

A MANUAL OF INSTRUCTION
IN
CHURCH HISTORY.

BY
THE REV. GEORGE W. SHINN,
Newton, Mass.,

AUTHOR OF "A MANUAL OF INSTRUCTION UPON THE COLLECTS, EPISTLES
AND GOSPELS," AND "A MANUAL OF INSTRUCTION
UPON THE PRAYER BOOK."

New-York:
T. WHITTAKER,
No. 2 BIBLE HOUSE,
1881.

Columbia University
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PREFACE.

CHURCH HISTORY is a greatly neglected study. It is rarely taken up even in the course prescribed in our Church schools. With the exception of occasional parochial discourses, very little effort is made to instruct our congregations as to the origin and the development of the Church.

One of the reasons for this general neglect of what is admitted to be a really interesting and important study, is the lack of *suitable* volumes upon the subject.

Not that there is a scarcity of Church Histories, but they are usually too erudite and too large to command the attention of other than regular students. Young people in our schools, and the general reader, can hardly be interested in the minute details of controversies, or in the exact shading of heresies, or in the connected history of obscure points, but might be interested in viewing the great

landmarks, and in tracing the connection between what now is, and what has been.

The present volume is designed to supply some such outline. If a book of so few pages does not include everything of interest and importance, it is by no means surprising, when the greatness of the field is considered.

The author's hope is that it may be useful as an introduction to the more careful study of standard works, may serve as a text book in schools, and may be helpful to those who would trace out the **Church's lineage**.

MANUAL OF INSTRUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH OF GOD BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

JEWISH CHURCH—ABRAHAM—PROMISES TO OUR FIRST PARENTS—DOCTRINE OF THE UNITY OF GOD—AGES OF PREPARATION.

ALTHOUGH we speak of the Christian Church as having been organized on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 34, in the city of Jerusalem, it would be a mistake to think of it as starting out then as something entirely distinct from all that had preceded it. In one view the Christian Church is the continuation of the Jewish Church. More than this, it is the continuation of the Church of God which existed from the calling of Abraham out of idolatry. And still beyond this, it is the development of the promise of redemption made to our first parents.

We are not to think of the all-wise God as trying one experiment and abandoning it for another, but as carrying out His plans by most gracious provisions, suited to the growing capacity and preparation of the human family.

In His mercy He promised to our sinning parents that their offspring should bruise the serpent's head.

To preserve and train a people who should preserve the memory of this promise, and whose high destiny it should be to give birth to the Deliverer, He called Abraham out of the land of idolatry and made of him a nation. That nation became His chosen people, and He secured their continuance through all the vicissitudes of many ages until the time was ripe for the coming of Messiah.

It would be hard to understand the history of the Jewish people if it were not that we could see, throughout all of their strange and eventful career, the gradual development of the good purposes of God.

Among this people were preserved the doctrine of the unity of the Deity, as opposed to the Pantheism and idolatry of surrounding nations—a moral code infinitely beyond that of other people—significant religious rites, which pointed on to a sequel in the future — a succession of authorized religious teachers—and inspired records containing a revelation of the attributes and the purposes of the Deity.

If we consider the older Dispensation to have ended abruptly and to have had no connection with the establishment of the Christian Church, and the Christian Church to have begun as something entirely new, we will utterly misapprehend the

purposes of God during the long ages before Christ, and also fail to see the unity of God's plans of mercy to our race throughout all time.

But we are to think of all of the ages before Christ as the time of preparation for His coming, and the Church which He founded as the realization of God's plans of mercy towards the fallen race.

If it seem strange to us that so many ages elapsed before the Redeemer appeared, and so many epochs of preparation came and went, we must remember that God is infinitely wise and good, and that a thousand years to Him are but as a day.

And thus it is that we regard the Old Testament Scriptures as the grand prelude to the sweet harmony of redemption so distinctly heard when the Son of God became incarnate for man's redemption. Just as an overture to a great musical composition combines the many melodies which are subsequently developed more clearly, so will we find in the Old Testament, suggestions of the truths which it was the mission of the Christ to reveal in His life and work.

Beginning with the first book of the Bible, we find the promise of salvation from ruin ; then going on, we note the conflict between good and evil in the world ; further on we have histories of individuals who illustrated the principle of trust in God, and, in some particulars, became types or shadow pic-

tures of the coming Saviour ; then we see a people called out of the world and brought into peculiar relationship to God, for whom He made laws, and for whom He established a religious system full of most significant religious rites, a system whose every part taught them to look forward to a sequel which should be full of grace and glory ; then we look still further on and trace out the history of that people, full of wonderful events — now they are captives in strange lands, now rejoicing in great prosperity in their own land, and now again, beneath the iron heel of foreign rulers, a people wonderfully preserved to accomplish God's purposes ; and last of all we take up the books of sacred poetry, the psalms and the prophecies, and while we hear the singers sing many plaintive songs, and strike the strings in the minor key to tell of sorrow and sin, yet running through all are the joyous notes that One should come Who will save His people, and make this world brighter and better.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONDITION OF THE WORLD WHEN CHRIST CAME.

ROME, MISTRESS OF THE WORLD—HEROD, RULER OF
THE JEWS—WAY PREPARED FOR A UNIVERSAL
KINGDOM — FACILITIES FOR REACHING ALL PARTS
—LEARNING SPREAD — USE OF LATIN AND GREEK
LANGUAGES — DISSATISFACTION WITH PAGANISM —
SOCIAL CORRUPTION.

Emperors—AUGUSTUS CÆSAR ON THE THRONE AT THE
OPENING OF CHRISTIAN ERA ; TIBERIUS, A. D. 14.

WE are now to glance at the condition of the world as it was when the Redeemer came. It is declared by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews that, “in the fullness (or ripeness) of the time God sent forth His Son.” Our view of the political, social and religious condition of the world then, will enable us to understand in what that fullness, or ripeness, of the time consisted.

1900 years ago Rome was the mistress of the world. The wish of her imperial master was obeyed from Britain to Syria, by nations separated from each other by many miles of territory and by

every variety of race and of religion. Throughout the civilized world, and over many barbarous tribes, Roman rule extended. Roman governors, consuls, triumvirs and dictators were the ultimate authority in every province. Roman soldiers were stationed in every quarter. Roman manners and customs prevailed. Everything was Roman, so that from her central city to the remotest extremity there flowed out law, literature, fashion and sentiment.

Sixty years before the birth of Christ, Palestine became a Roman province. After the Maccabean wars internal dissensions prevailed among the Jews, and the rival parties invited Pompey, the Roman general, to settle their dispute. His mode of settlement consisted in his making the whole country tributary to Rome.

At the time of Christ's birth we find upon the throne of Judea a ruler known as Herod the Great. He was a tributary prince, raised to power by the favor of Rome, and scrupled at no iniquity to please his royal masters. His government was a burdensome yoke to the Jews, and Judea groaned beneath the bondage.

Now let us pause a moment to see how the political state of the world then indicated the ripeness of the times for the coming of Christ.

First, the supremacy of Rome paved the way for the reception of the grand idea of a universal kingdom which should embrace all the nations of the

earth. It paved the way for men to understand more clearly what was meant when the Messiah established a kingdom which should embrace in one family all the families of the earth, and which should merge in one supreme sentiment of loyalty to Him, all the differing sentiments of many peoples.

Second, the progress of the Roman armies and of commerce, and of their language, had led to the opening of communications with far distant nations, and over the highways of travel thus opened, the heralds of the Gospel of Peace were subsequently to go. Rome acted unconsciously as the pioneer of the Church of Christ.

When we come to look at the *social condition* of the world as it was then, the view is a saddening one, and shows how the world needed the truths which the Christ was to proclaim.

Art and literature flourished, and science, as far as it was then known, both material and speculative, was encouraged, but there was but little in the culture of the day to make men better. The ties binding families together were lightly regarded. The strong put yokes upon the necks of the weak. Sensual appetites were ministered to at the expense of suffering. The very amusements of the people were such as involved extreme cruelty and the shedding of blood.

The fullness of the time had come, for—.

First, the general spread of learning rendered men able to examine the claims of Christianity, and those claims were submitted to a fiercer scrutiny than has ever been witnessed since.

Second, the general use of the Roman tongue made intercourse easy with distant places, and the use of the Greek language in literature, supplied a vehicle for the accurate conveyance of the profound thoughts contained in the religion of Christ.

Third, the dark background which the social condition of the world then presented, brought out in clearer relief the pure morals of Christianity. There was an immediate and most vivid contrast between what the world was, and what Christianity required it to become, and the yearnings of men for something better were to be gratified in the religion of the Christ.

If we look at the *religious condition* of mankind then, we see evidences that the time was ripe for the Messiah's advent.

With the exception of the Jews, among whom the knowledge of the true God was preserved, the nations had departed to error. Some were given to gross idolatry, others deified the stars, others worshipped a multitude of fictitious deities. The most refined preserved a mythology which contained within it most debasing beliefs. Many of

the educated were utterly skeptical, and the very ministers of religion were incredulous as to the truthfulness of their own system. Even among the Jews there was permitted the admixture of heathen errors.

Clearer light from heaven was needed both for Jew and for Gentile. Man must have a religion. If he do not have a true religion he will accept one that is false. The time was ripe for the clear revelation of a true religion, of one which would suit the needs of man, and satisfy his yearnings. When man needed that religion most, Christ came.

It is not for us to lament then that so many ages passed away before the true Light dawned upon men. God never suffers His plans and purposes to be defeated by their immature presentation.

He raised up the Roman power to unify the races of men for the acceptance of a universal religion. When human laws were shown to be inadequate to preserve social order, He caused the Healer to come to purify man's social condition. When the wild plant of heathenism had so grown that all men could see that its fruit was not for the healing of the nations, He planted His own Vine, which shall never be uprooted. When men saw that by their wisdom they could not find out God, the only begotten Son came to declare Him.

CHAPTER III.

THE EARTHLY LIFE OF JESUS, THE CHRIST.

THE GOD INCARNATE—THE GOSPELS—THE CHURCH A
WITNESS OF HIS LIFE AND WORK.

In speaking of the earthly life of the Saviour, we are reminded of that which can never be described by men :—His existence as *God* from all eternity.

Although there was a time when the second Person of the Trinity became incarnate, became man, we must never forget that He was in the beginning with God, and He was God.

It is hard too to separate between the two natures which He possessed after He took upon Him our nature. He was perfectly God, and perfectly man. There was no mixture or confusion of these two natures, and yet men looked upon but one being. They walked and talked with Him, saw Him grow weary and sleep, saw Him subjected to death, and yet they also saw Him control the elements, heal diseases, raise the dead, and return to life Himself.

In other words, while they looked upon His manhood, they also saw flashes of His Divinity. His

manhood was as the veil which was thrown over His Divinity. If it should seem to any of us to be incredible that God should condescend to visit this earth and take upon Him our nature, the reply is : It pleased Him so to do, and thus our redemption has been accomplished.

Four of His disciples, whom we now call Evangelists, were moved by the Holy Spirit to record what He did, and what He said, during the time He dwelt among men. These are very brief histories, and contain but the merest outline, but they are sufficient to give us some clear idea of His character and the work He came to do.

From these four histories, which we call Gospels, we may gather this outline :

The birth of Jesus took place in Bethlehem, of the Virgin Mary, during the reign of Augustus Cæsar. His youth was spent at Nazareth. When He was about thirty years old he began to teach and to preach. In course of time He gathered about Him a chosen band of followers, comprising a few simple-hearted men, to whom He made known more fully His mission, and whom He commissioned to make it known to their fellow-men. When He was less than thirty-four years old, He was put to death by crucifixion, but on the third day after that event, He arose from the dead, and remained on the earth forty days, during which time He gave them

instruction concerning the kingdom of God, and then ascended into heaven.

This is the briefest outline of a life which was filled with mighty deeds, and blessed works, and during which many gracious words were spoken.

Every detail of that life is important, every word spoken is of value, for all have a bearing upon the redemption of our lost race, the revelation of the will and character of God, and our final destiny.

All the subsequent history of the Church is but the record of the working out of Christ's mission to the lost, and the revelation of God's character and will to men.

It is beyond the power of the human imagination to conceive how very different the world would be to-day, if that life had not been lived here on earth, and if the light which has been poured out by the Christ had been withheld. It is true there was some light before the incarnation. The revelation made to the race in its infancy, the traditions handed down and preserved among the Gentile nations, the illumination vouchsafed the Jewish nation through its prophets and teachers, were as the gray tints before the day. But from the incarnation we date the rising of the Sun upon the world. Then the radiance began to excel all that had ever before been poured out, and they who stood where the beams could fall upon them, saw the fogs and mists of error vanish and the shadows flee away.

The world could not be *after* Christ's advent, what it had been *before*.

It is true that clouds sometimes arise and sweep across the sky, and hide the clear brilliance of the sun after the day has come, but the sun shines on, and bursts forth again and again with new splendor.

We will see, as we read further on, that there have been times when the truths revealed at the incarnation have been obscured by human errors, and for the time men have failed to see the beauty and the grace of the life of the Son of God ; but there never has been a time since that wondrous birth in Bethlehem when the world could be as dark and as full of mystery as it was before.

What God is—what He is to us and what we are to Him—why we are here, and what we may be hereafter—how we may be at peace with Him now, and dwell in His presence forever—these are the points which are taught us in the earthly life of the Christ.

There is really no mystery so great in all the universe as the life of Jesus, unless we believe Him to be God incarnate. If he were not what He claimed to be, and what His followers declared Him to be, there is but little value to be attached to all of the history of the Christian Church. That history is then mainly a succession of erroneous conclusions, based upon mistaken premises. It would be

scarcely worth the trouble to study a history which has now extended through eighteen centuries, if it started out upon a false basis. We might gratify our curiosity as we would in reading the history of Buddhism or of Mahommedanism, but it would be of little value to study a history of the Christian Church if that Church were based upon the pretensions of one who after all was not what he claimed to be.

It is particularly important at the present day to have this point well fixed in our minds, viz., that the Christian Church is based upon the belief that Jesus Christ is God in human form, for it has become part of the labor of many in our day to deny His true Divinity, and to explain away all that is supernatural in His life. Church history would be a very different story to-day if such views were true, for it would begin with the account of imposture, it would continue with the strange phases of the delusion of myriads of those who have believed in Him ; and it would end—how could it end except in the story of shameful defeat and extinction ?

Starting then with the truth that the second Person of the Blessed Trinity became incarnate, we look upon Jesus Christ as obeying the Law for us, as paying the penalty of our sins by His sufferings and death ; and as overcoming death by His resurrection. In order to secure to men the perpetual memory of His work, and to extend to them its

blessings, He organized a society, a Church, which is spoken of as the Kingdom of God on earth. For this Church He instituted two Sacraments : Baptism, and The Supper of the Lord. The first was to be the mode of admission to this organization, the second to be the mode of commemorating His redemptive work, and for the supply of spiritual grace.

The mode of government of the Church, and many of its other features, we infer He communicated to His apostles, and particularly in the period after His resurrection, from the fact that immediately upon the development of the Church after Pentecost, it possessed certain characteristics to be more fully described hereafter.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FEATURES OF THE CHURCH IN THE APOSTOLIC AGES.

SIMILARITY OF CHARACTER AS EVERYWHERE PLANTED—A KINGDOM ON EARTH, NOT OF THE EARTH—
BAPTISM — CONFIRMATION — EPISCOPACY — LORD'S DAY—LITURGIES.

IT is quite improbable that our Lord, in commissioning the Apostles to establish His Church in the world, would have left them without some directions. What were those directions? We do not find them all fully recorded in the Sacred Scriptures. How then can we ascertain what they were? The answer is briefly this:—So soon as the Church was established in any place we find it possessed certain prominent features. In whatever places it was established those features were the same. It is fair then to conclude that it assumed the form which it possessed because of the directions the Saviour gave the Apostles.

Some of these features we do find explicitly stated in the New Testament. Others of them are incidentally alluded to. Others were doubtless com-

municated to them in His many conversations which are not recorded, and particularly in that period of forty days after His resurrection, prior to His ascension. We are told in Acts i., that He then talked with them of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. The phrase "the Kingdom of God," is often understood as referring simply to the Kingdom of God in heaven, but its reference is also to that Kingdom which Christ came to establish on earth, as when He taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come."

When He sent forth the seventy disciples they were told to preach the Kingdom of God. St. Philip, the Deacon, preached the things concerning the Kingdom of God. St. Paul's ministry at Ephesus was a preaching of the Kingdom of God.

If then it was Christ's design to found a kingdom in the world, but not of the world, it must have certain features, and those are probably what we find in the Church which at once sprang up. It was to be visible, a society, with some mode of admission, with a government and discipline, with some central truths, and with mean for preserving its continuance and prosperity.

We are to look then at the features of this society which we find uniformly to have followed its establishment by the Apostles.

First, The Sacrament of Baptism was the door of entrance to this society. We see no exception

to the rule, whether it was a multitude as on the day of Pentecost, or a jailor, in a prison, by night, who desired to be numbered with the believers in Christ. And as little children had been received as members of the Jewish Church by the rite of circumcision, so children were incorporated into the Christian body by baptism.

Second, It became the custom of the Apostles to lay hands on those who were baptized, administering what we now call the rite of confirmation. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the laying on of hands is classed among the very elements of the Christian faith.

