

TALKS ON CHURCH HISTORY

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Talks on church history





TALKS
ON
CHURCH HISTORY

By

E. W. AVERILL

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CHAPTER I.

The Apostolic Age

Sowing the Seed

“A sower went forth to sow his seed.” In this picture of a farmer at work, our Lord describes the origin of the Church, which is the Kingdom of God in the world. It is planting in the hearts of men the seed of Truth which, when properly nourished, has the power to grow, to transform dead mineral into living organic life, and to reproduce itself a hundredfold. It is the introduction into the world of a new kingdom, a new power which shall redeem men and make them the sons of God and heirs of eternal life.

In some cases the soil was rocky or full of thorns, and here there was no result, but where the soil was good, the harvest was swift.

For many generations the Jews had been looking forward to the coming of Christ. (The Greek word for the Hebrew term “Messiah”). The Hebrew prophets had done their best to prepare the mind and heart of the people for this greatest of all the Prophets, but the Jews did not, as a nation, receive him. Nevertheless it was among devout Jews that Christianity had its origin. Pious

folk like Joseph and Mary, Zacharias and Elisabeth, Peter and Andrew, James and John, were the good soil in which the gospel seed first found root.

Besides the Jews, there were two other great nationalities which afforded special opportunity for sowing the seed. These were the Greeks and the Romans. The Greeks were the older of these two races. They had impressed their culture and language upon the whole of ancient civilization. They represented the highest development of human intellect. They were unsurpassed in the arts of sculpture, of architecture, of oratory, of poetry and drama. They laid equal stress on physical and mental development and achieved the highest perfection in both. Though politically conquered by the Romans, they still dominated in every school of thought. It was as necessary for an educated Roman gentleman to understand Greek as it was for an educated Englishman a century ago, to understand French.

The Greeks had lost their faith in the ancient gods and in place of the old mythology, turned to philosophy, or human wisdom. This was the attempt of the human mind by its own processes of observation and reason to arrive at all knowledge, not simply of physical law, but of the higher problems of man's nature and destiny and relationship.

The *Epicurean* philosophy sought the end of man's existence in pleasure. Happiness is the purpose for which we exist. A man lives most who enjoys most, who feels most, who gains the greatest amount of pleasure out of life. Omar Khāyym is the popular modern poet of Epicureanism.

The *Stoics* on the other hand believed that not pleasure but virtue is the end of human existence. Man is to rise above all selfishness and to ignore both pleasure and pain. Both are a part of the universal law that governs all human destiny, and the man who bravely accepts what universal law decrees, indifferent to both pleasure and pain, is the virtuous and happy man.

The *Platonists* taught the still higher doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the duty of every man to subjugate his lower nature to the higher instincts of reason and conscience; and the *Aristotleans* emphasized the practical doctrine that truth and common sense are generally found in the middle course between two extremes. No modern thinkers have advanced much beyond the ancient Greeks. Philosophy represents the height to which human intellect can go, but it does not go far enough to tell us of our origin, of our future, of God and of His relation to us. This is a revelation which Jesus Christ brought into the world. The Greeks did a great service in furnishing a suitable language for the inspired scriptures

and theological writings of the Church. No language like the Greek has so many philosophical and religious terms or is so adept for the explanation of Divine truth.

II.

The Romans were the civil rulers of the world. Their passion was for organization and law. They brought into existence a government which ruled all the nations of the ancient world. Caesar on his throne dominated from the Atlantic to the Caspian; from the frozen shores of the German ocean to the sandy deserts of Sahara. The law of Rome was inexorable but it was impartial and just.

They built great military roads from Rome. They were not a maritime people like the Greeks and Phoenicians, but preferred to travel over land, and so built their roads straight from Rome, over mountains and valleys, over rivers and marshes, to all the colonies in the empire, which were thus united, as by arteries in the human body, with the heart of the empire, and felt the bounding pulse of its imperial life. The highway was thus made ready for the preachers of the Gospel. Roman citizenship conferred protection in every part of the world, and ships and posts were open for the speeding of the messenger on his way.

III.

The Jews had long since lost their national independence, but not their desire for it. They had spread forth from Jerusalem and in every city there was a considerable colony of Jews, living separate, by themselves. Rome, Alexandria, Ephesus, Antioch, each had its ghetto as London and New York today, and among these Jews were some of the greatest scholars of their age. They despised alike the religion and the philosophy of the heathen, and held fast to the clearer revelation of the one true God, believing in His holiness and power; that they were His favored people, and that the time was coming when Israel should put its benevolent heel upon the necks of heathen kings and teach them the knowledge and fear of the true God. In every city there were some cultured and devout Gentiles, attracted by the monotheism of Judaism who were admitted to the humbler privileges of the synagogue and were entitled "proselytes of the gate." Among these were the "honorable gentile women" so frequently referred to in the book of Acts as adherents of the synagogue.

Thus among the Greeks and Romans and Jews the high places were made low, the valleys filled, the crooked places were made straight and the rough places plane and the way prepared for the sowing of the seed of Truth.

IV.

During our Lord's lifetime He spoke much about the nature of His Church, in parable and sermon, and stated that He would found it upon a rock. This foundation is the Apostolate and He Himself is the Chief Corner-stone. While there were certain privileges and prerogatives which attached to the first twelve, the ministry as an organic body was to continue to the end of the world and preach the gospel to all nations.

All power was given to these Apostles. They were entrusted with the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. As the Father sent the Son, so the Son sent them forth. The promise was fulfilled and within sixty-five years of the death and resurrection of Christ the Gospel had been carried to the north, south, east and west, and the whole Roman empire had heard its glad tidings of great joy.

There were certain points about this apostolic Church in which it differs from our own. It had of course, no places of worship, no stately cathedrals, no village churches. Christians met out of doors or in private homes. It had no Bible, as we mean by the term. The New Testament was not written. The Church was fully organized; Christians were being baptized, confirmed, receiving holy communion, meeting for worship, before a line of the New Testament was written. None of

the twelve apostles ever saw a New Testament. The Church was not founded on the Bible. It was founded on Christ and the Apostles, on men. Its tradition was oral.

The Church at Jerusalem was also unique. We may compare it to the cotyledons, the first leaves of a plant which are different from the rest. It was both Jewish and Christian. Its Bishop was James, our Lord's brother, and he was revered by Jews and Christians alike. The Jerusalem church was strict in its adherence to the Mosaic law. Nowhere else was this the case. The new life was growing up within the husks of the old, but the old forms still stood. Another characteristic of the Jerusalem church was that its members had all things common. There was a sharing of worldly goods unique in the annals of Church history, and almost similar to the common life of a religious order. Socialists maintain that this was the true norm of Christianity. It was rather a local condition called forth by the necessities of the case, the severe persecution, as now in times of public danger or a flood, there is a committee of public safety and the goods of each are held for the necessities of all. The Church at Jerusalem came to an end in the year 70 A. D. when the prophesy of Christ in S. Matthew xxiv was fulfilled and the Romans destroyed the city and temple. This was the end of the ancient sacrificial religion

of the Jews. It is true that the Jews still read the ritual of the sacrifice in their synagogues, but the sacrifice is not offered. It is as though a man who was sick should read his prescription regularly, instead of taking the medicine. The ancient Jewish sacrifices were fulfilled in Christ. The heathen sacrifices have also passed away. Henceforth there is only one sacrifice in the world, the Christian Eucharist, in which, in fulfillment of the prophesy of Malachai i, 11, the Church shows the death of her Divine Lord until He comes again.

V.

