers of the world may sometimes render him unable to do or to avoid what he knows he ought to do or to avoid ; but, so far as he can see, or be made to see, what would be either approved or condemned in heaven, and so far as he has, or can

obtain, strength either to do or to avoid the doing of it; he should scrupulously regulate the present with reference to the future. He should habitually live as though his next communion were to be made in "the Church of the first-born" and at the table in heaven! And yet, how few, among professing Christians, ever think of making this the rule of their present life! How few, by this rule, regulate their intercourse with the world! How few by this regulate their intercourse even with their fellow-Christians! How few think of this either in their business or in their devotions, and how few practice according to it either in their pleasures or in their charities!

The cases in which these suggestions will apply themselves, can be known only, or may be known best, by each individual member in the Church of Christ. These thoughts, however, must not have their close without an expression of the deep and solemn conviction that, if there can be tears in that world where "all tears are wiped away from all faces," Christians will shed them when they come to look down from their seats on high upon the courses in life which they have been pursuing; upon the present state of their associations, their habits and their feelings; so full of conformity to the world, so dull, so languid, so selfish, so slow to good, so little like what **THEY** ought to be who

profess to believe that their names are “ WRITTEN IN HEAVEN !”

Let us all listen to the voice which is sounding in our ears : “ Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light : ” and, as we hear, let us all arouse ourselves, “ gird up the loins of our minds,” and henceforth live like men who do indeed “ wait for their Lord.”

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: August 2005

Preservation Technologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 479 396 1