Third, There seems to have been immediately developed a ministry of three orders, consisting at first of Apostles, Elders, and Deacons, and then, as the Apostles passed away, of Bishops, Elders and Deacons, the Bishops succeeding, it is thought, to the Apostolic office. Here was at once inaugurated a succession, transmitted by ordination, a succession, involving a distinction of degrees, and perpetuating a presidency in its highest rank. This three-fold ministry seems to have been bound up in the very structure of the Church, and became one of its features wherever the Church was planted.

Fourth, Another feature was the celebration of the Holy Communion. This was a sacrament instituted by our Lord Himself, and was celebrated

by the primitive believers upon every Lord's Day, and probably even more frequently.

Fifth, The observance of the first day of the week, as the Lord's Day, a day of rest and of worship, became at once a feature of the Christian society. It will be observed that nowhere in the Scriptures do we find any directions for changing from the seventh day to the first day of the week. And yet it became essentially a part of the usage of the early Church to celebrate the Lord's victory over death on that day, and to make that day as religious a day as had been the custom with reference to the Jewish Sabbath. Who authorized the change? and when? There is no satisfactory answer, unless we suppose that our Lord Himself sanctioned it, in some directions not recorded in the New Testament.

Sixth, The use of Liturgies, or precomposed forms of worship, became at once common, if not universal, in the Christian Church.

We have traces of old Liturgical forms in quotations made in the Epistles themselves. See Eph. v. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 16. And the history of the primitive days shows a Liturgical worship everywhere prevalent. It must be remembered, however, that Liturgical worship was not then a new thing, newly introduced, for the Jewish modes of worship were of that character.

Here then we perceive six features which were found wherever the Church was established.

The Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion—A Ministry of Three Orders—The Rite of Confirmation—The Observance of the Lord's Day—The use of Liturgical forms in public worship.

It is not said that these are *all* the points which could be noted as features of the Church in apostolic days, but they are the most prominent, and serve to identify it, as it has continued to exist down through the ages since then.

It is not said, either, that there is any positive command on the part of our Lord, that all of these features are necessary to the existence of the Church, but as we find them so early and so universally appearing, and as for age after age they continued to be part of it, wherever planted, we have reason for thinking that they **were agreeable to His will.**

CHAPTER V.

THE CHURCH IN APOSTOLIC DAYS.

PENTECOST — JERUSALEM — DIVISION OF APOSTOLIC
LABORS.

Great Events.

- A.D. 33. MARTYRDOM OF ST. STEPHEN.
- 40. CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.
- 44. MARTYRDOM OF ST. JAMES.
- 50. APOSTOLIC COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM.
- 66-70. JERUSALEM BESIEGED AND DESTROYED.

ON the morning of the day of Pentecost, after Christ's ascension, the number of His disciples in Jerusalem included but one hundred and twenty. But that Pentecostal day witnessed the outpouring of the Spirit, according to His promise, and the rapid increase in the number of believers. We date, therefore, the formal establishment of the Church from that day. Jerusalem was honored in being its birth-place, and for many years after was the seat of its chief Bishopric. The work begun there spread rapidly to other places. The strangers from different parts who had become converts to Christianity on the day of Pentecost, when they

returned to their homes carried with them the outline of the Christian faith, and thus paved the way for the planting of the Church in subsequent days.

The growth of the Church in Jerusalem became so marked that the most violent means were resorted to by the Jewish priests and rulers to check it, but the persecution of its members only led to its rapid extension to other parts, for when compelled to leave Jerusalem they went to other districts of Judea, and even beyond, preaching the Gospel. No power could now check the growing society, for under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost men were filled with the most fervent zeal for the proclamation of the tidings of salvation, and felt called upon to devote their energies, their talents and their lives, to making that salvation known both to their brethren and to those of other nations.

After a time it pleased God to convert Saul of Tarsus and to commission him as an apostle to the Gentiles, and thus still greater impetus was given to the Church's growth.

The main sources of information respecting the progress of Christianity in the age of the apostles is the account given by St. Luke, and known as the Book of the Acts of the Apostles.

Other sources of information are the Epistles of the New Testament, the incidental allusions con-

tained in contemporaneous histories, and the traditions which have been preserved to us.

No complete history has ever been prepared. Enough, however, has been given to show the spirit of the Church, its principles, and its marvellous extension in the face of all obstacles.

While many were commissioned, as time went on, to assist in the work of founding the Church, the apostles seemed to have been ever the most earnest and most successful laborers. Asia, Europe and Africa, the three continents then known, were travelled by them, and myriads were converted to the faith.

DIVISION OF APOSTOLIC LABORS.

No complete record has been left us of the separate work done by each of the apostles in sowing the seeds of divine truth and in organizing the society of believers in different places.

The Book of the Acts of the Apostles gives us an account of their labors and the labors of the disciples in a *general* way in the city of Jerusalem ; speaks of their dispersion by reason of persecution ; and then is concerned mainly with the history of St. Paul.

The labors of *St. James, the elder*, the brother of St. John, were speedily brought to an end, for during the persecution of the Christians in Jerusa-

lem, under King Herod Agrippa, A.D. 44, he was beheaded.

The other apostle St. James, know as "*St. James, the Less,*" and "*St. James, the Just,*" continued for a number of years in Jerusalem as the head or Bishop of the Church there. He seems to have acted as president in the first Church Council, the account of which is given in Acts xv. He was the author of an Epistle to the converted Jews who were scattered abroad. (See Epistle of St. James.) He was murdered in Jerusalem by a mob, just before the destruction of that city.

St. Peter is repeatedly mentioned in the earlier part of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, but no mention is made of him in that Book after the Council at Jerusalem, which he attended.

At first he exercised a sort of headship over the body of Christians during the early years of its history in Jerusalem, but upon his liberation from prison, he left the city, and the ruling power devolved upon James, the Just.

St. Paul refers to him as being upon missionary tours, in two of his Epistles, Gal. ii.; 1 Cor. ix. St. Peter wrote two epistles to the scattered converts in Asia Minor. (See the Epistles of St. Peter.) A great deal of controversy has arisen as to whether it was he who planted the Church in Rome. The Roman Church contends strongly that it was he, and has for that reason, and from a mis-

understanding of our Lord's words to him, elevated him to a position of unapproachable supremacy among the Apostles.

It is a matter of some doubt, however, whether St. Peter was ever in Rome, and it is highly probable that the first Christian Church established in that city was made up of Greeks, and not of Latins. If he really did visit Rome, his stay there could have been but of short duration. Tradition tells us that he was crucified there, head downwards, after the great conflagration of Rome, under Nero, the Romans having been persuaded, falsely so, of course, that the Christians had fired their city.

St. John, probably lived longest of any of the Apostles. His work seems to have been mainly in Asia Minor, and particularly at Ephesus. When the persecution under the Roman emperor broke out, he was banished to Patmos, where he stayed a year or two. It was there that the Book of the Revelation was written. He is the author of three Epistles, which have been preserved to us, and one of the four Gospels. As Bishop of Ephesus he continued until very far advanced in years to exercise the duties of his office, and it is said of him that when too feeble to deliver long discourses, he would be carried to the place of worship, and would repeat the words: "Little children, love one another." Love, it is well said, was the centre of his theology and the sum of his life.

With reference to the other original Apostles, there is really but little history. Traditions have been preserved, but they are obscure. It is probable that *St. Andrew* labored in the territory of ancient Greece, along the Mediterranean and northward. He founded the church at Byzantium, now Constantinople, then in France, Macedonia, and other places, suffering martyrdom finally at Petræ in Achaia.

St. Jude, (Lebbæus Thaddeus) devoted his labors to Judea, Arabia, Mesopotamia and Syria. He has left us one Epistle. (See Ep. St. Jude.)

St. Thomas, travelled through Parthia, Persia and India, and told of the Christ. *St. Matthew*, is said to have performed his labors in Parthia, and the countries along the borders of India. He is the author of the first Gospel, which he wrote mainly for his brethren, the Jews, to convince them that Jesus Christ was the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. *St. Bartholomew*, (Nathaniel, "the Israelite, indeed,") labored in Arabia, and on the borders of Judea. *St. Philip*, in Upper Asia, *St. Simon*, in Africa.

St. Matthias, the successor to the place of Judas Iscariot, (See Acts i.) preached in Cappadocia, and suffered martyrdom. *St. Paul's* life and labors are more fully detailed for us than those of any other called to be an Apostle. From the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, and from St. Paul's Epistles,

we can gather a tolerably full history of the Apostle to the Gentiles. It is a marvellous history, full of interesting details and surprising incidents, and makes a record of heroism such as has never been equalled by man. It is almost impossible to sum it up in a few lines. It must be read and studied in the words of matchless simplicity and earnestness, in which St. Luke wrote it ; and must be gathered out of the incidental allusions which the Apostle makes in his Epistles.

While on his way to Damascus, in bitter hatred of the Christians, the Lord met him, and called him from his work as a persecutor to be thenceforth a helper in the Gospel. After his baptism he spent three years in Arabia in solitude, doubtless becoming fitted there for his sacred work. His ministry began in Damascus, and then extended to Jerusalem, and finally to Antioch.

At this place he was commissioned to his great work as an apostle to the Gentiles. From that time on until some twenty years after, when he was carried as a prisoner to Rome, he was almost ceaselessly in motion, now in one place, now in another. His missionary journeys may be grouped under three great divisions. He went out and found a pagan world opposed to him, to the message he bore, a world superstitious and corrupt. It was his joy to see, ere he died, in every place where he had told of Christ, bodies of believers who rejoiced in

the hope of salvation which he had carried to them. To the people of corrupt cities, to idolators, and to the most educated of men, to kings and rulers, to a jailor in a prison, he delivered his one message, redemption through the Christ. Sometimes he labored with his own hands at the trade of tent-making, while he stayed in a place to found the Church, sometimes in weariness and sorrow he was dependent upon the charity of the poor. But under all circumstances he realized that his mission was to proclaim Christ, and to his fidelity the world owes much of its joy to-day.

CHAPTER VI.

THOSE WHO HELPED THE APOSTLES.

THE FIRST DEACONS — PRESBYTERS — DISCIPLES —
DEACONESES — GROWTH IN THE FIRST CENTURY.

ALTHOUGH it was made the *especial* work of the Apostles to establish the Church, and although they took the lead in carrying forward the good work, we are not to think of them as laboring on alone without help and sympathy. Very early after that first Pentecost we learn of the ordination of the first Deacons, whose immediate work was the care of the poor, but whose zeal led to their preaching the good news of salvation. The first martyr was a Deacon. The account of St. Stephen's death, Acts vii. St. Philip the Deacon baptized the treasurer of Ethiopia, Acts viii. Doubtless the number of these Deacons was greatly multiplied, and many were promoted to the second rank, that of the Elders, or Presbyters, and here and there, in different places, some of the Presbyters were made Bishops, as was the case with St. Timothy. (See Epistle to him.) As soon as the Church was planted in a place, the

first effort seemed to be to secure for it a supply of ordained teachers, and in every large centre, probably in every city, some one was elevated to the office of overseer, angel or Bishop.

During the life time of the Apostles they themselves exercised paramount authority; but as they passed away, the Bishops whom they had appointed seemed to come forward in all things as their successors, except perhaps in having the miraculous gifts which our Lord bestowed upon the Apostles. But we cannot tell when these gifts ceased. They may have been withdrawn gradually, as the special need of their exercise ceased with the altered circumstances of the Church.

Not alone by the ordained clergy, the Bishops, Elders and Deacons, were the Apostles helped. In those days of loving trust, and fiery earnestness, *every disciple* was a helper in spreading the Gospel. Many are mentioned by name in the Acts and Epistles, among whom are holy women who are declared to have been helpful in the Lord, and there is an allusion to an *Order of Deaconesses*, made up of those who consecrated their time and talents to the Lord's cause.

From the very beginning of the upbuilding of the Church, with all of the newness of their labors, with all of the opposition made to them, the Apostles and their helpers evidently followed a de-

finite plan, and the product of their toils was in all essential features alike in all places.

Wherever they went they told of the Christ, what He said and what He did, and how men may be saved through Him ; and then when any believed their message they admitted them as members of the Christian society, and instructed them as to what were their new duties and high privileges.

Picture to yourself the earnest work, and self-denying labors of the primitive disciples. Here we will say is a town where up to that moment no voice has ever uttered the name of Jesus Christ. It is an idolatrous place. In the temple is the statue of a god or goddess, and the worship of the people is filled with lascivious rites and most debasing ceremonies. And now there come into this place two or three travel-stained men, recognized perhaps as Jews by their dress and speech. Who are they ? Who in all that town cares who they are ? They appear to be a few dusty travellers. Why give them a second thought ? But the travellers inquire for the synagogue of the Jewish colony established there, and at the hour of prayer go into that synagogue, and begin to teach their brethren, the Jews, that Messiah has come ; that Jesus Christ fulfils the ancient prophecies, and by mighty deeds and gracious words has shown that He is the Blessed One.

Their message is listened to and discussed.

Some believe it, others scoff at it. But a few hearts have been inclined by the Holy Ghost to loving trust in God's Son, and these few are the nucleus of the Church in that town.

And now the work enlarges ; the travellers deliver their message to the pagan population of the place ; they tell them that God would now make Himself known to all men, and has sent His Son to reveal the true God, that men might forsake their idols and serve Him truly. There is commotion in the place. The crowd scoff at their preaching of the Christ, and perhaps some rush upon them to do them violence ; but God has some open hearts there too, and a few believe. These Gentile believers are engrafted into the body of the Church, and thus among Jews and Gentiles the work has begun in that pagan town. Begun, yes ; to continue until scores and hundreds of souls rejoice in the grace of the Son of God !

Thus it was that the work went on. "God gave the word, and great was the company of the preachers." Each newly organized congregation became a centre from which some went with burning lips to tell the story to others.

With all of the world against them, it seemed almost a hopeless task to convert the world to the faith of Christ ; but God was with them, and in His strength they labored. At the end of thirty years after the death of the Saviour, His truth had

been proclaimed from Jerusalem eastward to the Indies and the Euphrates, and westward to the Thames. Tacitus, the Roman historian, admits that in the year of our Lord 68 "*vast multitudes*" of Christians were discovered in all parts of the Roman empire, and the Roman empire then included most portions of the then inhabited globe.

Thus, ere the first century closed, the Son of Man had lived His wonderful life, and died the death which atoned for the sins of the world ; the Holy Ghost had been poured out upon the infant Church; Jerusalem had been cast down into the dust ; and in every direction the heralds of the cross had gone, proclaiming the tidings of salvation; twelve Roman emperors had passed away, among them the cruel Nero, and Domitian, under whom two bitter persecutions of the Christians had been carried on ; new names had appeared upon the world's history, to be forever more famous than emperors and kings ; new truths had been announced, which were destined to revolutionize all existing institutions, and to usher in better, brighter times for men ; and there had been developed that society against which the gates of hell should never prevail.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DAYS OF PERSECUTION.

NATURE OF THE PERSECUTIONS—NERO—DOMITIAN—
MARTYRDOM—RESULTS.

Great Events.

- A. D. 64. 1ST GENERAL PERSECUTION, UNDER NERO.
168. MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP.

IT is hard for us who are living in a time when the Church is steadily making peaceful progress, to realize that for nearly two hundred and fifty years, with the exception of brief intervals of repose, her progress was met by the most bitter opposition, and that thousands and thousands of men, women and children were put to death for no other offence than that of being followers of Jesus Christ. And yet so it was. Until the beginning of the fourth century Christianity met but little favor from the rulers of the world, and its adherents were not safe from savage assaults, involving the loss of property, and the loss of life itself. Some of the persecutions were legalized, carried out under direct edicts of the Roman emperors, but others were irregular, mob-like attacks of individuals and

communities, in which it was considered meritorious to exterminate those who deserted the shrines of the gods and called themselves by the hated name of *Christians*.

Much of the early history of the Church may be said to be written in blood—the blood of those who proved their fidelity to the Lord by suffering for His sake.

It was not the Roman power, however, that inaugurated the persecutions. The Jews began the shameful work. We learn that immediately after the great Pentecostal day, when the Church was first established, the persecutions in the city of Jerusalem became so severe that many of the Christians were compelled to flee from the place. (Acts.) St. Paul himself was once a leader of the persecutors, and it was while on his way to secure the arrest of some who had fled as far as Damascus, that he was convinced of the error of his career, and converted to the faith which he had been trying to destroy. (See Acts viii.)

In subsequent chapters of the same book we learn that it was not uncommonly the case, even in distant places, where the Jews had colonized, for them to excite an uproar against the Christians, and to subject them to violence.

The persecutions by the Romans were of two kinds; there was one that was steady and persistent, involving inconvenience, degradation, loss, and

hardship to the followers of Christ ; and then there was a second kind, when, with the aid of the civil power, and often without it, with the fury of the mob, the believers were tortured, driven from their homes, and exposed to most cruel deaths.

The anger of the Jews against their brethren who became Christians arose from their considering them as having deserted the religion of their forefathers, and as having proclaimed one as the Son of God, the Messiah, whom many of the Jews regarded as an impostor.

Roman hatred arose from various causes. They too considered the Christians as being neglectful of the old religions, and stigmatized them as impious, because they refused to worship their gods. But there were many other elements in their hatred, some of them being of a political character and some social. So long as they considered Christianity simply as one more new sect, they were willing to tolerate it, for the ancient Romans believed there might be as many religions as there were tribes of men ; but when it was perceived that Christianity aimed at a supremacy over all other kinds of belief, and that its followers considered its mission was to supersede existing beliefs, they regarded its progress as dangerous to the welfare of the state, which then was bound up with paganism. Then, too, the code of morals introduced by the Church brought its members into

direct conflict with the whole social and individual life of the times. Cruelty, impurity, falsehood, and violence, but imperfectly describe the state of society as it then was. By the very nature of the better life the Christian sought to lead, he was compelled to turn away from much that was so generally tolerated, and to condemn the iniquity of the times. It was some little while after the planting of the Church before the first formal edicts against the Christians were published. Opposition to the disciples was made from the beginning, but it remained for the cruel Nero, in A. D. 64, to let loose the power of the state and the fury of the people upon them.