Let us now examine some of the characteristics of the Church in the Apostolic age. *a.* It had a definite doctrine or statement of truth which was called "the Gospel." This Gospel assumed the truth of the Jewish Scriptures, and taught in addition that Jesus was the Christ, that is the promised Messiah, that this was proved by His rising from the dead, that remission of sins was found in His death, and that He was the Son of God and the future Judge of the world. The gospel of the Apostles was exactly the same gospel which we have now, and our Apostles Creed is a very adequate epitome of it. We can find it all in the epistles of St. Paul. In fact so important did this Apostle regard the fixed and unchanging character of this gospel, that he writes, "Though an angel

from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be anathama." At the close of his life he expresses satisfaction at having kept the faith. The faith is the gospel or the revelation of divine truth necessary and sufficient for man's salvation. It is the special province of the Church to propagate it, and to keep it pure and undefiled.

b. The Church had a definite priesthood or ministry. This first consisted of the twelve apostles who had been personally chosen by Christ. Their first act as a corporate body was to fill the place made vacant by the defection of Judas with one of their own choice.

We next find them originating two new orders of ministry; *viz.*, assisting ministers or deacons, and local pastors or presbyters. (The word priest is short for presbyter and means the same thing.) They also shared with others their superintending office, and so there developed at once a three-fold form of ministry. There were assisting ministers, local pastors or priests, and superintending and governing apostles. The power of ordination was in the hands of the Apostles. The assisting ministers were called "deacons", the local pastors were called "presbyters" or "bishops." But after the end of the first century, the name "apostle" was no longer used, and the name of "bishop" was transferred to the superintending ministers.

c. The Church was also sacramental. Great stress was laid upon Baptism and Holy Communion. When St. Peter preached on the day of Pentecost and converted three thousand people, he baptized them. When he preached to the household of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, he baptized him and all his family. When Philip preached to the people of Samaria, and the Ethiopian eunuch, he baptized them. St. Paul preached to the jailer at Philippi, and to the household of Stephanus at Corinth and baptized them. Baptism was universally recognized as the door of entrance into the Church of Christ, without it there is no recognized discipleship.

Confirmation followed baptism as a matter of course. See Acts VIII and XIX.

The distinctive act of christian worship was the Communion or Eucharist as St. Paul calls it. The first designation of the service was "The Breaking of Bread" and was the continuous expression of fellowship with Christ and with the christian brotherhood. It was observed on every Lord's Day, or Sunday, and there are indications even of a daily observance of this sacred service. The sacrament had a two-fold significance. It was in the first place a communion with Christ, a renewal of the union between the Master and the disciple which imparted divine life and grace. It grasped the

truth of those striking statements of Christ in St John vi. The Church has ever sought to impress on the minds of her children the reality of Christ's presence, and the renewed life that comes to them from communion with Him. It gave point to the promise, "Lo, I am with you always." On the other hand, this service has always been regarded as an act of worship addressed to God. In this aspect it is our Eucharist, our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. The only thing we have to offer is ourselves, and we can only do this in union with Christ. It is also the expression of our love for the brethren. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love for one another." There was a deep brotherly love among the Christians in the early days of the Church. "See how these Christians love one another," was a common saying in the heathen world. In later years alas it became an irony and a reproach, but in apostolic days it was indeed the proof of true discipleship. Let us remember that the words of Christ do not pass away. They still stand as the measure of our sincerity. If we are an apostolic Church we must show apostolic charity. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."

CHAPTER II.

The Sub-Apostolic Age

The Leaven Hid in the Meal.

Our Lord tells us that His Church is like a woman hiding yeast in three measures of meal and presently the whole is leavened.

It is a picture of the hidden growth of the Church during the sub-apostolic period. The attitude of the world was hostile to the Church and therefore it shrank as much as possible from the observation of men. Its meetings were held in secret. Its disciples were known only to one another. On the surface there was little to indicate its presence, but underneath the spirit of life was at work. The Kingdom had been hidden in the great empire and it worked during the first three centuries until the whole was leavened. It has been said that at the beginning of the fourth century "The whole world awoke and found itself Christian."

I.

This age of the Christian Church is the most interesting and important of all epochs. It is the formative age, the period in which Christianity took the shape it was to keep until the end of time.

There have been other ages of greater scholarship and more brilliant attainments; ages in which great books have been written, great cathedrals built, and worldly power exercised by the ministers of the Church; but no other age came so near to the mind of Christ, none was so possessed with the missionary spirit, and none was so pure as when the Church passed through the fires of persecution. Christianity offered high moral ideals and a tremendous moral enthusiasm. It taught the possibility of salvation from every sin and purity of life for every sinner. It taught equality and brotherhood for everyone and admitted all who would come into the family of God. In this family there was the constant help and guidance of the Divine Spirit, there was abiding companionship with Christ, there was salvation and eternal life beyond the grave. Letters were constantly being sent from one part of the Church to another. Wherever the Christian might go he would receive hospitality as a brother. The practice of Christian hospitality was one of the most beautiful features of the Church at this period and gave it a sense of unity and power which no persecution could break or destroy.

During the first century, we may say, Christianity was in solution. It remained for the second century to precipitate the permanent elements. There was much in apostolic days that was transient, that

passed away; the communism of the Jerusalem Church, the love feast, the kiss of peace, the washing of the feet, the expectation of the immediate return of Christ, and the initiation of an earthly Messianic Kingdom. On the other hand the essential elements now assumed their permanent shape. We will mention briefly some of these.

II.

a. The Canon of the New Testament now took shape. The first century was a literary age. Great numbers of writings existed and many epistles were written. We have probably only a few of the many which had their origin at this time. St. Luke tells us in the opening words of his Gospel, that many others had written Gospels previous to his, and we know that many others were written afterward. There was no New Testament during the first century, but many written manuscripts and letters were passed about which varied greatly in authority and worth. It became the duty of the sub-apostolic Church to cull out the books of undoubted inspiration and to separate them from the greater mass of uninspired Christian literature, and so to form the "canon" or list of inspired books which were to be included in the New Testament.

b. Another element which became fixed for all time was the Diocesan Episcopate. We speak of our Bishops as the successors of the Apostles, and

this is true, generally speaking, but in the New Testament time there was no minister in the Church who corresponded exactly to our Bishops. There were three orders of ministers, Deacons, Presbyters and Apostles. The Deacons and Presbyters fulfilled the same functions as these clergy do now, but the Apostles had universal jurisdiction. They went from one place to another, from north to south, and from east to west, and everywhere exercised the authority of their apostolic office. With the death of St. John, the last of the original twelve passed away, and from that time on, those who succeeded to the apostolic office had a definite sphere of jurisdiction within which their authority was confined, and beyond whose bounds they could not go. We find the beginnings of this localized jurisdiction in the Apostolate of St. James at Jerusalem, of Titus at Crete, and of Timothy at Ephesus. In the Book of the Revelation we find St. John addressing the angels or apostles of the seven Churches of Asia Minor. With the death of St. John at the end of the first century the localized Diocesan Episcopate became the norm of organization throughout the whole Church as is evident from the epistles of St. Ignatius written in the year 107 A. D. "It is not lawful without the Bishop either to baptize or to celebrate the Holy Communion, but whatsoever he shall approve of, that is also pleasing unto God." Smyrnæans, iii, 5. The theory of some protestants

that at the death of the apostles, simultaneously throughout the world, one presbyter in each city arrogated to himself apostolic authority without protest of any kind, and so transformed the pure presbyterian ministry of apostolic days into an arrogant episcopal hierarchy of a dark and superstitious age, is fantastically and absurdly impossible. It is these same arrogant Bishops to whom we must go to establish the authority of the New Testament, and who were all gloriously martyred for their faith in Christ. We shall presently see who some of them were.

c. The liturgical worship of the Church also had its origin at this time. Roughly speaking, the Prayer Book is older than the Bible. This does not mean our present book of Common Prayer, but the early Liturgy which assumed definite structural form before the canon of the New Testament was fixed. The Liturgy is the Communion Service and although differing in details in each locality, nevertheless presents a striking similarity of structure, and even of verbal agreement in all of the ancient Churches.

d. The forms and ceremonies of the Church also grew up at this time. The baptism of infants is often referred to, the Sign of the Cross, the Vestments of the clergy and of the singers, the lights on the Altar, and other ceremonies of the Church's

worship go back to the days of persecution and were found in the catacomb of Rome.

