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**RELIGION'S  
ABC'S  
FOR  
THE EDUCATED  
Their Application**



**By J. F. N.**

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By J. F. N.

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## INTRODUCTION

Many people, otherwise well informed, know nothing about even the fundamentals of religion, clear as A B C's to the mind of any child, who has been under the influence of religious teaching. *Why* are these things not clear to people otherwise educated?

Because some have never striven to learn them, and because others have striven hard *not* to learn them.

The former group comprises not alone those who are wholly indifferent towards religion, but those who claim we cannot have certain knowledge about the things over which Christians wrangle.

The latter group embraces not alone those who, having had an anti-religious training, are opposed to the "churches" generally, but those who, realizing that religious knowledge imposes religious obligations, will have nothing to do with it.

Religion, whether regarded as a science or a mode of life, because intended for all people, must have its A B C's, or its fundamentals of easy acceptance, even though these have never been clear to many intelligent people for the reasons above mentioned.



## WHAT ARE THE A B C's OF RELIGION?

A.—Practical recognition of God by His dependent creatures or children is dictated by nature itself. This explains why there never existed even a tribe of uncivilized people, who did not practice some sort of divine worship.

B.—The creature dependent for existence and preservation on the Creator, should acknowledge it not only by some sort of worship, but by an eagerness to know Him aright. The disposition to rest content with one's ignorance of God could not be justified even though it entailed no serious consequences.

C.—A God of infinite perfection, and therefore Truth Itself, *could not permit* rational immortal beings to live in ignorance of their eternal destiny, nor deny them the assistance needed to attain it successfully.

D.—If God has actually revealed information concerning Himself to mankind, surely no individual may take a passive or indifferent attitude towards it.

E.—*If* God has taught other definite

truths of the supernatural order they were intended for our acceptance, and their rejection is nothing less than a challenge to God's veracity.

F.—Similarly, the will of the Creator, if it has been clearly revealed, must be the creature's law, and therefore knowledge of that will must be sought.

G.—If the will of God is expressed in definite laws for the guidance of His children's conduct, these must be obeyed, no matter how much one's inclinations might go counter to them.

H.—If man's destiny be of the supernatural order, the means for the realization of it must be of the same character. A supernatural end cannot be reached by natural means. A religion of human origin certainly could not claim supernatural means of salvation.

I.—A state of union with God or separation from Him in eternity must needs be the fate of an immortal being—a conclusion regarded as self-evident even by pagans. A spirit which survives after death must live somewhere.

J.—If God actually instituted a definite plan of salvation, then there can be



no alternative plans. If He established a definite religion and enjoined allegiance to it, no competitive religion of human origin may be tolerated as a substitute.

K.—God could not be the author of even two religious organizations, whose teaching and manner of guidance are mutually contradictory. People in heathen lands have been both confused and scandalized by the competition of several denominations, whose representatives frankly admit their mutually contradictory teaching, while each claims to possess the truth.

L.—A religious organization which confesses that it *may* teach error, even when making an official pronouncement, cannot be of God. Such a confession not only destroys confidence, but proclaims the human character of the denomination. Divinity cannot err either directly or through its divinely commissioned spokesman.

M.—God could not commission any organization to teach the nations in His name (Matt. XXVIII-19), and then decline to protect it from error. Would He not be held responsible for the error taught, and therefore for the deception of His creatures?

N.—God could not command people to “hear the Church” (Matt. XVIII-17), and then allow them to be deceived by her. Would you condone such an inconsistent policy even in an honest man?

O.—There is no valid argument against facts, even historical facts. Some of these must be included in the A B C's of religion.

P.—The most outstanding fact of history is a nineteen century old Church, inseparably associated with the civilization and the life of every nation of the western world, which remained Christian and Catholic for fifteen hundred consecutive years.

Q.—Other plain facts of history are the short life enjoyed by rival religions in the early centuries of the Christian era, and the too late origin of many present day religions. Evidently Christian organizations which have ceased to be, prove their own human origin; and religions which had too late a start to claim Christ as their direct Founder lack a very important mark which must distinguish the Church of Christ.

R.—The most renowned character of history is the Founder of the Christian

Church, respected and eulogized equally by friends and enemies of the religion which He founded. The greatest antagonists of Christianity have always conceded that the beauty of Christ's character has never been surpassed.