A dreadful fire having consumed a great part of the city of Rome, Nero, who it is believed was himself the incendiary, cast the blame upon the Christians, accusing them of the crime. The Emperor's permission was enough to inaugurate the most awful sufferings, but he himself became a leader in inflicting them. The details are almost too horrid to recount. Crucifixion, casting to dogs and wild beasts, covering with pitch and then burning them, became the means of torture and death to the unresisting disciples. Such multitudes were destroyed at this time that the taste for blood seemed utterly satiated, and for a time, in very weariness, the persecutors ceased. In A. D. 93, under Domitian, the second *general* persecution

took place. His enmity was not altogether on account of their religion, but he suspected them of disloyalty to him as king. They had refused to worship him as a god, and he supposed they would oppose him as king.

Again the bloody scenes were repeated. The cross, the sword, the wild beast, the bath of boiling oil, the shower of stones, and clubs in the public street—these were the means employed to put them out of the way.

Many, of course, fled to places of safety, and some renounced their religion altogether.

Under the laws which were passed, any Christian had the opportunity given him to renounce the faith, and to offer sacrifice upon the heathen altars ; but while some did thus escape death and suffering by denying the Lord Jesus, the great majority remained faithful to Him, preferring death to ignominious life. Indeed, at one time, many courted the honors of martyrdom, and exposed themselves in every way to its risks. The opinion was freely expressed by some of their leaders that death must ever be regarded as a blessed boon, since it brought them home to Christ, and martyrdom was to be considered both as an evidence of their love to Him and of His crowning goodness to them.

Christian writers, in after ages, were wont to reckon the great persecutions, as ten in number, taking the ten plagues of Egypt as the types of

the ten emperors under whom the sufferings came.

Among the many forms of torture and death with which the Christians were visited, none seem to us more remarkable than the exposure in the arena to wild beasts and the attacks of the gladiators, or sword players.

A Roman holiday, at one time, included the spectacle of a band of Christians thrown into the ring to be dispatched either by the swords of gladiators, or the teeth of lions. On a given day the Roman multitude would assemble to witness with the liveliest satisfaction the fearful sight of poor helpless men, women and children contending to the death with savage beasts, and no less savage murderers hired to do the bloody work.

Some of the greatest illustrations of courage and faith are those presented by the martyrs. They met death without a fear, and even tender children smiled at its approach.

In after years the reverence of the Christians for those of their number who had suffered martyrdom became so great, that it was the custom to commemorate their deaths by religious rites, and to recite their deeds at the graves where their mangled remains had been buried.

The persecutions continued with more or less severity until the accession of Constantine, when a new order of things prevailed—the once hated religion became the religion of the Empire.

The good results of the persecutions were numerous. Among them may be named, first, the conviction which grew in the world that the religion which could make men so courageous, and for which they were willing to suffer the loss of all things, must be from God. Second, attention was thus publicly called to the principles of the Christian faith, and the confession of trust in Christ which the martyrs made, became familiar to all classes. Third, the Church was maintained in comparative purity. Worldly principles were kept out, and the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus was preserved. If we are to look at the Church in its purest stages we will find such to be the days when it was in sorrow by reason of persecution. There was but little inducement to join one's self to its company, except a man were convinced that in it he could learn the truth, and save his soul. And yet during all these years of fiery trial, the number of believers steadily increased. Missionary zeal continued, and wherever the Christians made their home they became noted for their charity and good deeds to their pagan neighbors. The earnest preaching of the truth, and the holy lives of those who held it, were the agencies for commanding it to the consciences of men, so that some would come out and receive Christian baptism, although they knew that before the night of the same day they might be put to death for confessing Christ.

If you ask whether they built churches and had public services during these early ages, the answer is that there must have been but few edifices built in which to conduct Christian worship, except in the lull of persecutions, and in places distant from the great centres. They used the upper rooms of private houses, the quiet groves by the river sides, and in the city of Rome they met in the excavations beneath that city, called the Catacombs. At the times of their fiercest trials they found it necessary to conceal from all except their own number where they met ; and hence their assemblies were in secret places. As the roll of the martyrs began to increase, the tombs of the faithful dead became favorite places for celebrating Christian rites.

It must not be thought that during all of these 250 years there was one continuous, vigorous, legalized system of persecution. On the contrary there were often periods of repose, for longer or shorter intervals, when the work of propagating the faith was earnestly pressed by the believers.

But the days of blood were very many, and the ingenuity of their adversaries was exercised to the utmost to exterminate all who bore the Christian name from the earth. There was power enough, and there was malice enough to have annihilated the Church, had it been of man, but it was of God, and they could not overthrow it.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH.

IGNATIUS—JUSTIN MARTYR — POLYCARP—IRENÆUS—
TERTULLIAN—ORIGIN—CYPRIAN.

Date : A. D.

- 115. IGNATIUS.
- 166. JUSTIN MARTYR.
- 168. POLYCARP.
- 178. IRENÆUS.
- 201. TERTULLIAN.
- 254. ORIGEN.
- 258. CYPRIAN.

It has grown to be the custom to speak of many who became prominent by their labors in the primitive ages of Christianity, as “The Fathers.” In some cases their history has been preserved to us ; in others we have but the barest record of their names and the outline of what they did. The writings of some have come down to us, and contain rich stores of learning, illustrating the manners and explaining the views of the early Church.

IGNATIUS.—Among the earliest of the Fathers is *Ignatius*. He was the disciple and friend of St. John, and probably knew the other apostles. He is one connecting link between the apostles and the Church of later days. He was made the Bishop of Antioch, and labored there for forty years. The favorite title by which his friends called him was “Theophorus, or “the God-bearer,” one whose soul is full of God. His life in Antioch was spent in times of deepest anxiety and peril, but his noble devotion kept the Christians firm in their faith, and incited them to zeal for the Master’s cause. His one great longing was that Christ might honor him with calling him to be a martyr. His longing was at length gratified, and about A. D. 107, by a circuitous route, he was carried to Rome in chains for refusing to take part in the heathen religious ceremonies connected with Trajan’s entrance to Antioch. His foes thought to intimidate the other disciples by the sight of their aged Bishop in bonds, led away to death, but it had the effect of nerving them to greater constancy.

Upon reaching Rome he was thrown to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre, and thus his spirit was released.

Some of the letters of Ignatius have been preserved, and are most valuable, as showing the nature of the Church’s government in those days,

and as indicating the origin of certain heresies which at length grew to dangerous proportions, of which we will learn presently.

JUSTIN MARTYR.—A Christian Father who stands out prominently about the middle of the second century, is Justin Martyr. He was born in Palestine, in the province of Samaria. As a young man he went to Alexandria to be educated. He studied the philosophical systems of the day, but found no satisfaction. At length, while meditating in a lonely place, he was met by an aged Christian, who taught him the truth as it is in Jesus, and Justin became a believer. All his powers were now devoted to the Church. He travelled from place to place, teaching the religion of the Saviour, and finally settled at Rome. While there he became useful in combating certain heresies which had arisen, but his great work was his “*Apologies for the Christian Faith.*” These were writings designed to convince the more educated heathen of the truth of Christianity, and must have been invaluable aids to the Church’s progress, although the public disputation and the writings of Justin exposed him to especial danger. He was beheaded in A. D. 165.

POLYCARP.—Among the most amiable of all the Fathers was Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna. He seems to have been a man of the same sort as his teacher, St. John, and to have imbibed much of

that apostle's spirit. The saintly character of Polycarp won for him the especial reverence of the disciples. His name appears in great prominence in his efforts to settle a controversy which arose between the Christians of the West and those of the East as to the time of keeping Easter. Although the controversy was not settled by their adopting the same time, yet the wisdom and piety of the Bishop checked much of the bitterness, and taught them to tolerate differences of opinion, thus preserving the peace of the Church. His efforts were also blessed in checking the spread of heresies. During the persecutions he was ever a help and strength to the distressed disciples. Finally, when himself a very aged man, he fell a victim to the fury of his adversaries, the heathen, and was put to death in A. D. 167. He was burnt to death. He will always be remembered by the noble words he spoke when commanded by the proconsul to deny his Lord, and thus escape death. "Sixty and eight years," said he, "have I served Him, and He has never failed me; and shall I now deny Him?"

IRENÆUS.—A disciple of Polycarp was Irenæus, the Bishop of Lyons. He was born in Smyrna, accompanied Polycarp upon his visit to Rome, and finally settled in Lyons, where he was elevated to the Episcopate. His writings are particularly important to us because of his enumeration of the

succession of Bishops of Rome down to his day, and his testimony as to the Books of Scripture which the early Church deemed sacred. It must be remembered that there were many written accounts of our Lord's life, and many epistles written to the different congregations of the Church, and it was important to know which were inspired and which were not. Irenæus records the judgment of the early Church upon this point, and helps settle the important question as we now receive the list. Under an edict of the emperor Severus, Irenæus, with many others, met death. The date of his martyrdom was A. D. 202.

TERTULLIAN.—A man of a severer spirit, who became prominent in the early part of the third century, was Tertullian. He was born in Carthage, was noted for his great and varied learning, and became a Christian after the most diligent investigation of its principles and its claims. He was a very bold, soldierly disciple. At the time of the deepest peril to the Christians he wrote to the martyrs in prison, and encouraged them to remain firm, and was especially severe upon those who fled to other places to secure safety. Tertullian's record was blemished by his accepting the errors of the Montanists.

This was a party in the Church of that day that insisted upon a particularly rigid discipline,

claiming that they had received new revelations from our Lord upon this subject.

The stern, severe, disposition of Tertullian inclined him to receive their views, and thus his great powers were rendered less useful than they might have become, although his words were always a mighty force in the Church, even when excommunicated for his errors. He was the unsparing censor of whatever seemed like worldliness, and rebuked his brethren because they did not live up to sufficiently rigid rules. Doubtless his mission was needed to keep up the courage of those who suffered, and to prevent others from falling into sinful compliance to escape troubles. Although he favored the Montanist heresy, he was the great opponent of other forms of heresy, and wrote most learned works against them. He labored and wrote as a Presbyter in Carthage, until very old, and died about A. D. 230.

ORIGEN.—One of the greatest scholars of the early days was Origen. He was born of Christian parents, in Alexandria, in A. D. 185, and was baptized in his infancy. His great intellect was early manifested. While a mere boy he knew whole sections of the Bible, and could perplex his teachers with very difficult questions.

His father seemed to perceive the great work to which his son was called, for it is said that while the boy was sleeping he would often kneel by his

bedside in thankfulness to God for such a son, and would kiss the child's breast as a temple of the Holy Ghost. That father became a martyr, but in the hours of his trouble was comforted by the exhortations of his son. When Origen was but eighteen years old he was nominated as the head of the school for catechumens at Alexandria. The higher classes of this school virtually comprised a department for preparing young men for the sacred ministry. Origen's fame rapidly increased, and scholars flocked to be benefitted by his teaching. All over Egypt and in many other places his writings were copied and spread. He became a complete master of the heathen systems of philosophy, and convinced many of the learned of his day that Christianity answered the deepest needs of their souls. With an intellect so keen, and with learning so great and profound, he yet became the advocate of some errors, which were partly the result of the very depths to which his researches carried him.

If he had been content to receive simply what had been revealed for man's instruction by the Holy Spirit, he would have kept from error; but his wonderful intellect led him to explore fields of thought where no clear revelation has been made, and hence his errors. His life was a painful one. It became so partly through the mortifications he inflicted upon himself, and partly through the sufferings into which his opinions led him. He

selected poverty as his portion, although wealth was offered him, had but one coat, wore no shoes, slept on the bare floor, and mutilated his own body.

He was ordained a priest, late in life, while in Palestine. Some of his peculiar opinions exposed him to the censure of the Church, and led to great suffering on his part.

He was probably the greatest scholar of his time, and as Jerome says, wrote more than one man could read. Over 800 of his letters were collected by Eusebius. His books which remain are mostly explanations of the Scriptures.

CYPRIAN.—The greatest Bishop of the third century was doubtless Cyprian, of Carthage. He was born A. D. 200, and after living a luxurious life as a wealthy heathen, became a Christian in A. D. 245, sold his goods for the benefit of the poor, and henceforth devoted himself to a holy life.

In a very few years after, so great had his reputation for piety and learning become, that he was, in spite of his most earnest remonstrances, chosen Bishop of Carthage, by the voice of the people. He served some ten years, when the crown of martyrdom was given him.

His administration of the office of a Bishop was with great energy, wisdom and faithfulness; and his writings which remain to us are valuable because of the high ideal be formed of the Episcopate,

and of the magnificence of the Church. To him the Church of Christ was indeed the Kingdom of God on earth, and he never grew weary in speaking of its praises.

These now named are sometimes called the Ante-Nicene Fathers. But it would make a long list to go on giving an account of the many others, such as Clement, Narcissus, Gregory, Dionysius, who by their important services gave solidity to the Church.

Of course these men, although called Fathers of the Church, were not, as we have seen, entirely free from errors ; but we must not be surprised at that, for God alone is perfect, and even apostles needed the gift of inspiration to preserve them from blundering.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHURCH IN THE DAYS OF CONSTANTINE.

CONSTANTINE'S CONVERSION — CHANGES IN THE RELIGION OF THE EMPIRE—NICE—CONSTANTINOPLE.

Dates.

- A. D. 312. CONVERSION OF CONSTANTINE.
325. COUNCIL AT NICE.

A VERY marvellous change in the external affairs of the Church took place when Constantine became the Emperor of Rome, about A.D. 323. The father of Constantine had treated the Christians with comparative kindness, but still paganism was the religion of the empire, until Constantine ascended the throne. His conversion to Christianity took place while he was at the head of his armies, marching against Maxentius, who had seized the government of Italy. It is said that while greatly discouraged by the rebellion against him, which was led by Maxentius, he saw a vision of a cross in the sky, with the words "*In hoc signo, vinces*," meaning, "By this sign, thou shalt conquer."

He adopted the cross on his banners, and went forward to victory. Whether it pleased God to work a special miracle for his conversion or not, we cannot tell, but from the hour that Constantine saw, or fancied he saw, the cross in the sky, he favored the Christians, and sought to make their religion that of the empire. Thus after over two centuries of sorrow, the Church triumphed. Edicts were issued by the Emperor calling upon his subjects to embrace the Christian faith, forbidding the idolatrous rites of paganism, and putting an end to the cruelties which had been so generally practiced.

Christians were appointed to the public offices, the clergy were loaded with favors, the sign of the cross was marked upon the armor and weapons of the soldiers, and many churches were built.

His ardor was inflamed more and more by his mother, Helena, a British lady, who had long been a very zealous Christian, and who induced him to expend great sums of money in identifying the scenes of sacred events in Jerusalem, and in the construction there of a magnificent church.

The two great events which stand out prominently in the reign of the first Christian emperor, are the assembling of the first general Council of the Church at Nice, and the building of the city of Constantinople. Both of these were events of great importance. The first was the authoritative settling of the faith of the Church as against the errors of

heretics. The second was one of the steps which led finally to the division of the Church into an Eastern and a Western section.

But the whole reign of Constantine was filled with important events. In the adaptation of the Church to the new condition of things, we must not be surprised to learn that many evils sprang up, and that grievous errors and abuses followed the new era of temporal prosperity. When it became the fashion of the day to make a Christian profession, there were many who changed from paganism to the new religion without imbibing its spirit ; and when the clergy were so laden, as they became, with wealth and honors, there were some who could not endure the trials of prosperity, but grew corrupt both in doctrine and in life.

Constantine's own character and life were not such as we usually associate with that of a sincere Christian. Although he defended Christianity, he was not baptized until late in his life, during his closing illness. Much allowance for his errors and his sins must be made on the ground of the condition of the times, particularly the distractions which then began to prevail in the Church itself. Towards the end of his reign dark crimes stained his record, and occasionally he seemed to lean again to paganism.

His establishment of Constantinople, as the first Christian city, was, it is thought, partly from the

remorse he experienced after the crimes he sanctioned in Rome, the execution of his son and others accused of treason, and partly by his disgust with the paganism which ever sought to draw him back to its embrace. Constantinople was a grand city. Churches were the principal buildings. Monasteries and schools were numerous. Its Bishop was given the title of Ecumenical, or Universal Patriarch. There Constantine died, in his sixty-fourth year, after reigning thirty-one years as emperor.

How marvellous were now the changes which came to pass in the history of the Church. Stately buildings began to arise in every place, and the heathen temples were converted into churches. It was no longer necessary to worship in the secrecy of obscure places, but the songs of praise rang out boldly all over the empire. The court of the emperor was thronged with the clergy, who were loaded with favors, and many of the high offices were in their hands. Wealth poured into the treasury of the Church, and the resources of the realm were made tributary to her advancement. Protected by the power of the government, the missionaries could go everywhere and proclaim their message.

The whole influence of the empire was thrown upon the side of the Church. It was a marvellous change! Some of the very men who had

been maimed and tortured during the previous persecutions, others who had lost their all except life itself, came out of their hiding-places to find the religion for which they suffered, now the religion of the empire.