III.

The Apostolic Fathers are those individuals whose names and writings have come down to us, who form the connecting link between the Apostles and the historic Church. These men were not remarkable for their intellectual ability, but their writings are of priceless value because of the position which they occupied. The scriptural quotations in their writings show them to have been familiar with the books of the New Testament which must have been written prior to their own day, and therefore we depend upon their writings to establish the authenticity of the sacred books. Among these men are Clement, Bishop of Rome, mentioned by St. Paul, in Phil. iv, 3. Clement wrote two letters to the Corinthian Church which were esteemed next to the canonical scriptures themselves.

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, in 107 A. D., was brought before the Emperor Trajan and accused of being a Christian. After he had nobly confessed his faith in Christ, and refused to renounce his loyalty to One who had been his friend for so many years, the Emperor gave sentence, "Because Ignatius says that he bears the image of the crucified in his heart, let him be taken to Rome and thrown to the lions." Ignatius wrote seven epistles to the Churches

in the east, in which great emphasis is laid on the episcopal office and the authority of the bishop. We quoted from one of these letters above.

Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, was a pupil and friend of St. John the Apostle. He tells how the gospel of St. John was written, and also describes the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark. Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis also quotes from the New Testament books.

There is also the "Shepherd of Hermas," an allegory popular among early Christians, and an epistle attributed to the Apostle Barnabas which is not in the New Testament canon.

IV.

The Persecutions.

During this age the Church endured the bitterest persecution for 250 years. From the time of Nero in 64 A. D. to the Edict of Milan in 312, no Christian was safe at any time. It is true that the persecutions were more bitter at some times than at others, but the laws of the empire stood against the religion of Christ, and at any time any Christian might be denounced, set upon and slain by the multitude, or executed by the public tribunal. The first persecution in Rome was by the emperor Nero who accused the Christians of burning the city to divert public anger from himself. They were covered

with pitch and burned in the streets as torches to interest and amuse the populace.

The second persecution under Domitian in the year 87 A. D. is referred to in the Apocalypse, "These are they which have passed through great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

The third persecution was in the time of Trajan who ordered the execution of Ignatius. Trajan was, however, a just and merciful emperor and ordered that Christians should not be persecuted without a formal trial, or executed without being convicted of crime. Of course being a Christian was sufficient crime in itself to merit execution. Pliny, the younger, governor of Bythia and Pontus, wrote a long letter to Trajan describing the persecution and the worship of the Christians, which called forth the "rescript" of Trajan just referred to. In Pliny's letter he says: "They were accustomed on a certain day to meet before daylight and to say in turns a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by a *sacramentum* not to commit any wickedness; but on the contrary to abstain from theft, robberies, and adulteries; also not to violate their promise or deny a pledge; after which it was their custom to separate and meet again at a promiscuous harmless meal, from which last practice they however desisted after the publication of my edict."

The philosophical Marcus Aurelius was not above persecuting the Christians for what he deemed a narrow and degrading superstition.

In the narrative of the Thundering Legion, of the Persecutions at Lyons, of Pothinus and Blandina, of the Forty Wrestlers of Sebaste, in these and countless other cases, the Christians showed their willingness to walk in the path the Master trod, and the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church.

Heresies

The first meeting of Christian revelation with Greek philosophy produced a strange heresy called Gnosticism or Science. It assumed that matter is essentially evil and spirit only is good. The material world was not created by God but by an evil spirit. It was similar in many of its doctrines to modern Christian Science which has adopted the same name. It had its origin in Asia Minor. St. Paul encounters the beginnings of it in Colosse, see I Tim. vi, 20. Its endless geneologies and worship of angels developed to an absurd length. The Church, however, was not contaminated by this science, falsely so called. It kept the truth pure and undefiled.

V.

In no age was the Christian life so high, the faith so pure or the zeal of Christians so great as in these first centuries of the Christian Church.

CHAPTER III.

Conversion of the Empire

"The Birds of the Air come and lodge in its branches."

The third chapter of Church History dates from the conversion of Constantine in 311 to the fall of the Roman empire in 476. It was a period of great progress and development and is fittingly represented by the parable of the mustard seed. Christ compares His Church to a mustard seed, the least of all the seeds, which, when planted, is greater than all the herbs, becomes in fact a tree with spreading branches in which the birds of the air make their nests. These birds do not belong to the tree; they are quite apart from it, and contribute nothing to its life, but nevertheless they are accorded protection and help by it. They represent the institutions of the world; the government, the society, the business and the customs of the people. These things are outside the Kingdom, but nevertheless they are protected and upheld by the Kingdom. The Church of God is the bulwark of human government, of business, of family and social life. If we destroy religion, the whole fabric of civilization falls to pieces.

I.

The change which came into the empire with the conversion of Constantine was astonishing. There are plants which grow for a hundred years and then spring into bloom in one night. So Christianity burst into bloom. Whereas it had been everywhere persecuted and hidden away from the sight of men, it now entered upon a period of dazzling prosperity. Churches arose everywhere as if by magic. The whole world found itself Christian.

This sudden change was due to the conversion of Constantine. The death of Diocletian left the Roman world with four governors, two in the East and two in the West. The latter were Maximian and Constantine. Maximian stood for the old pagan culture. He represented the old aristocratic families of Rome which looked with scorn upon the new and popular religion. Constantine was the champion of Christianity and the line of battle was soon in array. The night before the conflict, Constantine had a dream or vision. He saw a bright cross in the sky and under it the words, "*In this Sign Thou Shalt Conquer.*" So firmly was he impressed with the reality and import of this vision that he abolished the Roman eagles, which for a thousand years had been carried before the victorious legions, and in their stead placed the *labarum*, the sign of the cross, which was, henceforth, to be his standard. The army of Constantine was victo-

rious, and with the death of Maximian, the power of heathendom collapsed like a punctured balloon. Christianity now entered upon a stage of flourishing progress. Constantine himself was not a whole-hearted believer, and in fact was not baptized until his death-bed, but nevertheless he lent comfort and assistance to the Christians in every way. He could see at least that the Christians had a spirit of brotherhood, of unity, and of enthusiasm which bound together the most diverse races. There was nothing else like it in the world, and if he could align this force on his side, it would hold together the empire. While thus it seemed that Constantine had done a great thing for the Church, the Church did a far greater thing for Constantine. The birds of the air were glad to find shelter beneath the ever spreading branches of the Kingdom of Christ. Constantine built magnificent churches in Jerusalem, Tyre, Antioch and Constantinople. In this he was warmly seconded by the efforts of his pious mother, Helena, who made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and is said to have discovered the relics of the true Cross.

II.

The next step of Constantine was fraught with great import to the civil and religious history of the world. He transferred the seat of the empire from Rome, which had been the mistress of the world for a thousand years, to Constantinople where

he built a city named in his own honor. In it was found no heathen temple. It was a Christian city from the beginning, and hundreds of churches were reared. Rome was still pagan at heart; the old aristocracy, the senate and the populace, looked with disdain upon Constantine, as an upstart, and he was glad to break away from their traditions.