S.—Even from the admissions of professed infidels the Divinity of Christ can be satisfactorily established. If He is concededly the holiest character of history, He evidently could not have been an arch deceiver. But this He would be if He were not truly divine.

T.—No claim made for Christ, no teaching of His Church, can be logically rejected before examination, and *should* not be because of the possible consequences. Yet the world abounds with such illogical, inconsistent and unreasonable people.

U.—Christ's "alleged" miracles should not be repudiated without investigation, because surely a God *can* work miracles. The Author of nature's laws can certainly temporarily suspend one of them if He chooses to do so.

V.—The Church of Christ had made great strides even under the fiercest persecution, and converted the powerful

pagan Roman Empire before even the identity of the New Testament Scriptures was known. The Church provided and preserved the Bible instead of the Bible the Church.

W.—The Bible can have reliable authority only in that Church, which determined its Canon, which provided the world with many copies of the original writings, preserved them through the centuries, and now officially interprets the Bible's meaning, just as the Supreme Court of the United States interprets the meaning of the American Constitution.

X.—When non-Catholic churches insist on the authority of the Bible they are unconsciously defending the infallible authority of the Catholic Church, through which alone they can prove the authenticity and present day genuineness of the New Testament Scriptures.

Y.—No teaching of the divine Church will be found repugnant to reason, although reason may not fully grasp *supernatural* truth. The things seemingly too good to be true are plausible in the light of God's infinite love for souls conformed to His image, and destined to live forever with Him.

Z.—Since religion is for all people, even for the rude and illiterate, it should be clear that faith is rather a gift of God than something discovered by deep study. To adults this gift is usually bestowed in answer to prayer, which the student inquirer too often omits. Evidently the way of salvation must be open to all men, and therefore could not be dependent on too arduous personal investigation.

The principle of "safety first" should incline all people to make the most thorough scrutiny of the Church's case. In every other field people want "the facts." In the religious field far too many people prefer to be deceived.

# A B C's OF RELIGION AND LANGUAGE

## *A Parallel*

The religious principles enunciated above will be more forcibly grasped if we institute a parallel between the A B C's of Religion and the A B C's of language.

Just as the Alphabet is learned not for itself, but as a basis for acquiring knowledge of any given language for practical purposes, so the A B C's of religion should be made the basis for the acquisition of *full knowledge* of the true religion, on which, in turn, a consistent systematic religious practice should be built.

Just as we resort to Webster's Dictionary to make certain of the correct spelling and meaning of words, so must we resort to the standard teaching of the *Church of Christ* for a correct knowledge and interpretation of things dealing with the *religion of Christ*.

Just as the knowledge of a language and the correct use of the same are presented for the student's use, in a systematized manner, in the grammar of the

language, so the knowledge of God's religion and the correct use of the same are presented to the student, in a systematized manner, in an official Catechism of the Church.

Just as the *unschooled* child never learns aright any language as taught by its standard books and dictionary, so those who have never been schooled in religion, but who still call themselves believers, do not learn aright the one religion, as originally revealed, and as it has been passed down through the centuries in the standard books and creeds of the Church of Christ.

Just as no one would defend the theory that the generality of people should learn a language or any science without an instructor, so no one could excuse those who insist on finding the full truth about the science of religion, unaided, i. e., without a competent instructor. Yet the claim is very prevalent and is even widely endorsed, that everyone may create and develop his own religion.

We do not study language merely for its cultural purpose. The generality of people hope to make it serve a *practical* purpose. The student who, with the aid of the language he has learned, studies mathematics or law or medicine, does so

principally for the purpose of using this knowledge. In the same manner religious knowledge acquired by building on religion's A B C's should lead to religious practice.

On this principle, universally acknowledged the unsoundness of the contention often made that religion has nothing whatsoever to do with dogma or doctrine, should be clear even to the child-mind. One of the reasons why 70,000,000 of our countrymen do not practice religion is that they have never had any schooling in the revealed truths of religion.

To maintain that religion was intended as "a mode of life," and need not have any doctrinal basis, is equivalent to maintaining that law or medicine may be practiced as a means of livelihood by one who had made no previous study of the principles of jurisprudence or of the science of medicine.