But, how sad it is to confess it, this marvellous change, this wonderful increase of temporal prosperity, was not entirely a blessing. It became sometimes a hindrance and not a help, for the trials of prosperity are as hard to bear as the trials of adversity, and then too there almost immediately sprang into prominence those corruptions of the true faith by the heretics, by which the Church was torn and agitated for many ages afterward. As we read on we are to learn how numerous and how dreadful these heresies were, and we are to see how, with the growth of worldly wealth and power, the purity, simplicity and earnestness of the early times gave way to arrogance and superstition.

CHAPTER X.

THE GREAT COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH.

NICE — CONSTANTINOPLE — EPHESUS — CHALCEDON —
FIFTH AND SIXTH CONSTANTINOPLE — ARIUS — MACE-
DONIUS — NESTORIUS — EUTYCHIUS — MONOTHELITES.

Dates of General Councils.

- A. D. 325. NICE.
- 381. CONSTANTINOPLE.
- 431. EPHESUS.
- 451. CHALCEDON.
- 553. CONSTANTINOPLE.
- 680. CONSTANTINOPLE.

IT was not long after the Church began to make progress that her doctrines were misunderstood, and then corrupted.

Allusions are made in the New Testament itself to the rise of false doctrines. The Epistles were written partly to correct errors which were rising wherever men sought to add to the revelation which God had made, and to explain it to suit their own philosophy.

ARIANISM.—One of the most important errors that soon spread alarmingly was with reference to the Divinity of the Lord Jesus. In the simplicity of the early confessions of faith, men declared, “I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” but soon some tried to explain the nature of His divinity, and to make clear to human reason those deep mysteries respecting the nature of the Godhead which it has not pleased the Holy Ghost to reveal to us. At length there arose one named Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, who presumed to declare that our Lord Jesus Christ was not truly God, but a creature made by God, and liable to fall into error and sin; that He did not exist as the second Person of the Trinity, as God from all eternity, but that He was only a superior kind of being, having an existence before the world began, and that all His virtues and powers were not His own, but only such as were imparted to Him.

It was a most blasphemous doctrine, and struck at the very roots of the whole Christian faith, for if Christ be not the God incarnate, then all worship paid to Him is wrong, and all our hopes of eternal life through Him are vain.

Arius was hardly the originator of this most dreadful doctrine, for others before him held the same view. It is, however, associated with him, and has been called Arianism, because of his bold

development and advocacy of it. Arianism spread rapidly and widely. Cities and towns were distracted by it. Even Bishops and leading Presbyters adopted it, and the din of controversy was everywhere heard. So rapidly did the heresy grow in some sections, that it seemed as if it would utterly supplant the true faith, and introduce a Christianity entirely different from that which St. Paul had preached, and for which so many martyrs had died.

Constantine found the Church fairly torn asunder in some sections by this heresy, and it was for the purpose of ascertaining the true faith, and healing the distractions, that he called together the Council at Nice.

THE COUNCIL AT NICE.—This great council, the first ecumenical, or general council, assembled
A. D. 325.

A summons had been issued to the Bishops and clergy in all parts of Christendom, asking them to meet together, to decide as to the truth or falsehood of the doctrine of Arius.

Nice was situated in Bithynia, on the bank of the Ascanian Lake. It was a large, well-built city. Every provision was made at the Emperor's command, and at his expense, for entertaining the clergy who were expected. 318 bishops, and many of the inferior ministers, attended. The

total number present is supposed to have been over two thousand, representing nearly every country, although the majority came from the East. It continued its session for three months. The emperor himself attended, and everything was done to lend dignity and force to the proceedings.

There were many present who had suffered dreadfully in the preceding persecutions. The Council, from every point of view, must be considered one of the most interesting, as well as one of the most important, gatherings held in the interests of religion.

It met at first in a large hall, and afterwards in the imperial residence. In the centre of the room, upon a throne-like structure, was placed a copy of the Holy Gospels. The Bishops alone seemed to be considered as official members of the council, but the opinions of those of lower rank were asked and given. There was much discussion. Day after day it continued, and sometimes with great bitterness. No one could tell for awhile what the end would be, nor how the majority would decide. The man who stepped forward most boldly in defence of orthodoxy, and swayed the minds of the wavering, was Athanasius, a Deacon of Alexandria, hardly twenty-five years old, the attendant of the aged Bishop of that place. The force and fire of his speeches chained the attention of the assembly, discomfitted the Arians, and led to the happy

result of defining the faith as it had been received in the primitive days. The greater portion of the Nicene Creed, as we now have it, was the outcome of this Council, and by it the true Divinity of Christ is declared, as against all of such errors as had been proclaimed by Arius.

The Creed adopted by the Council was signed by the Bishops who approved it, and became thenceforth the confession of the faith of the Church. Arianism did not die out at once, but sometimes showed great strength. In later days it reappeared, under different names, and in our time exists under the name of Unitarianism.

SECOND COUNCIL, CONSTANTINOPLE.—The second general council was held in the city of Constantinople, in A. D. 381, under the reign of the emperor Theodosius. Its main object was to determine the true faith with reference to the Holy Spirit. In the controversies fomented by the Arians, many erroneous views had been set forward, not only with reference to the nature of Christ, but also with reference to the nature of the third Person of the Trinity. Macedonius, a leading Arian, was the leader of a party that taught that the Holy Spirit was merely a creature made by the Son, and was not truly God. The result of the proceedings of the Council was the enlargement of the Nicene Creed, to express the belief of the Church in the

true divinity of the Holy Spirit. The words added were, "the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified."

THIRD COUNCIL, EPHESUS.—The third general council met in Ephesus, in A. D. 431, under the reign of Theodosius, the Second.

The Nestorian heresy was the particular matter to be considered. Nestorius the patriarch of Constantinople, taught that, "God the Word, and the man Christ Jesus, were different persons under the same appearance ; that the union of the divine and the human was one of will only ; that Christ was to be carefully distinguished from God who dwelt in him." The Council determined that the true faith of the Church was that the Word was made flesh ; that Christ was one Divine Person, but having two natures, God and man—which natures were closely and intimately united, without being mixed or confounded.

FOURTH COUNCIL, CHALCEDON.—Chalcedon was the place finally selected for holding another general council. This fourth council met in A. D. 451, Theodosius being still the emperor.

Opposition to the Nestorian heresy had led some into an opposite extreme. Opposing the Nestorian view, that Christ was to be thought of as

a distinct person from God who dwelt in Him, some fell into the opposite error of contending that in Christ there was but one nature, that of the incarnate Word ; and virtually denying the human nature of the Redeemer, making Him a semi-divine, semi-human combination. This heresy is known as the Monophysite, or the Eutychian heresy. The former term meaning *one nature*, and the latter referring to Eutyches, the leader of the sect. About 630 Bishops attended, and they declared the faith of the Church to be, that in our Lord Jesus Christ there are two perfect and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, united in one Person, without mixture, change or confusion.

FIFTH COUNCIL, CONSTANTINOPLE.—The fifth general Council, held in Constantinople in A. D. 553, is to be regarded as a kind of supplementary council to the preceding four, for the main work it did was to condemn the Nestorian heresy, which had again arisen ; and to re-affirm the doctrine settled by the other general councils.

SIXTH COUNCIL, CONSTANTINOPLE.—The last of the councils of the Church which can properly be called ecumenical, or general, was held at Constantinople, A. D. 680, under the reign of the Emperor Constantine Pogonatus. There was one held later, which is frequently called the Seventh

general council, but its authority is not universally admitted.

The heresy condemned by this sixth council was called the Monothelite heresy. It was really a branch of the Eutychian heresy. Its main point was that after the incarnation there was but *one will* in Christ, that of the incarnate God. The Council declared the faith of the Church to be that as there were two perfect natures, so there were two wills, the divine and the human.

It must not be supposed because one leading heresy has been singled out, in this account, as condemned by each Council, that these were the only heresies which arose in all the period from A. D. 325 to A. D. 680, or that the work of each Council consisted simply in condemning heresies. The sad truth meets us as we turn over the pages of the past, that there was rarely a period when efforts were not made to corrupt the faith of the Church. Sometimes, indeed, the heresies were the result of earnest, but one-sided, unbalanced, searching for the truth ; but the orthodox writers were wont to ascribe them to the efforts of the evil one to lead men from the simple truth as God had revealed it.

There was a great deal of bitterness, too, mixed up with these controversies, and sometimes the factions came into actual contact, resorting to

physical violence to carry their points. In some cases the disgraceful proceedings of mobs were prompted in the name of religious questions. Even the Councils were not free from undignified conduct, and on some occasions, seemed to forget that "the servants of the Lord must not strive."

Excommunication was resorted to by the Bishops, and by small local councils, very frequently, so that one who was declared orthodox in one place was condemned as a heretic in another.

But notwithstanding so much that was objectionable adheres to the history of the Church of those times, God has overruled all controversies and strifes of men to the preserving of the faith as He caused it to be delivered to holy men of old, and we are to look at the six councils as declaring authoritatively what was the truth.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PERIOD COVERED BY THE GENERAL COUNCILS.

CONSTANTINE — JULIAN — GOTHS AND VANDALS — MOHAMMED.

A. D. 361-63. JULIAN, EMPEROR.

395. DIVISION OF ROMAN EMPIRE INTO EAST AND WEST SECTIONS.

476. WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE FELL.

568. LOMBARDS INVADE ITALY.

596. AUGUSTINE, THE MONK, SENT TO ENGLAND.

639. MOHAMMEDANS IN PALESTINE.

OVER three hundred years elapsed from the time of the holding of the first council at Nice to that of the last at Constantinople. (325-680.) It is difficult to compress into few words the many important events of these three centuries, or even to call attention to the many great landmarks of their history. A few only will therefore be selected. We have seen that the closing work of Constantine was the founding of the Christian city, Constantinople. It seemed that the Christian religion was now firmly

established as the religion of the empire, and never to be superseded ; but to the terror of the Christian world, when Julian came to the throne, in A.D. 361, he labored most vigorously to restore the ancient religion of the empire. He rebuilt the altars of the gods, ordered the closing of the churches, deprived the clergy of their privileges, and surrounded himself with those who favored paganism. Considering the distracted state of the Church by reason of its controversies, and the bitter opposition made upon each other by the contending factions. Julian's plans at one time appeared to be likely to succeed ; but happily his reign was not long, and after his death no Emperor succeeded who was imbued with his love of paganism.

In the fourth century a new terror arose from the incursions of the barbarous tribes of the north, who precipitated themselves upon the provinces of the empire, and overran the countries of the west, Britain, Germany, Italy and Spain. These savage hordes had been kept in check during the earlier days of the empire, but now, as the military power of Rome was declining, they threw themselves relentlessly against, first, its outer posts, and then upon its very centre. The irruption of these tribes can be compared to nothing less than an avalanche, so completely did they sweep all before them, and spread themselves over the land.

For many long years it appeared as if they would

annihilate all laws, religion, and social usages, and establish in the fairest portions of the land, their own savage beliefs and customs.

But God had His plans with reference to them, and it seemed that they were led from their homes to receive the knowledge of salvation. The Church became at length their conquerors, not always with force of arms, but through the power of more gentle measures.

The barbarians became Christians, not all at once, nor for many years; nor did all receive the truth in its purity, but by degrees they gave up the worship of their false gods, and became the worshippers of Christ.

While in the West the northern tribes were occasioning alarm, in the East another trouble grew. Mohammedanism appeared as a conquering power, devastating with fire and sword, and compelling thousands in Arabia and elsewhere to submit to its sway. It began about A. D. 620.

The rise of the religion of Mohammed, was at a time very favorable to its growth. The nations of the East had not been largely, at this time, brought under the power of the Church, and where Christianity prevailed it was usually there in some distorted form, after the views promulgated by the heretics. The heretical sections contended with each other, and even resorted to strife and bloodshed.

Mohammed's religion was a mixture of truths

perverted from the Sacred Scriptures, and pretended revelations made to himself as a prophet of God. "There is but one God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God," was the cry of his followers. It was taken up with renewed zeal after his death, and was at length heard all through Persia and Syria. In subsequent ages, even the holy places of Judea were overrun by followers of the false prophet, and their hold upon them has never yet been entirely overthrown.

The events briefly alluded to, did not, of course, bloom out in their fulness in these three centuries, but had their rise and some of their development then.

The sixth and seventh centuries were truly a period of sorrow. The empire was falling to pieces. Upon one side the Goths, Vandals, and Huns were battering at its gates ; upon the other the towering form of a false religion, sustained by armed hosts, was crushing all before it. Throughout the empire contending factions in the Church were quarrelling, and effeminacy was superceding the old Roman vigor. Manhood, patriotism and Christianity were in a degraded condition, and it seemed probable to human vision that the civilization of the past would be swept away by the two forces that were coming in opposite directions. However, God interposed, holding back Mohammedanism, and infusing new principles into the barbarians of the West.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GREAT NAMES THAT APPEAR DURING THE GENERAL COUNCILS.

AMBROSE—CHYSOSTOM—AUGUSTINE—CYRIL—LEO—
JEROME—ANTHONY.

Dates, A. D.

- | | |
|------|------------|
| 325. | ANTHONY. |
| 345. | JEROME. |
| 374. | AMBROSE. |
| 395. | AUGUSTINE. |
| 397. | CHYSOSTOM. |
| 412. | CYRIL. |
| 464. | LEO. |

WE must glance back again over the period of three centuries, to look at the names of some of those who became prominent in the Church. Some of them loom up as Bishops who extended the power of the Church, others as writers who explained the Christian system, and others as the founders of societies for promoting works of charity and holiness of life.

AMBROSE was the Bishop of Milan. He was chosen to this office by the popular voice in A. D. 374, when he was thirty-four years old, and occupied the position until A. D. 390. His influence during his life-time was most beneficial, and his writings have helped instruct many, in all ages since. His bold, unswerving devotion to the right was illustrated in his forbidding the emperor Theodosius to enter a church until he had repented of, and made some reparation for, the crime of permitting the slaughter of some of his subjects. The emperor yielded at length, and came as a penitent to the house of God. Ambrose is believed to have written the Te Deum, and to have remoulded the music of the Church, introducing those simple melodies, now called Gregorian, but which are thought to be the same as were used in the Jewish Church from the days of David.

CHRYSOSTOM was the great preacher of the early centuries, eloquent to that degree, that he was called "the golden mouthed." He was made Bishop of Constantinople, about A. D. 397, when he was fifty years old. His history is almost a romance, so full is it of interesting details. For years, almost daily, in his church, would enrapt congregations listen to him. Sometimes his invectives against sin would lead to his being persecuted, but when delivered from peril he would

go on as boldly as ever. He wrote much, chiefly in explanation of the Sacred Scriptures. We use in the Church services a prayer of which he is the author.

AUGUSTINE was born A. D. 354, made Bishop of Hippo, in Africa, A. D. 395, and died A. D. 430. He was a giant in intellect, and has influenced to a great extent the theology of the Church in all subsequent ages. His writings are very extensive, and consist of explanations of the Bible, sermons, and systematic treatises on theology. His two best known books are his "Confessions," and "The City of God."

CYRIL, Bishop of Alexandria, A. D. 412, was a zealous, almost warlike, Bishop, in times of peculiar trouble, when the barbarous tribes were making their attacks, and heresies were everywhere spreading.

LEO THE GREAT, was Bishop of Rome for over twenty years, dying in A. D. 461. He is chiefly remembered now by his "Sacramentary," which contains the earliest of our collects, which he had collected from primitive sources.

JEROME, was one of the most learned of the Latin writers. He was born in A. D. 345, and died in his seventy-eighth year. Much of his time was spent at Bethlehem, and his great passion was the study

and translation of the Sacred Scriptures. The version, in Latin, now used in the Roman Church, was made by him. His life was one of the greatest self-mortification.

ANTHONY was the founder of the monastic system. However much in later days his imitators have departed from the ideal he set before himself, and however much his ideal may have been defective, he comes to our notice as one who was exceedingly eager to live a holy life, and to get out of the corruption which began to prevail in his day. He and his companions supported themselves by the work of their hands, and gave generously to the poor. Anthony was present at the Council at Nice, as the friend of Athanasius, and his influence went far to aid the latter in checking the Arian heresy.

But we cannot continue the list. There are many others who are entitled to mention, and perhaps equally so, with those now named. To get a clear idea of the part any of them took in the Church's affairs, it is necessary to study their lives more in detail than can be here attempted.

We must remember, too, in forming an estimate of them, not to judge them by the standards of our own day, but of the times in which they lived, although some of them were men of such true greatness that they would have towered beyond their fellow-men, in whatever age they had lived.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PERIOD FROM THE SIXTH COUNCIL TO THE DIVISION OF THE CHURCH.

EUROPE SLUMBERING — SARACENS — PAPAL POWER—
MONASTIC ORDERS — FEUDAL SYSTEM — DIVISION.

A. D. 711.	SARACENS IN SPAIN.
768-814.	REIGN OF CHARLEMAGNE.
871-901.	ALFRED THE GREAT OF ENGLAND.
1054.	DIVISION OF THE CHURCH.