The churches were generally built after the Roman law court or basilica, and were large and imposing structures. There were single or double rows of columns on either side of the long hall or nave; the chancel was raised by a flight of steps and terminated in a semi-circular apse. The altar stood in the chord of the apse; the chairs of the clergy were placed against the circular wall, that of the Bishop being directly behind the altar, facing the people. In this position the Bishop stood in celebrating the holy Eucharist. The churches were paved with marble and the walls covered with mosaics and paintings. The ancient basilicas of Rome are among the most beautiful and impressive in the world. Constantine built the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, and laid the foundations of the Church of St. Sophia, or Holy Wisdom, which his sons completed, and which still stands, a monument to the magnificence of these early days of Christianity, though alas, it has been desecrated by the Moslem and is today a Turkish mosque. God grant that it may be again restored to the

worship of Christ to whose honor it was erected in the golden age of the Church.

III.

We must now describe the organization of the Church. It followed that of the Roman empire. The latter was divided into provinces and dioceses, and the Church adopted this same division and terminology. The diocese was the sphere in which the bishop exercised his jurisdiction, and the Province consisted of a group of Dioceses. We see the beginnings of this provincial system in Asia Minor, where the Seven Churches of Asia are grouped under the leadership of Ephesus. Each province in the empire was ruled by a Roman Governor in its metropolis, and similarly, the Bishop of the metropolis was the head of the Church in that Province and presided at its annual Councils or Synods. Although there are but three orders in the ministry of the Church, and theoretically, one Bishop is as good as another, yet practically the Bishops of the larger cities have the greater measure of influence, so the metropolitan Bishop had more than his humbler brothers in the smaller towns.

Among the Metropolitans, there were certain that stood out in still greater rank and were known as Patriarchs. They occupied the apostolic sees, or Churches which were originally founded by the Apostles. St. James, the brother of our Lord, was

the first Bishop of Jerusalem, as we will see by reading the Acts of the Apostles; similarly St. John ruled the Church of Ephesus where he wrote his Gospel, and presided over the Churches of Asia Minor. Thus the provincial system had its beginning in apostolic days, and was now spread over the whole world. In addition to the Patriarchates of Jerusalem and Ephesus, there were also those of St. Mark at Alexandria, of St. Peter at Antioch, and of SS. Peter and Paul at Rome. When Constantinople was built its Bishop was made, by the Council of Nicea, a Patriarch, in honor, next to Rome, which had the precedence in dignity, being the imperial city. While these Patriarchates formed a convenient grouping for the practical administration of church affairs, they were in no sense of divine authority. We shall see in our next chapter how the western patriarchate capitalized the traditions of Imperial Rome and claimed an ecclesiastical supremacy over the entire Church. During this period of the Church's history the Patriarchs were all brothers and shared equally the honor and responsibility of ruling the Church.

IV.

We must now see how the Church exercised its authority. The Church was the body of Christ, and as such was guided and inspired by His Holy Spirit. Nothing could be stronger than this sense

of divine spiritual guidance in the Church. When the Apostles met together their conclusion was, "It seems good to the Holy Ghost and to us." Christ had promised to abide with his Church always, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against it; that His Spirit would guide it into all truth and bring all things to its remembrance. It was therefore inconceivable that the Church as a whole should fall into error. It was an infallible and true witness to Christ. This infallibility did not consist in the power to create new truths or doctrines, but rather to be a true witness to the faith which was once for all delivered. While the Church at times seemed to create new doctrines, these were only a clearer definition of what was always believed to be the true and ancient faith. On the other hand, because the Church is a living body and inspired by a living spirit it has always been free from a slavish adherence to the letter of scripture which has bound in legalistic chains some forms of protestantism. The unanimous voice of the Spirit of Christendom speaks in the General Council. Five of the great General Councils of the Church were held during the period we are considering, defining the faith in Christ, or as it is called, the doctrine of the Incarnation. This was brought about by four successive denials of this faith within the Church itself. The first of these heresies was that of Arius, a priest of

Alexandria, who taught that Christ was not divine, but the first of God's creation. He did not deny the miracles of Christ, but said that being a Son, He must be after the Father in time. Arius was controverted by Alexander, the Bishop and Athanasius, his deacon. The first General Council was summoned by Constantine, and met in Nicea, a suburb of Constantinople, in the year 325. Here Arius was condemned and the Nicene creed was put forth, declaring Christ to be of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made. Bishop Gore has written a very helpful book on the divinity of our Lord entitled "Belief in Christ."

The tendency of the human mind is to swing from one extreme to another like the pendulum of a clock. The next heresy was that of Apollonarius, who taught that Christ's human nature was simply an appearance.

"A mortal shape to Him was as the vapour dim
Which the orient planet animates with light."

This of course contradicted the Gospel, and was condemned by the second General Council of Constantinople in 381.

Nestorius taught that our Lord had a dual personality. This is a common belief today. It assumes that Christ was a human person, in whom the divine Logos or Spirit resided. This heresy denies the scripture and was condemned at Ephesus in 431 by the third General Council.

Eutyches confused the two natures of Christ, teaching that the human was lost in the divine as a drop of vinegar would be lost in the ocean. This would deny to Christ all human sympathy and feeling, and was condemned by the fourth General Council of Chalcedon which met in 451. The fifth and sixth General Councils completed the definition of the Incarnation condemning various other heretics, among them Pope Honorius of Rome. As fixed by the General Councils the doctrine of the Incarnation is that Jesus Christ is truly divine and perfectly human, and that the two natures are inseparably, yet unconfusedly united in one person.

V.

Among the great Churchmen of this period were Athanasius, St. Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, and St. Augustine. It was as Dr. Spence-Jones calls it "The Golden Age of the Church."

CHAPTER IV

The Middle Ages

"While Men Slept an Enemy Sowed Tares"

Our Lord foretold that the time would come when the enemy would sow tares in the field; when evil men should dominate in the Kingdom of God. Hence the dark days in the Church's history. We must not suppose that the Church became wholly corrupt in spite of wickedness in high places. The Dark Ages were really a period of growth and development, and from them emerged the civilization and religious freedom of the present era.

The Dark Ages began with the downfall of the Western Empire in 576. For six centuries the light haired barbarians of northern Europe had been pressing against Rome. The movement began a hundred years before Christ. Every school boy knows how Caesar describes the first waves of this mighty ocean which beat so long upon the rock of Roman dominion, and at last swept all before it. The Helvetii, the Germans and the Gauls were beaten back into submission by the Roman legions. For seven hundred years they were held at bay. But no power of man can stay the forces of nature. The Goths, the Huns, the Vandals and Franks at last swept over the ancient empire.

Europe was once more in the darkness of barbarism. There was but one source of illumination left—the Church. When Alaric, the “scourge of God,” with his barbarian hordes stood at the gates of Rome, having spread devastation and waste behind him, he was met by Pope Innocent, and, overawed by the dignity of the great Bishop, he withdrew without destroying the city.

The great work of the Church in Europe had to be accomplished afresh. Europe had to be civilized and converted anew. But whereas the first churches in Europe had been founded by missionaries direct from Jerusalem or Antioch or Ephesus, now the teachers of the Gospel went out direct from Rome, and so in its second conversion the new churches of Europe were allied to the great see of western Christendom and looked up to its great Bishop as their spiritual Father. This added greatly to the prestige and influence of the Roman pontiff.

II.