THE next period of history at which we are to look, extends from A. D. 680 to A. D. 1054, at which latter date the Church was rent into two portions. The pictures presented are not very cheering in their nature, for ignorance, worldliness and superstition prevailed. It was a winter period of cold and dreariness. It seems doubly dreary to us, living at this distance from it, because of the corruptions of the true faith which were nearly everywhere spread, and which overshadowed whatever of primitive truth and piety there was. Doubtless there were, in every place where the Redeemer

was worshipped, the same loving trust and godly sincerity which have been in the world ever since the Church was planted. We know too that there was much zeal for the extension of the faith, for it was spread during this period to regions which had not before received it. These four centuries constituted a period in which much of the world seemed to be slumbering. Not that it was an entirely deep sleep, but the old empire, with its vigorous life, was crumbling away, the east was sealed by the spread of the Saracens, and for a long while the feudal system laid its icy hand upon all general progress.

The four most notable points for our consideration are : the conflicts with the Saracens ; the extension of the papal power ; the rise of monastic orders ; and the rise of the feudal system.

THE SARACENS.—The Saracens were the believers in Mohammedanism. They became a mighty war-like power, and aimed at a subjugation of the world to their faith, through the force of their arms. They were enthusiastic, and relentless. One victory paved the way for another. To crush and to destroy was the passion of their lives. They could not be softened. Nothing but superior force could turn them aside from their purpose.

Pushing on from the west eastward they planted their victorious standards upon the ruins of cities and towns, and at last, in A. D. 672, came in front

of the walls of Constantinople itself. Here they were met and checked, although for five years the siege was kept up. Turning from the city, they poured their hosts along the northern shores of Africa, and upon the ruins of Christian churches built their mosques. Their territories stretched, at length, for 2000 miles, from Syria along the shores of the Mediterranean.

Resting awhile, they crossed to Europe, and pressed on through Spain into the interior of France, and then along to the heart of Europe. Their dreams of universal dominion seemed about to be realized.

But Europe was aroused. The issue was now one in which every interest was staked. If they went further, Christianity must go down and Mohammedanism would be the religion of the world. But God would not suffer His Church to be obliterated. Charles, the Hammer, son of Pepin, was raised up to protect the imperilled Church. In A. D. 732 the great battle was fought at Tours, between the Saracens, on one side, and the Franks and Germans on the other. 300,000 of the sons of Islam fell. The rout was complete; and Mohammedanism was hurled back.

THE PAPAL POWER.—In the first days of the Church, Jerusalem was honored as the seat of the chief Episcopate, but gradually, through the impor-

tance of the city of Rome, the Bishops of the latter place were accorded much consideration, although no power over other Bishops was given them. As time went on, and the empire became Christian, the Roman bishops gained in honor, and began to claim especial powers and privileges. When Constantinople was built, the Bishop of that city was styled "the Universal Bishop," although the title never gave him any authority over others. In the case of the Roman bishops, too, at first, the supremacy was considered simply honorary. During parts of the sixth and seven centuries, there were disputes between the Bishops of the two cities concerning which of the two should be called the "Ecumenical Bishop." But with the increase of wealth, and especially the adding of lands in Italy to the possessions of the Roman Bishop, he began to take rank as a temporal prince, as well as a spiritual ruler. So long as the claims made by the Roman Bishop to a title of supremacy were pressed only by argument, they received but little consideration; but growing temporal strength gained for them acceptance by those who were weaker than they, or who courted their favor.

During the period we are now considering, the Roman Bishops became wealthy, powerful princes; and as superstition and ignorance spread over the land, their supremacy increased with both. The title "The Pope" came into common use,

as applied to the Bishop of Rome, although previously it had been given to the Bishops of other places.

There were few causes that brought about so much evil as this increase of the power and dominion of the Bishops of Rome. It tended to beget and to perpetuate error, and bound men in bondage to superstition. In subsequent days the Pope claimed power to bestow crowns upon rulers, to regulate the affairs of nations, and to receive the homage of all men, in matters temporal and spiritual.

THE RISE OF MONASTIC ORDERS.—We are not to look for the first beginnings of the monastic system in this period, for, as we have seen, Anthony, in the fourth century, was the founder of a brotherhood who devoted themselves to an ascetic life. Even earlier than his time, there were many who turned their backs upon the world, and lived in caves and solitary places as hermits and anchorites. The monkish orders, however, were greatly multiplied in this period, and came into very great favor. The Benedictine order was founded in A. D. 529, by Benedict of Nursia, a pious, zealous man, whose aim was to encourage others in devotion and usefulness. Money poured in upon them, and the order became the leading one in the west. Others flourished in different sections, and pres-

ently it became the popular notion that if one desired to lead a holy life, it was necessary to enter a monastic order.

There can be no doubt, that so long as the rules of the founders of these orders were observed, their influence was wholesome. Learning was encouraged in the monasteries, copies of the Scriptures were multiplied, the works of the Fathers were transcribed and studied, schools were established, the poor were fed, an asylum was always ready for the sick and the troubled, and great churches were built. Even, indeed, when the strictness of the founders' rules was departed from, they still subserved many useful purposes.

At the close of this period, however, the monastic orders had declined in usefulness, and the good they had the opportunity of doing was often left undone, although their popularity was never so great before. Even kings left their homes to shut themselves up in the monasteries, that they might devote themselves to prayer and meditation and holy deeds. So high did the monks stand in favor, that many were promoted to posts of honor under the different governments. The revenues of the different orders grew to be immense, and their lands were almost beyond measuring.

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM.—To understand the feudal system, it must be remembered that, when the

Roman empire was in its strength, its powerful arms were so spread out over all its dominions that it was one vast government, although made up of many tribes of men. When the empire fell, it fell to pieces, to many pieces indeed ; and its territory became ruled over by numerous kings and princes. Never again were the broken pieces cemented together, but the subdividing process seemed to go on almost indefinitely. Not that all rulers were princes, in one sense of the word, but in every country there were numerous rulers, who held sway each over a small extent of territory. They were called barons, or feudal lords. Each petty prince built his castle, and around it flocked the peasants and others for employment and protection. Sometimes one of these small rulers became powerful enough to control a number of others of his class, and now and then one rose to great supremacy.

Charlemagne did much to restore a semblance of the old empire, but never again was so vast an empire as Rome once was to be established. During the prevalence of feudalism, the common people sometimes suffered, and sometimes were benefitted. Their condition was usually deplorably ignorant and degraded, except as they clustered in large towns and cities, whose rising commercial importance gave facilities for education and comfort. In the numerous wars between rival princes,

the Church became the protector of the exposed peasants, and sometimes her clergy would put on the garments of the soldier, to fight for the rights of the Church and of the poor.

In picturing to ourselves the condition of the things during this period, especially towards its end, we are to think, first, of the monastery, with its great church, its cloisters, its farm and tenants, and its schools ; then of the castle, with its armor-clad soldiers, its surrounding peasantry ; and then of the few cities where commerce had attracted population, and accumulated wealth.

It is difficult to describe in sufficiently clear terms the utter misery which prevailed at the close of the ninth century and extended still later. Education was confined almost entirely to the clergy, and even they, as a general rule, were in a deplorable condition of ignorance. The peasant population of Europe was depressed, poor, and unhappy. Robbers frequented every road, and there seemed to be no authority left to punish them. Lands were left untilled, and famines and plagues spread in every quarter.

As the ninth century drew to an end, there prevailed almost throughout Christendom the belief that the world was coming speedily to an end.

The year 999 was regarded as the last year.

The wretchedness that was spread, and the general disorganization of society, seemed to convince every one that some wonderful change might be expected ; and then, too, strange as it may seem, the expectation of the world's ending led to the increase of this wretchedness. Men left their ordinary employments, the activities of life seemed suspended, and the condition of society was like that of the crews of sinking vessels, who give themselves up to the wildest excesses as they see ruin so near at hand.

But the new century dawned, and the knell of doom was not struck. The earth moved on in her course around the sun. The stars beamed as brightly as ever. The Son of Man had not yet appeared to open the books and to declare His Judgment.

A great weight of dread was at once lifted off the minds of all men, and the new century, which had been looked forward to with so much terror, came in laden with many blessings.

We can hardly over-estimate the importance of the change which it ushered in. The torpor, the unquiet, the distress of the past began to be changed ; not, it is true, at once or entirely, but a new state of things began.

The change was observable in the care that was given to the restoration of the crumbling churches, and to the construction of new ones. For a long

while before it had seemed useless to build with the view of permanence ; now, however, grand structures, upon a gigantic scale, began to loom up.

The neglected fields were tilled, the ordinary channels of industry were again resorted to, the laws against criminals were enforced, and society became more secure.

One note that was struck began to vibrate throughout the whole Christian world,—the crusades for the recovery of the Holy City. No one knew at first what wondrous changes the cry, “Jerusalem must be recovered !” would produce ; how it would set in motion the turbid waters, how indeed the whole destiny of the world would be eventually changed. But we will learn more of the crusades further on in this history.

We are brought now up to the time of the division of the Church into its Eastern and Western parts. There were many causes that brought it about. It was not the work of one day or one century. The building of Constantinople, the arrogance of the Roman Popes, the insertion of an article in the Nicene Creed by the Western Church without the authority of a general council ; the many controversies and excommunications, first of one, and then of another—these led finally to the great division, the date of which is A. D. 1054. Some communion between the two branches

existed long after, but that year seemed to be the time when intercourse generally began to cease.

In this rapid review of this period, of course, we have not been able to do more than look at a few of its leading characteristics.

CHAPTER XIV.

FROM THE DIVISION OF THE CHURCH TO THE REFORMATION—A. D. 1064-1517.

THE CRUSADES—ROMISH ERRORS—INVENTIONS AND
DISCOVERIES—DECLINE OF FEUDALISM.

Dates. A. D.

- 1096. FIRST CRUSADE.
- 1118. ORDER OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR FOUNDED.
- 1146. SECOND CRUSADE.
- 1170. DEATH OF THOMAS -A-BECKET.
- 1189. THIRD CRUSADE.
- 1209. ATTEMPTS TO EXTERMINATE THE ALBIGENSES
- 1217. FOURTH CRUSADE.
- 1223. FRANCISCAN ORDER ESTABLISHED.
- 1228. FIFTH CRUSADE.
- 1248. SIXTH CRUSADE.
- 1270. SEVENTH CRUSADE.
- 1294. ROGER BACON BORN.
- 1348. CANNON FIRST USED.
- 1383. WICLIFF'S BIBLE TRANSLATION.
- 1452. INVENTION OF PRINTING.
- 1483. LUTHER BORN.
- 1492. AMERICA DISCOVERED.

We have compared the preceding period to a winter condition. The period we are now to con-

sider may be likened to the spring-time. Not indeed to the balmy days of spring, but to those days which come with sunshine and storms, hail and sleet, yet with clearer light; longer days, less of night in them, and give promise of summer at hand.

There are few periods of history more important than the four centuries now to be examined. Changes, overturnings, and the infusion of new ideas, became the order of the times.

We will try to select some of the leading features, as we did in the preceding period. Among the many points worthy of attention, there are five which stand out prominently.

First, the Crusades. Second, the corruptions of the faith by the Roman Church. Third, the decline of Feudalism. Fourth, the inventions and discoveries. Fifth, the movements which led to reform.

THE CRUSADES.—The victorious march of the Saracens in the east led them to Jerusalem in the beginning of the tenth century. Their banners were planted over the holy places. The rallying cry of the Christians was raised by Sylvester, the new pope of Rome, who succeeded to that position A. D. 998. “*Soldiers of Christ, arise and fight for Zion,*” were his words, which rang out over the West. There was no response at first, while yet

indignation and sorrow filled every Christian heart. At length, about the close of the tenth century, Peter the Hermit began to preach a crusade against the infidels who had intrenched themselves in Palestine, and had committed many cruelties upon the swarms of pilgrims to the sacred places.

The long smouldering fires in the bosoms of the men of the West were fanned into furious flame as they listened to the preaching of the Hermit. He recounted the wrongs perpetrated upon the pilgrims, told of the wealth of eastern places which might be gathered, and particularly of the merit which he said they would earn, both now and hereafter, who would rid the holy city of its defilements.

Suddenly (A. D. 1095) there was gathered together a rabble armed in every variety of fashion. There were princes and peasants, beggars and robbers, an indescribable multitude of all nations of the West, pouring forth to the East upon the first crusade. It was an immense mob-like expedition, numbering some 300,000. Upon the breast or shoulder of each one there was worn a red cross. At first it seemed as if this torrent would prove to be utterly irresistible, but it was soon seen to be an utterly undisciplined, riotous mob. Its passage through Europe was like that of a devastating flood. With violence, riotous living, and crime, they pressed on, leaving hosts of their number dead as they crowded forward. They were not to reach

the holy city. But a small proportion of them escaped the attacks of the Saracens, who destroyed their ships as they issued forth from Constantinople. Only about 20,000 of the vast multitude ever returned to their homes. None of the whole number ever came in sight of Jerusalem. The holy city remained in the possession of the infidels.

We might suppose that so disastrous an ending would have discouraged any further efforts, but within a year another reinforcement was on its way. This second portion was led by the knights and barons, more military in its character than the preceding. All the great soldiers of Europe were in it. Six hundred thousand men, with innumerable attendants, made up the four armies of which it was composed.

As before, thousands perished by the way, and many stayed behind in the cities and towns through which the route lay. Others perished in conflicts into which they were led before they reached Palestine. At last the Crusaders met the Turks on the plains of Phrygia, and achieved a victory ; but hunger, thirst and heat brought dismay into their ranks. Their horses all died. It is said, that upon one single day five hundred men died of thirst. Quarrels broke out between the different races in the ranks. But notwithstanding their sufferings, they pressed on and besieged Antioch. Here, however, the luxurious living into which

they plunged, produced results as fatal as the privations they had suffered.

Antioch was finally captured, but plagues broke out and cut off many of the captors. When they resumed their march, but fifty thousand of the force of six hundred thousand were left. Nothing could exceed their enthusiasm when Jerusalem appeared before their gaze. They stretched out their hands, fell upon their knees, and raised loud shouts, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, God wills it!"

A long struggle for its possession ensued ere they could enter; but they finally triumphed, and the streets ran with Moslem blood. Godfrey of Bouillon was made the ruler of the city, and it was again added to the domains of Christendom. But the force left to hold the city was all too small to resist the assaults of the Saracens. Other crusades followed. There were eight in all, extending from A. D. 1095 to A. D. 1270, nearly two hundred years. Sometimes there would be a long interval, then the fires would break out again. They never became so enormous, however, as the first. The crusading spirit died out after the disastrous expedition of Louis IX. of France, A.D. 1270, when the infidel was left in unmolested possession of Palestine. It is estimated that over two millions of lives were sacrificed in the crusades, and the treasure expended is beyond calculation. Some

countries were nearly depopulated and impoverished.

As attempts to subdue the Moslem power, the Crusades failed, and the sacrifice of human life is appalling ; but results have flowed from the Crusades, to bless the world to the latest days. They helped dispel ignorance ; they set in motion the stagnation which had before been the condition of all classes ; they led to the re-distribution of the soil ; they made changes in the status of the lower classes ; and they excited thought and inquiry, which eventually led on to reform.

Although they were organized for the recovery of the holy places in Palestine, and failed, we may regard these movements as leading finally to the recovery of holy truths which had been lost through the reign of superstition. But for the upheaval of Europe by the Crusades, the world might have slumbered on, and the rust of error would have gathered all the more heavily over the truth, and have eaten it away. The beneficial results of the Crusades were not evident at once. They came out slowly, and were not fully recognized for many a day after the last one ended.

THE GROWTH OF ROMISH ERRORS.—It is hard to recognize in the lordly rulers who occupied the papal throne, in this period, much likeness to the primitive bishops, who with the utmost simplicity

and with unsparing devotion, ministered to the people the truths of God. It is as hard, too, to see the likeness between some aspects of the Church that then existed, and the band of disciples, first called Christians at Antioch.

Doubtless if we could have the history of this period written out for us fully, there would be many a redeeming feature found in it. God's truth and God's Church cannot be in the world without begetting holy lives, and holy deeds; and there never has been a time, even in the darkest periods, when there have been none to worship Him in sincerity and truth.

It would be strange, indeed,th if, among the myriads who at this time named the name of Christ, there were not a goodly number who were better than the average, and more free from the debasing superstitions that prevailed.

When, however, superstitions and corruptions become united with the holding of power, it is hard to rise superior to them or to shake them off. The arrogant assumptions of the popes of Rome were connected very closely with the prevalence of corrupt doctrines and practices.

Without recounting *all* the errors that were then spread, we may specify :

First, The virtual subjugation of all temporal governments to the dominion of the pope. There seemed to be no escape from his grasp. He

could direct the armies of one nation against another, and remove the crown from a king's head. Whatever was promulgated by his authority, whether in matters temporal or matters spiritual, must be received without question. This thorough subserviency to papal rule would not have been so fraught with evil, had the popes always been good men. Unhappily some of them were warriors, others were reckless evil livers, and some were almost, if not quite, infidels.

Second, A second error was the belief in the efficacy of the intercession of saints and angels for sinners. There is but one Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus ; but as time went on, prayers began to be addressed to the Virgin Mary and to others ; and their intervention in behalf of sinful men was implored.

Third, The belief in purgatory led to many abuse of the primitive faith. Claiming that the souls of the departed needed purification before they could be admitted to heaven, there grew up the offering of masses for the dead, and the purchase of favor in their behalf.

Fourth, A superstitious regard for relics, images, and the like, made the worship of some resemble the old idolatry which had been overthrown.

But the list of errors is too long to be recited here. We will see it again as it will come before us in the account of the Reformation. Suffice it

to say, that the hand of Rome was spread out everywhere, and it was neither a very clean nor a very gentle hand.