While the empire was destroyed in fact, it still lived as an ideal in the hearts of men as a great spiritual domain, and the Roman Church was the natural heir to this valuable heritage. When in 800 the Pope placed the iron crown on the head of Charlemagne, and crowned him Emperor, the Holy Roman Empire was born anew as the creation of the Roman pontiff. We must now briefly

consider the circumstances which led to the rise of the papacy.

a. A negative cause was the weakening, and in some cases the annihilation, of all the eastern Patriarchates by the rise of Mohammedanism, dating from 622. Mohammed appealed not simply to the reason of men, but supplemented his argument with the sword. His movement became a great military conquest. It spread through Arabia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, Spain, and attacked the very heart of Europe. The Moors were driven back into Spain by Charles Martel at the battle of Tours, and finally the combined armies of Ferdinand and Isabella drove them out of Spain, and back into Africa. Constantinople itself did not fall until 1435. Since then all of the great patriarchal sees of the Eastern Church, Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Alexandria and Constantinople have been under Moslem domination. Our own day has seen the spoilation of the fairest and youngest daughter of the Greek Church, the Church of Russia. The final separation of the Latin Church from the East in 1054 left the Patriarch of Rome without an equal, and henceforth the papal power grew by leaps and bounds, unchecked.

b. The Temporal Power of the Pope began with the gift of the States of the Church by Pepin, the father of Charlemagne, in return for which the Pope made the latter the head of the Holy Roman

Empire. From this time on the Pope extended his temporal power not only in Italy, but also claimed supremacy over all the monarchs of Europe. We must not regard the temporal power of the Pope as a thing in itself, but in connection with the civil authority exercised by the Church throughout the whole west. Not only was the Pope a civil ruler, but each Bishop was a Prince of the Church, a feudal lord.

In the Roman Empire the Emperor was supreme, and all others were simply citizens with equal rights. When the empire fell, the feudal system took its place. The barbarians loved freedom, but freedom only for the strongest. The hero who was strong did as he pleased, and compelled others to do as pleased him. Hence each community had its leader whom the others served as vassals. These chiefs built their castles in strong and inaccessible places. They carried on war with each other and were independent rulers. The Bishops of the Church were feudal lords, and had their castles, their armies and their retainers. The Clergy were endowed with much property and had great influence in public affairs. This was due to the fact that theirs was the only learned profession, and included law and medicine as well as affairs of state. The barbarians despised learning. It was considered effeminate for them to know how to write their own names. They depended upon the Clergy,

their spiritual advisors, to do their literary work. Hence to the present day, we call any writer a clerk, which is only short for clergymen.

The temporal power of the Pope was the logical climax of the temporal power which the Church everywhere exercised. We must say that the temporal power of the Church was generally a blessing for the people. The civil rulers and petty lords were often cruel and bloodthirsty. They were selfish masters, whereas the Church was the only power which they respected or feared, and it generally took the side of the people against their oppressors. It was therefore to the interest of the common people to build up and strengthen the spiritual power as their one protection against injustice, and, though the Church itself was a hard master, it protected them against the greater rapacity of their civil rulers.

c. The ignorance of the times also contributed to the development of papal power. Before the invention of printing, all books were copied laboriously by hand and many corruptions crept into the text, which were difficult to discover. Especially was this the case in regard to books of law. They were often garbled in the interests of the Clergy and Pope. A great body of spurious laws arose called the Papal Decretals, supposed to be genuine and representing that the temporal and spiritual supremacy of the popes went back to the earliest

ages. With such precedents as this to appeal to no one dared to dispute any claim which the Pope might make. He was monarch of all he surveyed, both in the temporal and spiritual realms.

In 1066 the Pope gave England to William of Normandy, who invaded the country, and was victorious at the battle of Hastings. He brought with him not only his French retainers and lords, but also his French Bishops and England was brought much closer to Rome than in the old Saxon days. Protests were made from time to time against Roman usurpations, but the Church of England did not regain her freedom until the time of Henry VIII.

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Gregory VII came to the papal throne in 1073 and did much to further the interests of his office. He humiliated Emperor Henry IV and made him stand three days barefooted in the snow doing penance before the papal palace at Canossa before he returned to him his kingdom. From now on the papal power continued to develop until the time of Boniface VIII, who issued the celebrated bull *Unam Sanctam* declaring that Christ had given to St. Peter authority over all kingdoms and empires in the world and that his successor, the Pope, might give them to or take them away from whomsoever he chose.

III.

This was the climax of papal power. Phillip the Fair, of France, drove Boniface from the throne and transferred the papacy bag and baggage to Avignon in France. Now began what is known as the Babylonish Captivity. For seventy years the Popes were Frenchmen and puppets of the French kings. They lived in great luxury and ease, but corruption reigned in the papal court. Then the people of Rome rebelled at the absence of their Bishop. They accordingly elected a Roman Pope, and enthroned him in St. Peters, as described in "Rienzi," and now for forty-three years there were two heads to the Western Church, one at Avignon, and one at Rome, each claiming to be the true successor of St. Peter and excommunicating his rival. All Europe was divided, some nations following one Pope and some the other. The climax was reached when in 1409 the council of Pisa deposed both Popes and elected a third. From now until 1417 there were three Popes. The council of Constance deposed two, recognized one as valid, and on his death elected Martin V, who ended the "Great Schism." These scandals in the Church had much to do with preparing the way for the reformation.

The Crusades also contributed to the downfall of the papacy. Although they missed their in-

tended purpose of restoring the sacred shrines of Christendom to the hands of the faithful, they re-established communication between the east and the west, and brought back to Europe much of Greek culture. The fall of Constantinople hastened this movement, resulting in the revival of Greek letters known as the Renaissance. In the light of the new learning it was evident that the extreme papal claims were not grounded on ancient authority, and were contrary to the spirit and teaching of the early Church.

There were many corruptions and superstitions in the Church's teaching, the worship of the Saints and of the Virgin Mary developed to great lengths, and pilgrimages to certain sacred shrines were supposed to be of great efficacy. The doctrine of purgatory was taught in its most materialistic form and much money was spent in saying prayers and masses for the dead. The Pope claimed authority not only over the earthly but over the heavenly kingdom as well, having power to release the souls of the departed from the fires of purgatory. From this a system of dispensations and indulgences grew up which became a source of traffic and scandal throughout christendom and led directly to the German Reformation.

On the other hand we must not suppose that the Church was wholly corrupt. There have been pious and godly men in all ages of the Church, and

some of the greatest Saints, such as St. Francis, lived during this period. The wheat was growing in the field as well as the tares.

CHAPTER V.

The Reformation

The Treasure Found

Our Lord in one of His parables describes the Church as a treasure hid in a field, forgotten by the owner. A man passing through, discovers it by accident, and for joy goes and sells all that he has and purchases the field. So it was in the days preceding the reformation. The saving truths of Christianity were largely lost sight of by the Church itself. They were thickly overlaid with superstition, worldliness and sin. When the New Learning brought to light again the Holy Scriptures, and the invention of printing enabled them to be put into the hands of all men, it was a re-discovery of Christianity. Men rejoiced so that they sacrificed all that they had in order that they might purchase for themselves this great treasure, pure and undefiled.

Circumstances were making for a great change, not only in the religious but in the social and political world of the day. These changes were due to three inventions. *a.* The discovery of gunpowder blew the feudal system to pieces. So long as a man could wear a coat of mail, sit upon a horse and be immune from the man, with a

pike on the ground, he was a great nobleman; but gunpowder enabled the serf to fight better than the baron with his horse and coat of mail, and the coat of mail and the baron disappeared simultaneously. *b.* The invention of printing took learning out of the hands of the Clergy and put it into the hands of everybody. Instead of having to go to Church and listen to the Clergy tell what the Word of God said, each man could own a copy and read for himself. *c.* The invention of the mariner's compass made navigation a science and brought about the discovery of a new world. This developed maritime and colonial power, England soon taking the precedence of Spain and maintaining her ascendancy on the sea to the present day.