Even when good men ascended the papal chair, the customs and traditions of the office overcame whatever there might have been of good influence on their part. Alas, that it should have been so ; that they who represented the life of the blessed Christ to men should have so distorted it, and have made it so hideous and repulsive !

INVENTIONS AND DISCOVERIES.—One of the results of the agitation which grew out of the Crusades, was the increase of general mental activity. It was not long before the peasant found, that although devoid of rank, he could rival the wealth of the knight, by engaging in commerce. The rich commodities of the East began then to be sources of trade, and presently the manufacture of goods was encouraged in the West.

Commercial cities and towns sprang up, and employment was found for classes which had been dependent upon baronial protection. Then, as wealth came to the masses, there were the accompaniments of wealth—better houses, general improvement in men's surroundings, and education.

Wars began to assume a different character, for the invention and use of gunpowder was the fatal blow to knighthood ; and with its fall,

there fell many usages which had prevailed for ages.

A mighty revolution, too, was carried on by the general employment of the art of printing. Before printing became so general, books were copied out by the pens of the monks and others, and the possession of a manuscript or illuminated copy, was possible only for the wealthy, or for some public institution. The rapid multiplication of copies of books, by printing, helped to popularize learning, and to put the truths of revelation and of science into the hands of the many.

Then came the use of the mariners' compass, enabling seamen to make longer voyages than had ever been attempted before, and encouraging the daring exploits of Columbus, which led to the discovery of a new continent. With the discovery of this continent there seemed to be a widening of the conceptions of men, and a shaking loose from the petty views which had hitherto influenced them. Although it was many years before any permanent settlements were made in America, yet from the time of its discovery there began to spread a spirit of adventure and love of exploration, which had their influence subsequently over the condition of the whole world.

THE DECLINE OF FEUDALISM.—It will readily be seen that the growing earnestness of the times was

opposed to the continuance of a system of multiplied petty governments, and of the depression of the lower classes of society. So long as the peasant was ignorant, he was content to be the vassal of the baron ; but as he grew in the scale of enlightenment he became restive under such a yoke. Then, after the Crusades, there was a great unsettling of all previous relationships. The peasant had become the warrior ; from that he glided into mercantile callings ; and thence into the position of the wealthy townsman. As commerce became established, the manufacture of commodities was pressed with vigor, and gradually there arose a class of citizens as wealthy and as intelligent as their former rulers had been. The changes in the modes of warfare which were introduced diminished the effectiveness of the knight as a soldier, and ancient military tactics gave way before the use of gunpowder. For these reasons, and for many others, the feudal system faded away. The remnants of it existed still in very modified forms, but it was impossible to revive it as it once existed.

It required no prophet to declare that the world was approaching a mighty crisis of some kind, when the years rolled along, and there came to be an earnest life in the world which had not been so seen before. We must think of society as being acted upon by mighty forces which were preparing it to break the trammels in which it was held.

Possibly none knew exactly what was coming, nor what they wished might come. Here and there, there was a cry for reform, and now and then some blind, impulsive movement towards the light. The pen of some writer, like a keen sword, would tear open the hypocrisy of the monkish orders, and men would hold their breath in terror. Some one would secure a copy of the Word of God, and venture to read its almost new stories to his neighbors. In some lonely places a few would be bold enough to talk together about the evils of the times, and to deplore the weight of the iron hand that pressed them down so heavily. Then the darkness would grow darker, but it was the dark hour before the dawn ; and the dawn was nearer than some of **them** thought.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REFORMATION PERIOD.

DANGERS—WICLIFFE—LUTHER—ENGLAND.

Dates : A. D.

- 1415. JOHN HUSS MARTYRED.
- 1509. CALVIN BORN.
- 1509-47. REIGN OF HENRY VIII.
- 1513-21. LEO POPE.
- 1522-23. HADRIAN VI. POPE.
- 1523-34. CLEMENT VII. POPE.
- 1540. JESUIT ORDER FOUNDED.
- 1547. COUNCIL OF TRENT.
- 1558. ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

A SUFFICIENT number of the abuses which had crept into the Church have been named to show how greatly a reformation was needed. But it was dangerous to men's comfort and safety to become reformers. Rome did not want to be reformed. Rome was powerful enough to seek to crush any one who attempted it.

Then, too, it does not always happen that those who project reforms are wise, prudent and patient. An attack upon an existing abuse is often apt to be intemperate, or to carry with it the destruction of some good thing which ought never to be touched.

Long before the period of the Reformation there had been efforts at reform. Some of them were wisely led, others were but blundering movements in the right direction.

Wycliffe in England (A. D. 1350), Huss in Bohemia, and Jerome of Prague, had denounced some of the corruptions of Rome, but their movements were not always of the wisest character. Wycliffe, however, will always be most gratefully remembered for having given to the English people a translation of the Bible in their own language. He is called "the Morning Star of the Reformation," and justly deserves that title, although some of his propositions were utterly impracticable.

The reading of the Sacred Scriptures produced great changes, opening the eyes of the people to see how erroneous were many of the teachings of Rome, and preparing the way for a return to the primitive faith. But a return to the primitive faith involved danger. There had arisen certain orders in the Roman Church, principal among them the Dominicans, who became active agents for discovering and punishing by torture and death

those who were bold enough to condemn the existing corruptions. The history of the Inquisition makes sad reading, when we think of its horrid work as done in the name of the religion of Christ. To be suspected of having any sympathy with the views of those who were styled heretics, was sufficient ground for exposure to the savage proceedings of this cruel court.

The opening of the fifteenth century witnessed the rise of Martin Luther as a reformer, and a good Providence made him the agent for carrying on the mighty work. Luther was an Augustinian monk in Saxony, and came into conflict with Rome by declaiming against the sale of indulgences by Tetzel, the pope's agent. Pope Leo was then building St. Peter's Church in Rome, and needing money, offered indulgences to all who would contribute to this purpose. These indulgences were based upon the fancied power of the Pope to secure benefits to the souls in purgatory, although the popular notion applied them to permission to commit sin here. Tetzel hawked the Pope's indulgences about from place to place.

Luther's attacks at first were directed against these abuses, but as time went on he was led to declaim against the supremacy of the Pope, and the other errors which had been introduced. He and his followers, upon refusing to retract their expressions, were excommunicated. They were not silenced,

however, and the excitement grew. Multitudes of the people sided with them, and they were protected by some of the German rulers. Eventually their principles spread through a great part of Germany, Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

In Switzerland, Zuinglius led the reformed movement. On his death Calvin of Geneva became their leader, and his views spread through France. Many of the nobility favored them, among whom was Henry the Fourth, of Navarre. Under the kingship of Charles the Ninth a vast multitude of the French, who had adopted the reformation principles, were massacred, on the eve of St. Bartholomew's Day, A. D. 1572. After a long and cruel persecution they obtained toleration by the edict of Nantz, A. D. 1598, which remained in force until A. D. 1685, when Louis Fourteenth revoked the edict, and they were compelled to return to the Church of Rome or leave the country. They are known in history as the Huguenots.

It is sad that the reformers on the Continent did not carry with them into their movement the ancient form of Church government. Many of them, perhaps nearly all of them, were in favor of so doing, but no Bishops of the Church sided with them. In after times, when it was possible to incorporate this feature of the Church with the primitive doctrines for which they contended, they generally

neglected the opportunity, and thus have perpetuated a separation from the organic body.

In Great Britain the reformation was more wisely conducted. The Church there had existed from the days of the Apostles. For 600 years it remained independent of the Roman see, and it was only after the Norman conquest that the papal jurisdiction became thoroughly established.

While there were many efforts at reform, none gave promise of success so long as the Pope's power was held. In A. D. 1532, the quarrel of Henry the Eighth with the Pope, led to the overthrow of the power of the latter in Great Britain. Once overthrown, that power was impotent to check the rising tide. Henry is not to be credited as a reformer, nor is he, as is sometimes urged, the founder of the Church of England. That Church was founded ages before he was born. God permitted his efforts to secure a divorce from his queen to be the occasion of the downfall of the Pope's authority in Great Britain, and thus the way to the reformation was facilitated. Almost contrary to the wishes of the king, reform went forward step by step. First one error was cast out and then another, until, with the accession of Edward the Sixth, A. D. 1547, there were made the most sweeping changes. Images and relics were removed, the communion in both kinds was given to the laity—the clergy were permitted to marry—and the liturgy was purified and

set forth in English. Although, when Mary became Queen, A. D. 1553, every effort was made to restore the Roman Church to power, it was but for a time; for when Elizabeth succeeded her, the Church of England became fully established, and has been the Church of that country and her dependencies ever since.

The nation went with the reformation in England, although not all were in favor of it. For many years the people worshipped in the same churches, and were taught by the same pastors. The Pope was much annoyed at this, yet no effort was made to lead those who were still friendly to him from the Church of England, until A. D. 1569, when a bull was issued by Pius Fifth, Bishop of Rome, excommunicating the queen, and absolving the people from their allegiance. This bill caused the Romish schism in England, for from that time the Pope's followers formed a party distinct from the national Church. The Romanists had no bishops there, however, until A. D. 1685.

The great aim of the English Reformers was not to destroy, but to restore the ancient Church — to remove whatever superstitious views and practices had been introduced — and to adapt the Church to the progress of the times. The English language was substituted for the Latin in the service books; the invocation of the saints and martyrs was omitted; and the people were taught to worship the Persons

of the Blessed Trinity only ; the Communion service became a holy feast of joy and gladness, instead of a superstitious ceremony in which the elements were thought to be changed to veritable flesh and blood ; the reading of the Scriptures became a prominent feature in public services ; and in every particular they sought to restore the Church to what she was before her fair outline had been obscured by the superstitious fancies of men.

Very great were the learning, the patience and the courage of the English Reformers. Their work was one of extreme delicacy and importance. It was like pruning the dead branches from a tree, when extreme care must be taken not to injure whatever was good and living. Or, to use another figure, it was like cleansing an exquisite piece of statuary upon which dust and soil and rubbish had accumulated. They wanted to preserve it entire, only removing the extraneous matter, and having it come out again with the beauty it possessed when it left the sculptor's hands. Worthy then, of all honor, is the memory of the four English martyrs, Crannier, Ridley, Latimer and Hooper, and the scores of others who helped restore the old Church to what she was before Romish superstitions had marred her fair beauty. And while we record gratefully their zeal for a pure faith, let us also record their reverence towards the bride of Christ, their care lest in getting rid of error they should

Injure one lineament of truth which had been impressed by the Lord Himself.

Thus, then, throughout the world, came the reaction from the errors which from time to time had crept into the Church. The reform was accomplished at the cost of much suffering. Many noble lives fell before the vindictiveness of the Pope's followers, and the return to the truths which Christ taught has been at a cost which no one can fully estimate to-day.

Happy would it have been could some general Council have been summoned, after the manner of those of the earliest ages, and the true faith of the Church been re-established. Such a measure was again and again proposed, but no Council could be favored by the Pope except such as would give his views a preponderating influence. Indeed his claims were virtually above the jurisdiction of any Council, for he declared that none should meet, except such as he himself might call. But the days of God are long, and no one knows what there may be, in the future, of joy and peace to a now divided Christendom. He may be working out some plans of mercy through our present divisions, and when the time is ripe it may please Him to draw all Christians into *one* fold.

Error cannot always live. The truth must prevail.

CHAPTER XVI.

SINCE THE REFORMATION.

COUNCIL OF TRENTE — JESUITS — EASTERN CHURCH —
PURITANS — CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THIS COUNTRY
— PROTESTANT RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.

Dates : A. D.

- 1540. ZAVIER, MISSIONARY.
- 1572. MASSACRE OF FRENCH PROTESTANTS.
- 1609. ENGLISH SETTLE JAMESTOWN.
- 1789. FRENCH REVOLUTION.
- 1789. CONSTITUTION AND PRAYER BOOK
ADOPTED BY AMERICAN CHURCH.

ITALY, Spain, Austria, Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, France, and part of Germany and Switzerland, remained under the Papal jurisdiction after the Reformation had gone on, although in every land the Pope's power was shaken. Two efforts were made during the Reformation to revive the declining influence of the papacy. These were the holding of the Council of Trent, A. D. 1563, and the sounding of the order of the Jesuits, A. D. 1537.

Although the former was measurably of a local nature, yet its results showed the spirit of the Roman power, and its determination to cling to its corruptions, for that Council decided in favor of the doctrines of transubstantiation and purgatory ; and approved of the invocation of the saints, the celibacy of the clergy, the communion in one kind, &c.

The Jesuits' order was formally recognized by a bull, in A. D. 1540. Every member took an oath of unhesitating obedience to the pope's commands. They were ready to do any kind of service, however degrading, however laborious ; to go anywhere ; to be anything, or to do anything. They spread all over the world, sometimes as missionaries to the heathen, as teachers in schools, as members of king's cabinets, as detectives of heresy, as the unscrupulous allies of Rome wherever her interests could be advanced.

The order exists to-day, although the Jesuits have, at different times, been driven out of nearly every country in Europe. They have influenced the politics of kingdoms, fomented strifes, and in many cases have not scrupled to commit crimes.

Still they exist, and wherever Romanism is in the ascendant, there they are found. It is true that among them have been numbered some of the most zealous of missionaries, and some of the most learned of men, but no religious order is so unscrupulous in carrying forward its purposes. Believing

that the triumph of Rome is paramount to every other consideration, they labor for that one end.

It would be a mistake to think of every Jesuit as being uninfluenced by good motives. It would be monstrous, if we had in the world an order of men bearing the name of Jesus, who were all given to evil. Many of them are better than the principles of their order, and have shown and do show their love of Christ and of men by their holy deeds. The reeking dungeon, the distant mission post, the lazar house,—the places most prejudicial to health and life are visited by them in their errands of mercy. Sometimes, in view of the noble lives they live, and the heroic deeds they do, it is hard to remember the errors of their belief.

But all the zeal and devotion and craft of the Jesuit order have not availed to recover the ground lost by Rome at the Reformation ; and with the advancing light of later days, her power has been steadily waning, even though the fiery earnestness of the Jesuits has added missionary fields to her dominion.

The separation of so many reformers from the Roman communion did not bring quiet to that body, for shortly after the Council of Trent there began long continued controversies among the Roman Catholics over such questions as the authority of popes, the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, and the general doctrines of

predestination and free will. The latter point, finally, after many years of discussion, took the name of *Jansenism*, after the Bishop of Ipres, named Jansenius. His date is about A. D. 1640. The views he held are about like such as are usually called *Calvinistic*, involving a belief in the foreordination of some to life, and of others to damnation, and denying man's freedom of will in turning from sin to righteousness. The great opponents of the Jansenists were the Jesuits, and for many years the war of words went on between them. Sometimes, however, the hand of the ecclesiastical and civil powers was laid heavily upon the Jansenists. The popes issued their bulls against them, and sometimes sought to turn the bishops who favored them from their offices, but it was all of no avail. They lived on and defied the power of Rome for many years.

The controversies respecting the Pope's supremacy and the amount of submission due to him, have been going on for many years in the Roman Church, and the contesting parties have arrayed themselves upon opposite sides. Those who have taught openly and without reservation the duty of absolute submission to the Pope in all things, both temporal and spiritual, have become known as *Ultramontanists*. Their opponents have been mainly German and French Romanists, although opposition to ultra-montanism has been found

among Romanists in all parts of the world. It is a singular spectacle to witness the strenuous efforts made by the Pope and his supporters to bolster up the temporal dominion which has been so rapidly passing from him.

Once his word could make and unmake a king ; but to-day every part of his territory has been stripped from him, and whatever power he yet possesses, is not as that of a prince, but as a spiritual ruler.

Once at his bidding whole nations would spring to arms ; but his voice is not listened to any longer as a leader in conquest.

And yet, as the temporal power of the Pope has been steadily declining since the Reformation, the Church of Rome has been ascribing to him a spiritual dominion greater than was claimed even in the darkest periods of the middle ages, until at last we hear the almost blasphemous declaration that he is infallible, that what he teaches as the head of the Church must be infallibly true.

Of course if one pope is infallible, then all must have been so ; and yet it is only necessary to read their history to become aware that what one declared heresy another declared true, and so on. How can the contradictions be reconciled ?

Not only, however, has the doctrine of the Pope's infallibility been a product of later times in the Church of Rome, but other errors unheard of in

the early ages of Christianity have been introduced, and prominently among them is the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary ; that the Virgin herself was born into the world absolutely without sin, and also that she is entitled to be called "the queen of heaven," aiding by her protection her favorites on earth. The name by which these grievous errors relating to the Virgin are usually known, is Mariolatry.

But it is an ungracious task to go on thus pointing out the errors of a branch of the Church of Christ. Would that there were no errors to point out ! Much more gratifying is it to look at the good things the Roman Church has done, and the patience and zeal of many who are enrolled among her members.

Prominent upon her pages since the Reformation is the record of Francis Xavier, a man of most sincere devotion, and of singular earnestness. He was born in 1506, in France, became a Jesuit in 1537, went to India in 1540, and for twelve years, in India, Ceylon, China, and Japan, he labored with a success scarcely seen since the times of the Apostles. In some places his converts were numbered by thousands ; and sometimes so many were the candidates for baptism that he could scarcely find the physical strength to baptize them.

Another noted name was Charles Borromeo, the Archbishop of Milan (born 1538, died 1584).