The premonition of coming events was felt by the Church and abortive efforts were made to reform the Church from within. Councils were held at Pisa, Constance, Basle, and Florence, all for the purpose of reforming the Church in its head and in its members. The Pope, however, as the head, wished the reformation to begin with the members, and the Bishops wished to begin with the head, so nothing was done.

Erasmus, a great scholar, wrote a Greek grammar and made the new learning popular throughout Europe. He was a careful, calculating man, and did not identify himself with the new religion. The monks however gave him full credit for his

share in the reformation, saying "Erasmus laid the egg which Luther hatched."

The reformation was three-fold. When we speak of the reformation we sometimes think of it as a solid movement. There were, however, three reformations, each carried on with different principles and arriving at widely differing results, viz.; the Reformation in Northern Europe, outside the Church; the Reformation in Southern Europe, within the Church, and the Reformation of the Church of England. Each of these movements was quite distinct.

The first of these reformations began in Germany. At the beginning of the XVI Century, Leo X, the Medician Pope, was building St. Peter's, in Rome, the most magnificent Church in the world. In order to raise the money for this enterprise he sent Tetzal into Germany to sell indulgences or pardons for sins. This aroused the ire of Martin Luther, who at once began a campaign denouncing the corruptions of the Church. In the words of Erasmus, "He hit the Pope on the head and the monks in the belly." But Luther's reformation did not stop with the corruptions of the Church. By his own vehemence and by the force of circumstances he was carried entirely outside the pale of the Church, so that instead of reforming the Church he founded a new one which has ever since been called after him.

The great doctrine which Luther preached was Justification by Faith only. During the dark ages the Church had been corrupted and the priests, like the pharisees of old, had bound heavy burdens and laid them upon men's shoulders. In order to receive forgiveness of sins, which the Gospel offers freely, men must do heavy penances, buy expensive indulgences, and go on long pilgrimages. Even after death penalties followed them, which could, however, be escaped by the payment of large sums of money to the priests. The Clergy had the keys to the Treasure of Merit accumulated by the Saints, and, by the power of the Pope, the Merits of the Saints could be transferred to the credit of sinners, and so they might escape some or even all of the pains of purgatory. Religion thus became mechanical and a matter of barter. We can understand then the tremendous popularity of Luther's doctrine of justification by faith only. All that was necessary to be forgiven and to be saved was just to believe. It was not necessary to go on pilgrimages, or to buy indulgences, or to do hard penances. Only believe. The pains of purgatory and the fires of hell cannot touch you if you have faith. In the course of his controversy, Luther was drawn into the extreme position that even the moral law is unnecessary and that if a man had sufficient faith he might break all of the ten commandments. He encountered the epistle of St.

James, in the Bible, but declared it a straw-brief and of no account. The new doctrine cut the foundation from under all the other institutions of religion. The Church, the priesthood, the sacraments, the discipline of the Church all become superfluous. Faith only is the one thing needful, and this is practically the attitude of modern protestantism today. Luther, however, was not entirely consistent, and while he gave up the Church and the priesthood, he nevertheless retained the sacraments, the altars and many of the old customs of the Church, including the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper.

Calvin was far more logical than Luther. While Luther strove to keep all that was not contrary to the Bible, Calvin would have nothing that was not expressly commanded in the Bible, as he interpreted it. The five "points" of Calvinism are Total Depravity, Effectual Calling (predestination), Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace and Final Perseverance. This, too, transfers religion from the domain of the external, to the hidden councils of God. Man need not worry about faith, for if he is predestined to be saved, God will give him irresistible grace to believe. The Calvinist has a most exalted idea of the Holy Catholic Church, but it is not an outward institution; it is an invisible Church whose true members are known only to God himself. Each Calvinist of course hopes

that he belongs to that invisible Church. But again, priest and sacrament, church and altar are entirely superfluous. New religious organizations took their rise at this time, and since then there have been many ramifications and divisions of protestantism; they all rejected the Church, the priesthood and the sacraments, and put in place of them faith as the only necessary virtue; and each man's individual judgment in interpreting scripture in place of the authority of the Church.

II.

Within the Roman Church a corresponding change now took place called the Counter-Reformation. The Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) had been founded and began a great work both in Europe and in the missionary fields. The Council of Trent was summoned and effected a thorough reformation so far as the moral corruptions of the Church were concerned. The dogmatic positions of the Schoolmen were affirmed, and the papal power, without the nations of Northern Europe, was more strongly entrenched than ever. The Roman Catholic Church has gone on in an active, vigorous, religious life, and the members which it lost in Northern Europe have been more than made up in South America, where the Latin-Spanish culture was dominant. It is worthy of note that the Roman Church is at its best in protestant countries. In 1870 the Pope

lost his temporal power, and was declared infallible by the Vatican Council.

III

The third reformation movement which was going on simultaneously with the two which we have above described, and quite distinct from either, was the reformation of the Church of England. The Church of England goes back to the earliest days of Christianity. Three of its Bishops attended the Council of Arles in 314. It was at first entirely independent of the Roman Church. With the coming of St. Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, in 597, the Church of England first came into contact with the Roman Church. From this time until 1066 the Church of England was in friendly communion with Rome, and looked up to the great western pontiff as a father in God, but nevertheless lived quite an independent life. With the coming of William the Conqueror and his Norman Bishops, which was simultaneous with the rapidly developing claims of the papacy, the Church of England was brought into closer contact with Rome, which was regarded as the mother and the mistress of all the national churches. However, protests were made from time to time. The Magna Charta begins with the words, "The Church of England shall be free." Its freedom was not achieved, however, for several centuries. When the

new learning came to Europe it found a welcome in the English universities. The learned began to question the supremacy of the Pope, and the common people objected to the enormous proportion of the Church's income that was sent to Italy. Many of the holders of English bishoprics were Italian ecclesiastics who never set foot in England and who drained all the revenue of the Church. Besides this there were many monasteries and convents in England where monks and nuns lived in idleness, who were not under the jurisdiction of the English Church. The whole country was then waiting for the occasion to abolish the papal autocracy, when the opportunity came over the question of the annulment of Henry VIII's marriage with his deceased brother's wife, a marriage contrary to the canon law of the Church and the civil law of England, as in fact, it is today. A dispensation had been obtained from the Pope to permit this marriage. Henry's motive in seeking annulment was desire for a legal heir to the English throne, a motive in which the people of England generally concurred. The universities of England and of France declared that the Pope had no authority to dispense with divine law, and pronounced the marriage with Catherine, Henry's brother's widow, null and void. This brought about the expected break with the Pope, but in other respects there was little change in the English

Church during Henry's reign. He dissolved the monasteries, distributing their property to his favorites. The services were still said in the Latin tongue, the Clergy were forbidden to marry, and anyone who denied transubstantiation was burnt at the stake. Henry did not found a new Church in any sense. The creed, the services, the priesthood and the sacraments remained exactly as they had always been. Henry and his children were more or less wicked and altogether selfish people, but they smashed Spain and made England great. They were no more wicked than other kings and Popes of their day. Roman Catholics who are disturbed at the shortcomings of Henry VIII and Martin Luther should read the article on Pope Alexander VI in the Catholic Encyclopedia.

When Edward the VI came to the throne, a boy of eight years, in 1548, the reformation set in at full tide. His counselors were men who had profited by the Church's spoliation, and they did not wish to see the old order restored. On Whitsunday, 1549, for the first time the services in the Churches were said in the English tongue, from the First Prayer Book of Edward the Sixth. It was conservative and Catholic in tone and did not suit the reforming politicians, so two years later a second prayer book was issued which was decidedly protestant. The influence of the continental reformation was beginning to make itself

felt in England, and the Church of England was on the verge of losing her Catholic heritage, when the boy king came to a premature end in 1553.

The English people had not wanted a protestant religion, and they hailed the accession of Mary with joy. Mary, however, was a bigot. She and her mother had been despised and set at naught by the reformation and she had a score to settle. She burnt at the stake three hundred men and women, digging some out of their graves. She burnt the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cranmer, and four other bishops and many priests. She married a Spaniard, Phillip II. This was England's last experience with the papacy and it was enough. When Mary died, after five years of unhappy rule, the bonfires were lighted and the people rejoiced. Elizabeth came to the throne to uphold the freedom of England in Church and state. Let us survey the position of the Church of England at this time. Under Henry the Church repudiated the Pope but otherwise remained Catholic and unreformed. Under Edward it was reformed and was in danger of losing its Catholic character. Under Mary it was put back into obedience to the papacy. Which direction would it now take? Elizabeth was a good Catholic at heart. During the first months of her reign the mass was still said in Latin. Cardinal Pole, Mary's Archbishop of Canterbury, died at the same time as Mary, and Matthew Parker was

consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury in Lambeth Chapel by four Bishops on December 17, 1559. The other bishoprics were filled, and less than two hundred of the Clergy refused to accept the new order. The Second Prayer Book was revised, its objectionable protestant features being eliminated, and is practically the prayer book which we use today.

The important question which we must now answer is, Was the Church of England founded by Henry VIII and is it a Catholic or a protestant Church? This is one and the same question, for all protestant Churches had their origin at the reformation period, or some subsequent time. If the Church of England existed before the reformation, then it is a Catholic Church in the true and correct sense of the word. Did Henry VIII found a protestant Church in the same way that Martin Luther did? Luther formed a new organization, with a new ministry, and a new doctrine, a new form of worship, and a new faith. Henry VIII did not change the ministry, the faith, the sacraments or the worship of the Church in any respect at all. Neither did the Bloody Mary found a new Church when she brought England again under Roman autocracy. Neither did Elizabeth found a new Church when she made it again independent. If the universal jurisdiction of the Pope is essential to the Church's Catholicity, then of course the

Church of England would be a new Church, but the universal jurisdiction of the Pope was never recognized in the Eastern Churches, which are unquestionably as ancient and Catholic¹ as the Western Churches. Therefore the Catholicity of a Church is a matter quite apart from the question of the Pope's jurisdiction.

As children of the English Church we should feel devoutly thankful that our Heavenly Father has preserved it through all the ages of its trial and danger, and brought it out at last into ways of pleasantness and peace. Let us ever remember that we are Catholic in the true sense of the word, and that we hold the faith, not of the reformation, but the faith that was once for all delivered to the Saints, and that the Church of our fathers is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Cornerstone.

IV.

The position of the Church of England was now defined so far as its relation to the Pope was concerned.

Another question of equal importance is, What is the relation of the Church of England to protestantism? The continental reformation developed upon two lines—the Lutheran, and the Calvinistic. The motto of the Lutherans was to keep all the old customs that were not forbidden in scripture. That

of the Calvinists was to throw out all customs that were not commanded in scripture. For example, the Lutherans continued to keep Christmas Day; the Calvinists passed laws against it.

The seat of Calvinism was Geneva, where Calvin reigned as a protestant Pope. His doctrine was the faith of Holland, of the French Huguenots, and of Scotland. When the Bloody Mary came to the throne, many English Churchmen fled to Geneva, where they were imbued with the stern doctrines of Calvin (see page 43). John Knox similarly was the protestant Pope of Scotland and ruled the Church and state alike with an iron hand. When Mary died, the refugees came back to England and created a strong Calvinistic faction in the Church. Here then was the situation. The Romanists had rejected the Church and were fighting against it. It was surrounded by firm and autocratic protestant groups in Switzerland, Holland, France and Scotland. John Knox and John Calvin believed in the supremacy of the Church over the state as much as any Pope. There was a powerful group of sympathetic men within the Church itself. Their attitude was one of contempt for the Church of England as a miserable compromise. They regarded her as still clinging to the rags of Popery. All that was essentially Catholic, was repugnant to them. They despised the prayer book, the altars, the chanted service, the

surplice, kneeling at communion, the ring in marriage, the sign of the cross in baptism. All that was characteristic of the Church as such, they hated and determined to destroy. Most of all they concentrated their attack upon the episcopate, which was the living witness of the Church's continuity. The Calvinists were Presbyterian in their church organization.

Under Elizabeth the Puritans had little chance for growth. She kept them down with a strong hand. When she was succeeded by James I, who had been brought up a Presbyterian, the Puritans thought their inning had come. A conference was called between Churchmen and Puritans, but James took the side of the Church of England and the Puritans were discomfited. The matchless King James version of the Bible was translated at this time. It was the greatest English classic.

When Charles I came to the throne Puritan opposition continued to develop. The days of autocracy were going by both in Church and state. Charles set at naught his parliament and tried to rule arbitrarily. The Church stood by the king. (The Church is generally wrong when it gets into politics.) The Puritans stood by the parliament. Charles lost his head and the Church went down with him. The prayer book was forbidden, the Clergy were dispossessed of their parishes, and Puritans put into their places. The altars, windows,

organs, statuary and vestments were destroyed. Christmas was made a fast day, May poles were cut down, and England found herself a Puritan nation.

There were of the Puritans two sorts. The parliament which opposed Charles was Presbyterian. When it abolished the Church it called the Westminster Assembly, which produced the Westminster Confession, and the Longer and Shorter Catechisms, which form the creed of the Presbyterian Churches in England and America today. But a new type of Puritanism was arising, the Independents or Congregationalists, who regarded presbyterianism as a mere imitation of episcopacy, and the only thorough godly religion was to be found with themselves. The leader of this party was Oliver Cromwell, who put the fear of God into his own soldiers first and then into all England. It was not the Long Parliament, the Presbyterian Parliament, with which Charles had had his quarrels, that executed the king. They in fact refused to do so. It was the Rump Parliament, composed of Independents and Cromwell's followers, after Colonel Pride had driven out the Presbyterians, (Pride's purge) that signed the death warrant. Never before in history had a king been legally executed by his own people. The English people were the first to arrive at the important truth that

the king belongs to the government and not the government to the king.

Cromwell was, of course, as much an autocrat as Charles, but he made England respected at home and abroad.

The English people, however, were not Puritan at heart. When Cromwell died, Charles the II came back as a constitutional monarch, with the consent of parliament, and the Church came back as a matter of course. The Puritans were irreconcilable. Many of them emigrated to America, and those who remained separated from the Church and established the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches in England, which are closely allied to the Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland and the Dutch Reformed Church of Holland

CHAPTER VI

The Church in America

When Columbus discovered America, it was quickly taken possession of by men of many nations and many religions.

The Spanish and French were foremost in this work. In fact, Spain appropriated everything in the New World, from Florida to the Straits of Magellan. France took the northern part of North America from the St. Lawrence, pushing her discoveries into the interior, including the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi Valley, and on to the Gulf of Mexico, the territory of Louisiana including originally almost all of the land west of the Mississippi.

To the English was left only the North Atlantic coast. It possessed no mines of gold or silver for the adventurer, or skins for the trader. Although it did not seem so at first, it afterwards turned out to be the best part of the New World, or at least it became such under the influence of English civilization and religion.