He was a reformer within the bounds of his own diocese. He found it in a disordered state ; the clergy were ignorant and unprincipled ; and religion was at a low ebb indeed. First setting the example of living a life of self-denial and of devotion, he carried on his reforms in his diocese, established seminaries for educating the ignorant clergy, held conferences, made good laws, and enforced them. His life was an honorable exception to the worldliness and superstition that abounded. A score of such men as he would have reformed the whole Church of Rome.

As time went on, the Roman Church in France came in conflict with a dreadful enemy ; not only hers, but the foe of Christianity itself. There grew up to most frightful proportions a form of infidelity which denied all revelation, and refused to believe there was a God. The leader of this band of unbelievers was Voltaire, but he was assisted in the work of overturning the faith by many others, among whom were D'Alembert and Diderot, and the authors of the Encyclopedia. Publications of the most impious character were issued, and infidelity was openly taught. All the wit and learning of the day seemed to be arrayed on the side of unbelief. Rousseau, Buffon, and many others, engaged in scientific and literary pursuits, joined hands in seeking to overthrow the Church. Finally the horrid principles which they so vigorously spread had

their issue in that awful reign of terror known as the French Revolution. Then it was that blood ran as water, and the very foundations of society were upheaved. Plunder, desolation, massacre and famine followed in rapid succession, and France reaped the whirlwind which her infidel philosophers had sown. The monasteries were suppressed, the clergy were either put to death or driven away, and the very names of religion and of religious things were discarded.

It was inaugurated as a reign of reason, but men soon saw that it meant sorrow and death. Never was there a period of such awful wickedness and violence as during the years of this carnival of crime, when the restraints of religion were thrown off, and men became more like fiends than men. It was a sad day for the Church, and although there came a reaction, yet never has France recovered from the fearful effects of that terrible revolution. Doubtless a pure Church would have prevented or allayed the outbreak, but the Church in France was not pure, and her superstitions were punished with fearful retribution.

It would be a long story to trace out fully the history of Romanism in modern days, to tell of the introduction of new errors, to recount how, step by step, the temporal power of the papacy has been waning, and how desperate have been the efforts to regain its supremacy over the affairs of men and

nations ; and to describe its futile efforts to check advancing light and civilization.

We behold it, to-day, a corrupt Church, sadly departed from the simplicity of primitive Christianity, holding on tenaciously to old superstitions, and yet containing within itself the outline of the faith once delivered to the saints. But the period of its reformation may be near at hand. God hasten it !

THE EASTERN CHURCH.—After the formal separation into Eastern and Western branches, there was very little intercourse between the two parts, and then the Reformation and its exciting events concentrated the attention of Western Christians mainly upon their own affairs. The Eastern division continued almost unknown to us as to its internal history, until within comparatively late years, when the movements looking forward to a re-union of the Churches have led to a closer examination of its history. It exists in Russia, Palestine, Greece, Austria, and other places, and numbers over seventy-five millions of members.

It has retained the ancient form of Church government, and has been preserved from some of the gross errors which have marred other branches, remaining in its faith and practice substantially as it was in the early ages.

The popular notions concerning the Eastern

Church attribute to it many superstitious views and observances ; but as recent inquiries bring to us more and more information, it is found to be much more free from all such additions than the Roman Church. Being an oriental Church, of course its modes of expression are much more glowing and striking than are usual in the Churches of the West ; and embracing within its fold a very large proportion of uneducated persons, there are superstitious views and practices maintained by some which are not authorized by the authority of the Church itself. Her highest authority has declared the faith of the Eastern Church to be “that which the Holy Scriptures, the Apostolic tradition, and the Ecumenical Councils of the undivided Church have defined for us.”

Important movements are now progressing on the part of the Anglican and American Churches to secure more thorough information respecting the principles of the Eastern Church, with the view of bringing about, if possible, some re-union. The movements to this end are watched with great interest, because of their bringing to light the actual condition and the internal affairs of a great branch of the Church of Christ, which has for so many years been, as it were, locked up from the gaze of Western Christians.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.—It took many

years to establish firmly the reformed Church of England in that country ; for no sooner had it been reformed, than a new set of foes arose, who became known as Puritans. They were the objectors to many of the points of the ancient faith which the wisdom and piety of the English reformers led them to retain.

The Puritan sympathies were rather with the views of the Lutherans and other continental reformers than with those of the Churchmen, and for years they ceased not to cavil, and to disturb the peace of the Church.

By degrees many of them separated from her communion, and calling themselves by different names, professed to maintain the truth in greater purity. Their opportunity to overthrow the Church seemed to come with their rebellion against Charles the First. Hatred to bishops, liturgies, the sign of the cross, etc., culminated then, and for awhile they had full sway ; but when Cromwell died, the Church was re-established, and has been the national Church ever since.

The English people throughout the world are indebted, perhaps more than many of them realize, to the Church of England, both for the preservation of a pure faith in the world, and for the results of magnificent learning and courage which have carried blessings to all parts of the earth.

Becoming a great commercial nation, England

has also had opportunity to become a great missionary nation, and has been the agent for carrying the Gospel to the four quarters of the globe. India, Africa, America, Australia and the islands of the seas have become the scene of her missionary enterprises. Her missionary bishops and clergy have rivalled the heroism of the primitive heralds of the faith, and millions of the heathen have had opportunity to know of Christ and His salvation through the zeal of this Church. Her history at home has ever been an eventful one, and has had its periods of agitation.

A strange coldness seemed to benumb her members in the period about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Her grand services were rendered in a perfunctory manner, and the glow of enthusiasm was exchanged for mere formalism. Of course there were exceptions. Not all, and it may be not a large proportion were under the spell of indifference, but it was sad indeed that a Church with such a noble history, going back to apostolic days, should ever lose her power and should slumber.

Some young students at Oxford, desiring to cultivate among themselves a more earnest piety than they found prevailing, met together frequently to encourage each other in fervor of devotion and in holiness of life. The result was a great awakening, led by the Wesleys and others. These men never intended and never labored to promote any separa-

tion from the established Church. The object of all their efforts was to infuse new warmth and earnestness, and to reach the great masses of the people who were ignorant of the Gospel. It is to be ever lamented that their work was needed, and that their followers have cut loose from the Church to which these men were so strongly attached. The movement inaugurated by the Wesleys would hardly have taken place, had the Church been as warmly in earnest as she is to-day. The date of the rise of Methodism is 1739.

Another movement, also beginning at Oxford, about 1833, and having at once, and through all the years since, a great influence upon the English Church, is known as the Tractarian movement. Certain professors at Oxford, among them Drs. Pusey and Newman, and others well known throughout England, united in publishing a number of tracts upon topics connected with the faith and practice of the Church. Their object, they declared, was to show that the Church of England was opposed equally to the views of the Papacy and to those of the ultra-Protestants. They labored particularly to interpret the thirty-nine Articles in such a way that they would lose their distinctively Protestant character, and, as was said, be more in accordance with the spirit of the primitive ages.

These tracts excited great commotion, and led to controversies and trials. Many of the Bishops

and other clergy condemned them as favoring Romanism, and the leaders of the Tractarian movement were expelled from their positions in the University. In the midst of the excitement, Dr. Newman and some others, clerical and lay, left the Church of England and entered the Church of Rome. It was a time of great sadness, and almost of terror. But with the passage of years there has come the calmness necessary to examine the views of both sides in the controversy, and the result has been not the unsettling of the English Church from her position as protesting against all superstitions and errors, but a more careful attention to the principles which connect her with the apostolic ages. A controversy, which at one time was so bitter and so alarming, has led to the increase of zeal and devotion, and to the strengthening of the position of the Church of England as a pure branch of the Church of Christ.

Partly growing up from the Tractarian movement, and partly starting forth as a new thing, is what is popularly called the Ritualistic movement of to-day. It is difficult to define it in few words, for it relates both to modes of worship and to points of belief, and it is sometimes difficult to separate what is objectionable from what is allowable. There has been a growing desire on the part of very many to improve the character of the services of the Church, and to lend

impressiveness and beauty to them by the introduction of more music, and by the greater adornment of the places where services are held. But with all this there has been the gradual introduction, by some, of practices which are either not recognized as part of the usage of the Church, or else have been long since abandoned in the Reformation movement.

While the object of some has been simply to enrich public worship, to reach the poor, to inspire greater fervor, the object of others has been to symbolize doctrinal views which have not been set forth in the standards of the Church, but which, they claim, have been held as allowable opinions by many.

The central point around which there is most controversy is known as the doctrine of *Eucharistic Adoration*, or the worship of Christ present in the Holy Communion. How is He present? has been the question discussed, and while all agree that to the soul of the faithful communicant there is a spiritual presence of the Lord particularly gracious, some contend that there is a presence locally upon the altar and in the elements. Others state it less definitely as a presence in the sacrament. The controversy has led those engaged in it to draw very delicate lines of distinction, and to make definitions which are not readily grasped by the popular mind.

Along with the discussion of Ritualism has been another controversy of a different character, namely, the question of *Rationalism*. Briefly stated, Rationalism is an effort of human reason to eliminate all mysteries from Christianity, and its aim is to receive nothing which it cannot explain. Of course it varies in degree, and in kind. It had its origin in Germany, and made its public appearance in essays, and sketches of the Life of Christ, in which His proper Divinity and His Divine Work were discredited. The pernicious views spread elsewhere, and sometimes it seemed that no part of God's revelation to man would escape the attacks of infidelity, for infidelity it really was, although many disclaim the name of unbelievers.

These attacks have made it necessary to go all over again the defences of the inspiration of the Scriptures, the Divinity of Christ, the credibility of miracles, man's need of supernatural grace, and the immortality of man.

Rationalism, of course, has had its various phases, sometimes attacking single points of the faith, and then again attacking every principle of Christianity, and stigmatizing our most cherished beliefs as but phases of superstition. It has been closely allied with *Materialism*, an outgrowth partly of unbalanced scientific research, which in the study of nature has too often forgotten the God of nature. While there is really no conflict between true science

and revelation, properly understood, many crude theories are hastily adopted, and to untrained minds there has seemed to be reason for doubting the truths of Christianity. The leaven of unbelief has steadily penetrated large classes, and it has called forth the mighty energies of the Church to counteract the mischievous efforts of perverted scientific progress, to show that the God of revelation and the God of Nature are one ; that the Bible and the Book of Nature are from the same Author, and hence there must be agreement, even though in all cases our present light does not enable us to point it out fully.

While, however, no part of the ancient faith has been surrendered through the assaults of the Rationalists and the Materialists, advancing scholarship and scientific research have modified, in some respects, many notions which have been held as to the teachings of revelation,—notably among these the periods of creation and the age of the earth.

It is almost unnecessary to add that these controversies, which have agitated the English Church, have also agitated the American Church, and have called forth the same or similar earnestness.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN AMERICA.—The Church of England was first established on the American shores in 1609, at Jamestown, in Virginia. The colonists obtained grants of land for

building up new settlements, and one of their avowed objects was the extension of the Christian faith among the Indians. In the New England colonies the planting of the Church of England was attended with many difficulties, owing to the unfriendly aspect of the Puritans, who were in the ascendancy there. In the southern colonies much greater success attended its establishment.

A very serious difficulty which the colonists had to contend against was the lack of the Episcopate. Many requests were made to the mother Church to have Bishops sent here, but they were not complied with for a long while. Candidates for holy orders, and for confirmation, were compelled to make the voyage to England, which was attended with great inconvenience and expense.

When the revolution ended, decided measures were taken to adapt the Church here to the changed condition of political affairs, and to set it up as an independent organization.

The first Bishop was Samuel Seabury of Connecticut, consecrated by the Scotch Bishops in Aberdeen, A. D. 1784.

Subsequently, William White, and Samuel Provoost were consecrated in Lambeth, England, for the dioceses of Pennsylvania and New York.

The Prayer Book, as now used here, was set forth in A. D. 1789. The American branch of the Church has gone on increasing steadily in numbers

and importance until now, A. D. 1876, it has 60 Bishops and about 3,200 other clergymen.

The history of the Episcopal Church in this country divides itself into three periods, which are very clearly marked.

First, Its colonial period, when it was a part of the Church of England, and fostered by her care. This period ran from 1609 to 1789.

Second, Its period of recovery from the disintegration occasioned by the revolution, lasting from 1789 to about 1820. Being a part of the English Church, bearing her name, and her clergy being by their oaths bound to the throne of Great Britain, it seemed at one time as if the revolt of the colonies from the rule of the mother country would utterly annihilate this Church. Many of her parishes were without services, and the most bitter hatred was manifested towards an organization which was thought to be utterly incompatible with a republican government; but perhaps to none more than to her members, is the credit due, both for the successful carrying on of the revolution, and for the establishment of a government such as this land now rejoices in.

The taking command of the American forces by Washington, a devout Churchman, gave at once a national character to a movement which might otherwise have been a mere sectional struggle against English rule. And it is a singular fact, but show-

ing the influence of Churchmen in the moulding of the civil government, that the outline of that government and the outline of that they provided for their Church, are alike in all essential points.

But it took years for the Church to recuperate. Her valuable lands in some sections were forfeited, and there was but the most inadequate supply of clergymen to carry out her work. For nearly forty years she was weak, although gradually her strength was given her.

Third. The third period came with the infusion of a zeal for missions. At first, but little was attempted. There was, however, the stir of renewed life, and the waking up to greater zeal. Finally, in 1821, the Missionary Society was formed, and from the date of its formation God's blessing has been more and more richly given this branch of His Church.

Missions to the West, and South, to the Pacific coast, to Africa, China and Japan, and to the Indians, have been projected, and to-day a great multitude has been gathered into the fold of Christ. Among the names of the pioneers of the American Church are those of Bishops Chase and Kemper, who went to the West, and that of Bishop Scott, who went to the extreme North-western section of our country. They were pioneers indeed, holding their services and preaching the Gospel in the log cabins of the settlers before some of the great cities

which now have their hundreds of thousands of people, were more than villages, if indeed they existed in any shape at all. Among the laborers in the foreign field were Bishops Payne and Boone, the former spending over twenty years in Africa, and the latter a shorter, but none the less useful period in China. Both of them were men of singular devotion, and their works do follow them.

The pages of the history of the American Church contain many a bright record made by the noble deeds of her children. We are standing too near what they did to appreciate their struggles, but the day will come when the names of faithful Bishops, zealous clergymen, and saintly men will shine out with clearness, and we will read the story of their lives to feel that they prove apostolic descent by apostolic deeds.

Of the religious bodies which have sprung up since the Reformation, and which have discarded the primitive form of Church government, the leading ones to-day in this country are the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Unitarians, the Lutherans and the Quakers. There are many others, indeed the list is very large, for one result of the reaction from the former condition of things has been to encourage the formation of independent organizations.

The Congregationalists, once called Independ-

dents, had their rise in England, about A. D. 1580. Their leading principle is a government of each separate congregation by the voice of its own members. Each has no necessary connection with other congregations, and recognizes no organic union as needed. The form of faith, modes of worship, and style of government are regulated by the congregation.

The popular names by which they were known here are Pilgrims, and Puritans. To-day, however, in most parts of the country they are called Congregationalists, and have greatly changed from the views of their ancestors.

The Presbyterians trace their origin to John Calvin, A. D. 1520, and hold the system of doctrines promulgated by him, and popularly known as Calvinism. There was not a clear distinction between this body and the Congregationalists in England, or in this country in early times, although, in later days, the distinction has been made more marked.

The views of the Presbyterians include very positive declarations respecting the utter depravity of man, and the election of those who shall be saved. They refuse to accept Episcopacy as the primitive form of Church order.

The Methodists have a doctrinal system very different from the Presbyterians, and follow, in the main, the system of Arminius, known as Armini-

anism. They originated in England, A. D. 1739, under the leadership of John Wesley. The original movement was simply an organization *within* the Church of England, to promote deeper piety, and to evangelize the world. Contrary to the most urgent appeals of Wesley, his followers separated from the Church, and formed themselves into a distinct society.

The Baptists, once called *Anabaptists*, began in Germany in A. D. 1523. Their views were introduced into England A. D. 1608; into this country by Roger Williams, A. D. 1638.

Their peculiar tenet is a belief in the necessity of baptism by immersion; their doctrinal system in the main resembles that of the Methodists.

The Lutherans were the followers of Martin Luther in the Reformation. Their adherents now are mostly of German origin. The doctrinal system of the body varies very greatly.

The Unitarians.—The old names for those who held Unitarianism were Arians and Socinians; the particular point being a denial of the true divinity of the Saviour. Much of Unitarianism in this country is a rebound from the stern Calvinistic or Puritan views once held.

The Quakers began in England, A. D. 1644. They were originally called “The Society of Friends,” and so style themselves now. Their principal tenets are the disuse of the sacraments,

and a belief in an inner illumination by the Spirit, which they claim supercedes the employment of external aids.

There are many other religious societies besides those above described, and they abound largely in this country.

The position of this country is peculiar. Myriads from all portions of the old world having flocked here, bringing with them their peculiar religious beliefs, and encouragement having been given to the holding of opinions freely, we behold a country in which nearly every form of faith is held, from the most orthodox beliefs down to those which can in any sense barely be called Christian. We behold, also, great zeal in propagating opinions, and even the smallest societies are active in adding to their adherents, and building up their strength. It would be difficult to form any estimate of the amount of money expended year by year in maintaining religious worship and in sustaining these different forms of Christianity. It would be infinitely more difficult, too, to forecast the happy results which would flow to this land if there were, instead of these disunited efforts, a union of all those who bear the name of Christ, and a concentration of their zeal and their efforts against irreligion and vice.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CHRISTIAN WORLD AS IT IS TO-DAY.