The French and Spanish were both Roman Catholic. The English colonies, however, were by no means all devoted to the Church of England. The Puritans who settled New England were bitterly

hostile to it. They came to this country, not so much to find religious liberty, as to found a state in which their Puritanism might be dominant. Cotton Matther pronounced the doctrine of religious toleration the doctrine of devils. They thoroughly believed in the union of the Church and state and that religion should be enforced by civil penalties, and of course, it was to be their kind of religion.

New York was settled by the Dutch, whose Dutch Reformed Churches are still landmarks in New York City.

New Jersey was settled by the Swedes; Maryland by the Roman Catholics, and Pennsylvania by the Quakers.

In fact, it is not until we come to the colony of Virginia that we find the Church of England. Here it was the established Church. The first colonists landed at Jamestown in 1607, and on St. John Baptist's day, of this year, June 24th, the Holy Communion was first celebrated by James Hunt, chaplain of the expedition, a sail being stretched from tree to tree for protection against the weather, and the pulpit made of two spars, lashed between trees. A Church was subsequently built with brick brought from England, the original tower of which is still standing, and the whole building has been restored on the original foundation lines.

People in Virginia were compelled to go to church under penalty of paying a pound of tobacco in case of absence; and other similar laws that were regarded as necessary for the welfare of the community were enacted.

This period, however, was one of grave religious indifference and laxity. In one instance a clergyman preached every Sunday, and went about during the week delivering infidel lectures. In England religion had reached a low ebb. The Church was spiritually dormant, if not dead. The non-juror, representing the highest and best in the traditions of the Church, had been expelled from its communion, and the Clergy were Erastian and worldly-minded. The sacraments had fallen largely into disuse, and the conduct of public worship had become slovenly and irreverent.

At this time a young man was in attendance at Oxford who was destined to profoundly influence the religious history of England and America. At Oxford he organized a society for the observance of the rubrics of the prayer book, including the fasting communion, the recitation of the daily offices, and the observance of the fast days of the Church. Because of his strictness in observing these rules, he and his companions were called Methodists, for the young man was none other than John Wesley. He took orders in the Church with his brother Charles, and they went to Georgia

with Oglethorpe, when he founded his colony, Charles to take charge of a parish there and John to convert the Indians. Failing in this, John took charge of a Church, where he made himself disliked because of his strict discipline. Finally he capped the climax by excommunicating a young lady who had jilted him in an offer of marriage. The people rose up against him, and John found it expedient to return to England. On his way there, he fell in with some Moravian missionaries who preached to him their doctrine of personal religion, and as a result, he experienced a religious conversion, which he regarded as a new starting point in his Christian life. He at once began to preach this doctrine of instantaneous conversion with great success. He was warmly seconded in his efforts by an English priest, Whitfield, who had a wonderful gift of oratory. On one occasion Whitfield preached all afternoon, until it was dark, but the people would not depart, so he continued to preach all night long, after the example of St Paul, and dismissed his congregation at daybreak.

This movement started in America, where it was known as the "great awakening," Jonathan Edwards, a Puritan Divine, giving assistance to it. It was never Wesley's purpose that the Methodist movement should be more than a development in the Church of England. The original Wesleyans, in England, are still members of the Church, but

the whole movement was too large for John to manage.

His superintendents, whom he sent to America, Coke and Asbury, proclaimed themselves Bishops, and Methodism was launched as a new sect of Christianity. It was most unfortunate that this division took place. Had the Church of England been able to appreciate Wesley at his real value, and had the Methodist movement kept within the bounds of the Mother Church, it would have been of inestimable value to both. The Church would have received a new impetus, which it certainly needed, and Methodism would have been saved from the extremes to which it has gone, and from which it is now receding. The crucial difference was, of course, the doctrine of instantaneous conversion, upon which Wesley so strongly insisted, and which is not the religious experience of every individual. John himself lived and died a priest of the Church of England, as did his brother Charles, who wrote many of our most beautiful hymns.

In the early part of the eighteenth century a circumstance occurred which gave great impetus to the Church in New England. Dr. Timothy Cutler was president of Yale Collge, the great Puritan stronghold. He became engaged in controversy with a Churchman, and in order to fortify himself, began reading the history of the Church

and of the apostolic ministry. His reading had a most unexpected result, for instead of fortifying his position, he became convinced that the Puritan orders were invalid, and that an Episcopal ordination was essential for a valid ministry. Accordingly at the Commencement in 1722, he, together with five other members of the faculty, resigned their positions, and entered the communion of the Church of England. Great was the consternation in Connecticut. A day of fasting and of prayer was proclaimed to counteract the effects of this great apostasy, but apparently without avail. Cutler and his companions went to England, where they were ordained priests of the Church, and returning, laid the foundations of the English Church so firmly in Connecticut that today one in every ten of the population, men, women and children, is a member of the Church, the highest proportion found in any state of the Union.

There was still, however, a great prejudice against the Church in Massachusetts, and threats were freely made that if a Bishop should come to that colony, he would be assassinated.

Here was the real difficulty in the Church's development. No missionary work in the Episcopal Church can be successful without the episcopate, and during this long period there was no Bishop in America. Not a confirmation had been administered. For ordination it was necessary that young

men should make an expensive and dangerous journey across the ocean to receive Holy Orders. While other religious bodies grew apace, the Church was sadly handicapped in lacking its chief ministers.

Then came the Revolutionary War, which severed the colonies from the Mother Country. Many of the leaders in this war were devoted Churchmen, among them Washington, Jefferson, Henry, and Franklin. The attitude of the majority of the people, however, identified the Church of England with the tyrannical government, an attitude justified in many cases by the opinions of the Clergy. Samuel Seabury, a Connecticut priest, and a staunch Tory, served as chaplain of one of the British regiments until the surrender of Yorktown. At the conclusion of the war, he was chosen by the Clergy of Connecticut to go to England and receive orders. After waiting in vain for a year in England, he turned to Scotland. The terms of peace had not yet been made with the new nation, and the English Clergy were restrained from ordaining a Bishop for the colonies.

The persecuted Church of Scotland, however, was bound by no such rules, and in Aberdeen, in 1784, Samuel Seabury was ordained the Apostle to America. He pledged that the American Church should use the Scottish prayer book instead of the English, and for this reason, today, our communion service follows the Scottish order in

some important respects. White and Provost were shortly afterward ordained in London, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, thus supplying the three Bishops necessary to continue the Apostolic succession in America, and from them our American Bishops have derived their orders.

From now on the Church grew apace, and although it is still relatively small in numbers, it is growing rapidly, and exercises an influence much in excess of its numerical strength.

The real strength of the Church is in its historical position. It stands at the meeting of the ways. It is both Catholic and reformed. On the one hand, it stands for religious liberty and personal religion. This principle alone, however, leads to division and religious anarchy. It is Catholic in retaining the historical character of Christianity and preserving its ancient forms and traditions. It has kept all that is sacred and valuable in the traditions of the past, and it is in fullest sympathy with the thought of the present. While it does not aim to assimilate other bodies of Christians, it does believe that when Christian unity is restored, it will be along the lines which the Anglican Church rightfully stresses.

In the meantime, let us be loyal to the Church of our Fathers, exhibiting at the same time the fullest sympathy for our brother Christians of every name. Protestant Christians are members

of the Church of Jesus Christ by virtue of their baptism. The Roman Church is a great sister Church, believing all that we do and more. Let it be our prayer that the unity of the Church may be restored. Division among Christians is the great obstacle in the way of the world's conversion. Christ prayed that His followers might all be one, and pointed to this as the evidence of His divine mission. "That they all may be one, I in Thee, and they in Me, that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me." If we are to convert the world, we must restore the broken unity of the Church of Christ.