DIVISION—POINTS OF AGREEMENT—POSITION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

OUR studies in Church History, thus far, have prepared us to look over the world, and to see the followers of Christ divided into many divisions, and calling themselves by various names. It would be a much more agreeable survey if we could behold a solid, united Church, steadily progressing, and preparing the way for the coming of the Lord. But we must not forget that we are living only in one stage of the Church's history. There may be brighter chapters by and bye. Already, indeed, the yearning for unity has taken strong hold of Christians of every name. It may please God, in times which are to come, to bring the dismembered fragments of Christendom into greater harmony, to the glory of His holy name.

There are some considerations which will tend to make this subdivision of the followers of Christ appear less startling.

We must remember that the names of the parts of the Church in the primitive ages did not indicate real divisions of the Church, but were simply intended to designate the parts of the same body existing in different localities. Thus the Church at Laodicea was a portion of the same organization as the Church at Ephesus, and the Church at Ephesus was the same as the Church at Corinth.

In course of time these local names became more numerous, as Christianity spread to other places. Thus we hear of the Gallican Church existing in Gaul, or ancient France; the British Church in England and Wales, and the African Church in Africa.

These were not all disconnected bodies, but were the local subdivisions of the same body. Upon great occasions they met together in General Councils, and there were interchanges of fellowship. At the present day, in some countries there are national Churches, protected by the laws of the land, and supported in part or entirely from the public funds. Thus, in Russia, the Greek Church is the religion of the land. In England the Anglican Church holds the same position.

Mere local names, then, or the adoption of a branch of the Church by a particular nation, do not of themselves indicate any real severance of the Body of Christ.

2. The first formal division of the Church was

made about A. D. 1054, when there came to be an Eastern and a Western portion. The causes of this division were various, but prominent among them were the controversy respecting the time of keeping Easter, and the insertion of an article in the Nicene Creed by the Western portion. The Eastern Church comprised that part of the Christian body existing mainly in Asia; and the Western, that in Europe. These parts are sometimes spoken of as the Greek Church and the Latin Church.

3. The next division was made at the time of the Reformation, in the sixteenth century, when the Western Church was divided in Great Britain, that part which clung to the primitive faith becoming the Church of England, and the part which had grown corrupt by the addition of false doctrines and practices becoming known as the Roman Church. At the same time, in Europe, that is at the time of the Reformation, a great number left the ranks of the Church of Rome, and became known by different names. In Germany, Lutherans. In France, Calvinists. In Switzerland, Hussites.

Most of the other separations from the Church, now bearing different titles, had their origin subsequent to the Reformation.

4. The last great division has taken place in our day. The Roman Church, having added many

doctrines, which are not taught in the Sacred Scriptures, and which were unknown in the purest ages of the Church, has at last been the means of occasioning another division. Those who are seeking to restore the Church of Rome to what she was in purer days, call themselves Old Catholics, and claim that they are the true representatives of that Church before it became corrupt by the addition of errors.

WHEREIN THE DIVISIONS AGREE.—It would be fearful, indeed, if all of these divisions exhibited opposite views of Christianity ; and if we could not discover any points of agreement between the various fragments of Christendom. A little examination, however, will show that there is much which is held in common by most of these bodies.

First, The Greek, the Roman, the Anglican, the Episcopal and Old Catholic Churches adopt and approve equally the Apostles' Creed. The Nicene Creed, with the exception of two words, is retained by all, so that the outline of the Christian faith, as expressed in these symbols, adopted in the earliest centuries of the Church, is still maintained.

These bodies, also, agree in the form of Church government, by a ministry of three orders, and in the use of liturgical worship.

Second, Some of the Protestant bodies, in this and other lands, are in substantial agreement with

those above named in holding the Apostles' Creed, but reject the primitive form of government of the Church, by a ministry of three orders : and also reject liturgical worship, the rite of confirmation, etc.

Third, The difference between the great divisions of the Church in which the primitive doctrines, usages, and discipline have been retained, consists mainly in the additions which have been made in later ages.

Regarding, as we must, the Anglican and American branches of the Church as conforming more closely than any others to the Church of apostolic times, we find, upon comparing the Greek Church with them, that it differs from them in ritual, and in some views of doctrine. It is found, however, that as the principles of the Greek Church are understood, they are much purer, more correct, and with less additions and distortions of the primitive faith than is the case in the Roman Church, which has introduced such errors as the worship of the Virgin ; the invocation of the saints ; Purgatory, the immaculate conception, Papal infallibility, etc.

The Old Catholic movement of the present day is one of the greatest importance, for its aim is to do away with whatever has been added to the primitive faith by the superstition of later ages.

THE POSITION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH.—One good result of the study of Church history is to enable us to see what reasons we have for thinking so highly as we do of that branch of the Church of Christ, known here as the Protestant Episcopal Church.

First, It has a history which reaches back to the very first permanent English settlement made in this country, and then back through the Church in England to the days when Apostles or Apostolic men came to Britain with the message of salvation.

Second, It retains a mode of government which is the same as that which existed in the very first ages of the Christian Church.

Third, It has a liturgy which preserves among us the precious truths relating to Christ and His salvation ; and which tends to cultivate fervent, practical piety.

Fourth, It seems to have in it those elements which may prove to be connecting bonds to unite together in a loving, living union those who love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

At this day this branch of the Church is greatly outnumbered by many bodies of Christians, and these surrounding religious bodies are in our day so active and so numerous, that as we look upon them there arises admiration of the zeal with which they carry religion to mankind, and make known the blessed Christ as the Saviour of sinners.

At the present time they so greatly outnumber the Episcopal Church of this country, that it appears as a very small body by the side of them. Their numerical greatness and success lead some to think less highly of the distinctive features of this Church, and to question whether there can be defects in those zealous bodies which are doing so much good and increasing so fast, and whether any system really is superior to theirs.

The piety and sincerity of their members are too distinctly marked to allow us to doubt that they seek to render themselves approved unto God. And then, too, we must remember, that the generation which we see so active did not originate the societies of which they are members. As Christian men, they are doing the work of Christ as they found the opportunity before them. It is a notable fact, however, that as intelligence advances, and many of them read and study, and reflect upon the history of the eighteen centuries past, they are convinced that this Church is in accordance with the primitive Church, and they seek membership in it.

While we have nothing to do with determining the responsibility of those who are separated by outward arrangements from the Church which has descended to us from the apostles' days, we have reason to be thankful that our lot has been cast in it; for it is the divinely commissioned witness and keeper "of the faith once delivered to the

saints." It was not begotten at the time of the Reformation, but was founded by those whom Christ sent into the world as His apostles; and founded, too, as we think, after the pattern received from Him. Our duty, as its members, is to transmit the faith to others as we have received it. Nor dare we change it in one essential feature. We are to regard ourselves as custodians from whom future generations are to receive it in its purity and entirety. We are to hand it down to others without corruption or mutilation. We are not to be troubled by reason of the comparative smallness of our numbers now, for the time must come when there will be a return to the old ways, and a desire on the part of all Christians to know the old landmarks. Let us ever offer with great fervency the supplication : "We pray for Thy holy Church universal ; that it may be so guided and governed by Thy Good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life."

ON THE STUDY OF CHURCH HISTORY BY CLASSES.

THERE is no reason why the more advanced pupils in our Church Schools and Sunday-Schools, should not take up the study of the history of the Church. This book may be helpful to such as a text book—the outline lessons appended being followed. For younger pupils it will be necessary to assign a chapter or part of a chapter, and then question them upon the portion studied; the instructor adding the additional facts and explanations needed.

Older scholars, who are competent to prepare essays, could follow closely the outline lessons, consulting standard works and reading the essays in turn in class.

In nearly every parish the Rector could form a class of adults to whom this study would be most interesting and valuable.

The portions marked under some of the lessons would be too long for one evening's recitation, with the accompanying essays. The instructor must regulate the length to suit the time. Where

essays are not prepared, it would answer the purpose to appoint some one to read aloud upon the points indicated, and then spend the time in conversation upon the topics thus brought up.

It will not be difficult, however, to find members of the class who will prepare and read essays, and that is the best plan. The writing of essays, the reading of quotations, and general conversation upon the topics, would probably be combined at each meeting.

LESSON OUTLINES FOR CLASSES.

I.

1. Is there any connection between the Church of Christ and previous dispensations?
2. Sketch the history of the Jewish Church. [Bible.]
3. Give an account of Abraham. [Bible.]
4. What promises were made to our first parents? [Bible.]
5. Trace out through the Old Testament some of the predictions relating to the coming of the Messiah.

II.

1. Give some account of the political condition of the world when Christ was born.
2. Give some account of the social condition of the world when Christ was born.
3. Give some account of the religious condition of the world when Christ was born.
4. Show how these particulars indicated that the time was ripe for His coming.

III.

1. Where do we find an outline of the earthly life of Christ?
2. Give an account of His birth, and life, up to the time of His baptism.
3. Make a sketch of His life to the time of the Last Supper.

4. Describe the events of the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension.
5. Show from the Gospel narratives the proof of His Divinity.

IV.

1. What is meant by the kingdom of God ?
2. What features of the Church do we find explicitly instituted by Christ ?
3. What others may we infer that He instituted ?
4. What were the features of the Church which became evident wherever it was planted.
5. From the Acts and the Epistles repeat the argument for Confirmation—for Liturgical worship—for a ministry of three orders.

V.

1. Describe the events of the day of Pentecost ? [Acts.]
2. Give a summary of the events in Jerusalem up to the time of the holding of the first Council. [Acts.]
3. Sketch the life and travels of St. Paul.
4. Sketch the lives of the Apostles.

VI.

1. Give an account of the first Deacons.
2. Name and give an account of others who helped establish the Church.
3. Describe the seven Churches of Asia named in the Revelation.
4. Give an account of the extension of the Gospel in the first century.
5. Describe the siege and capture of Jerusalem.

VII.

1. Why were the Christians persecuted by the Jews ?
2. Give an account of the Jewish persecutions.

3. Why did the Romans persecute the Christians?
4. Describe the persecutions by the Romans.
5. Sketch the lives of Nero, Domitian, and other persecuting Emperors.
6. Name some of the results of the persecutions.

VIII.

1. Who are called the Ante-Nicene Fathers?
2. Make sketches of the lives of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen and Cyprian.

IX.

1. Give an account of the career of Constantine.
2. What were the results, to the Church, of his accession?
3. Describe the city of Constantinople, as he founded it.

X.

1. Give an account of each of the six general Councils.
2. Explain the object for which each met.
3. State the doctrinal points each settled.

XI.

1. Make a sketch of the career of Julian the Apostate.
2. Give an account of the irruption of the barbarians.
3. Sketch the rise and progress of Mohammedanism.

XII.

1. Give an account of Ambrose, Chrysostom, Augustine, Cyril, Leo, Jerome and Anthony.
2. Sketch the career of other great Christians of that period.

XIII.

1. Describe the condition of Europe after the period of the Sixth Council.
2. Sketch the progress of the Saracen power.

3. Describe the rise of the Papacy.
4. The origin of the Monastic orders.
5. Explain the Feudal system.
6. What led to the division of the Church?

XIV.

1. Describe the origin and progress of the Crusades.
2. Who became prominent during the Crusades?
3. What errors were introduced into the Roman Church?
4. Explain the changes made by new inventions and discoveries.
5. Recount the changes made by the fall of Feudalism.

XV.

1. What were the causes of the Reformation?
2. Give an account of the career of Wycliffe.
3. Sketch the life of Luther.
4. Give the history of the English Reformation.
5. Explain the difference between the Reformation in England and that on the Continent.

XVI.

1. Give an account of the Council of Trent.
2. Sketch the history of the Jesuits.
3. Give a history of the Eastern Church.
4. Give an account of the Puritans.
5. Continue the history of the English Church.
6. Explain the origin of the Protestant societies.

XVII.

1. Give an outline of the condition of the Christian world as it is to-day.
2. What are the points of agreement and of difference between the divisions of Christendom?
3. Give the history of the Episcopal Church in this country, and compare her position with that of other Christian bodies.

BOOKS OF REFERENCE.

THE books are grouped according to the outline of the lessons.

The student must not be surprised to find varying views expressed in the books here named. In placing the title of a book on this list, the writer does not thereby express any opinion as to an author's views. It is part of the student's discipline to search for the truth, and to compare authorities. Whenever he finds views advanced which are not in accordance with the principles of the Church, it will be safest to confer with his rector.

The list given is not exhaustive, nor perhaps the best in all cases. It comprises such as are most easily accessible, and can readily be enlarged by the instructor of the class.

BOOKS OF REFERENCE.

THE BOOKS REFER TO THE TOPICS MARKED IN THE LESSON OUTLINE.

I.

The Chosen People.	<i>Miss Yonge.</i>
The Jewish Church.	<i>Stanley.</i>
History of the Jews.	<i>Milman.</i>
Christology of the Old Testament.	<i>Hengstenburg.</i>
The Prophecies.	<i>Newton.</i>

II.

Eighteen Christian Centuries.	<i>White.</i>
History of the Christian Church.	<i>Schaff.</i>
Christ in History.	<i>Young.</i>
Introduction to the History of the Church.	<i>Jarvis.</i>
History of Christianity.	<i>Milman.</i>
Christ and other Masters.	<i>Hardwick.</i>
Seekers after Truth.	<i>Sunday Library.</i>

III.

The Life of Christ.	<i>Farrar.</i>
The Life of Christ.	<i>Ellicott.</i>
Devotional Commentary on the Gospel.	<i>Williams.</i>
Narrative.	
The Religion of the Christ.	<i>Leathes.</i>
Our Lord's Divinity.	<i>Liddon.</i>

IV.

The Holy Catholic Church.	<i>Goulburn.</i>
The Administration of the Spirit.	<i>Moberly.</i>
Church Doctrine—Bible Truth.	<i>Sadler.</i>
The Sayings of the Great Forty Days.	<i>Moberly.</i>
Defence of Episcopacy.	<i>Onderdonk.</i>

V.

History of the Early Church.	<i>Sewell.</i>
Life and Travels of St. Paul.	<i>Conybeare & Howson.</i>
Lives of the Apostles.	<i>Cave.</i>
Ecclesiastical History.	<i>Eusebius.</i>
The Planting of the Christian Church.	<i>Neander.</i>

VI.

Acts of the Deacons.	<i>Goulburn.</i>
Church History.	<i>Robertson.</i>
Church History.	<i>Milner.</i>
Also,	<i>Eusebius, Josephus, Sewell.</i>
The Seven Churches of Asia.	<i>Trench.</i>
The Chosen People.	<i>Yonge.</i>

VII.

For secular history consult the standard Histories of Rome.	
<i>Milner, Robertson, Milman, Sewell, Eusebius,</i> for History	
of the Church.	
Book of Martyrs.	<i>Fox.</i>
Catacombs.	<i>Kip.</i>

VIII.

Lives of the Fathers.	<i>Cave.</i>
Pupils of St. John.	<i>Sewell.</i>
The Works of the Fathers.	<i>Ante-Nicene Library.</i>
Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Biography.	<i>Hook.</i>

IX.

Latin Christianity.	<i>Milman.</i>
For secular history.	<i>Standard Hist. Rome.</i>
Eastern Church.	<i>Stanley.</i>

X.

Standard Secular histories, and History of Sects and Heresies.	<i>Milman and Milner.</i>
The Six General Councils.	<i>Blunt.</i>
Church History.	<i>Dix.</i>
	<i>Kurtz, Mosheim, Butler.</i>

XI.

As above.	
Also, Life of Mahomet.	<i>Muir.</i>
Eastern Church, p. 360.	<i>Stanley.</i>

XII.

As in section X.	
Also, Lives of the Fathers.	<i>Cave.</i>
Dictionary, Ecclesiastical Biography.	<i>Hook.</i>
See separate Lives of Chrysostom, etc.	
Confessions.	<i>Augustine.</i>
Translated Works.	<i>Library of the Fathers.</i>

XIII.

Standard Secular Histories, and Church Histories, as before named.

Eighteen Christian Centuries.	<i>White.</i>
Eastern Church.	<i>Stanley.</i>
Pope's Supremacy.	<i>Barrow.</i>
Monastic Orders.	<i>Different Authors.</i>

XIV.

As in former section.	
Also, History of the Crusades.	<i>Different Authors.</i>
Crusade of the Children.	<i>Gray.</i>
Standard Histories of England.	

History of Church of England.	<i>Short.</i>
Early English Church.	<i>Churton.</i>
History of England.	<i>Berard.</i>
Church History in England.	<i>Martineau.</i>

XV.

History of Reformation.	<i>Massingb.^s.</i>
Reformation of Church of England.	<i>Blunt.</i>
Reformers before the Reformation.	
Lives of <i>Luther, Huss, Melancthon, etc.</i>	
Also, Standard Histories.	

XVI.

Standard Histories, as before.	
Ecclesiastical Polity.	<i>Hooker.</i>
Lives.	<i>Walton.</i>
Puritanism.	<i>Coit.</i>
History of his own Time.	<i>Burnett.</i>
History of Sects and Heresies.	<i>Blunt.</i>
Life of Wesley.	<i>Southey.</i>

XVII.

Catechesis.	<i>Wordsworth.</i>
Theophilus Americanus.	"
Memoirs of Episcopal Church.	<i>Bp. White.</i>
Reprints of Historical Papers.	<i>Perry.</i>
Pioneers and Founders.	<i>Yonge.</i>

 Any of these books can be supplied by T. WHITAKER, Publisher, 2 Bible House, New York.



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