No citizen of our Republic, or of any nation, would defend illiteracy in relation to secular knowledge, realizing that its victim is deprived of innumerable material benefits in this life. Similarly illiteracy in relation to religious and spiritual matters must result in the loss to the individual of manifold spiritual blessings.



## THE A B C's AND THE ILL-DISPOSED

In our Alphabet of Religion we assume the existence of God, and from that assumption the twenty-six conclusions previously enunciated flow logically and naturally. But since there are those who, whether logically or not, disown God altogether, I feel that they should have at least passing attention.

The atheist, the agnostic, the infidel, the indifferentist, all practically scorn religion's A B C's; and in so doing they act not unlike the child who stubbornly refuses to learn the Alphabet of the language of his country. But just as the child who declines to learn language from books will, by contacts with others, unconsciously put the Alphabet to crude use, so unbelievers, because of association with others, frequently talk and act as those who recognize and accept religion's fundamentals.

But even Atheism must have a basis. In a rational being it should be a conviction reached by the use of reason or proof of some sort. But there never existed one who arrived at his unbelief in a positive way, whether by a process of

reason or experiment. One might *assume* that there is no God, and then develop this assumption into a sort of conviction by reading infidel and irreligious literature, but in the end his unfaith will still lack the support of positive proof.

Atheists might be formed machine-like by anti-Christian propaganda and by the forced exclusion from popular education of all constructive religious knowledge, as atheists are made in Russia. But not one of these unfortunate persons could prove the correctness of his atheism to another.

The farthest one can honestly drift from faith is to Agnosticism; in other words, a person might conceivably be honest in his prejudgment that religion is at best pure superstition, and therefore persist in maintaining that he does "not know." But in the light of man's strife to learn other things with certainty his reluctance to overcome his doubts concerning God and His revelation is not justified. Nine times out of ten the professed Agnostic *does not want* to know anything about God, because such knowledge begets duties. It is arrogant for man, who is a riddle even to himself, to insist on completely comprehending God.

Our countrymen have become acquainted with the staged religious discussions in which an Agnostic, Christian and Jew often participate—and which are nearly always promoted by the Agnostic for the door receipts. Although the Agnostic is usually the best of the three entertainers, he succeeds by setting up his own straw man, so easy to knock down. He disproves nothing while he expresses scorn for the mysteries of religion, ridicules Old Testament miracles, gives vent to his contempt for a God so cruel as historical books of the Old Dispensation are presumed to represent Him to be.

All the while the Agnostic sees nothing repugnant in the belief that nature itself is God. It does not occur to him that there is nothing more mysterious than nature, nothing more cruel than nature, nothing more chargeable with inequalities, sorrows and miseries. He has no explanation for the hatreds and wars and inexplicable injustices proceeding from the very hearts of men. Who would honestly aver that there is less of cruelty in organized atheism than in organized religion? In fact is not atheism itself a Creed promoted with greater zeal than theism? Error has always been more

defiant than truth, evil always more combative than good. The irreligious are the most merciless of men.

The believer is astounded at the inconsistency of the infidel, who is far more credulous than the Christian. He may turn a deaf ear to every religious pronouncement, no matter how competent the authority, but without demanding the slightest proof he eagerly devours every scientific pronouncement, no matter how obscure the authority.

It is not the men of culture and of education and of big achievements who are scoffers and professed atheists; it is rather the communist, the discontented, the men who have grievances against orderly government, and against the major part of the human race.

A recent analysis of the large volume entitled "WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA" discloses the fact that only 17 out of 29,623 prominent personages, whose names appear in the Roll of Fame, declare themselves to be infidels, atheists, free-thinkers, or agnostics.

It is the proud man of little learning who must be feared. Men of great learning are usually very humble, and realizing that they are certain of so many

facts of nature although they do not comprehend them, they find it very easy to accept supernatural revelation, by whose light many truths of nature become immeasurably clearer.

Not much less excusable is the one who is *indifferent* about the whole field of religious belief and practice. He has never been interested, and he justifies his lack of interest by what to him seems to be the futility of arriving at impregnable convictions. Does he not behold numerous religious organizations calling themselves Christian, and much disagreement among them? Were most of them not born of differences? Is their history not one of mutual strife and wrangling? Are all, therefore, or is even one likely to be of divine origin? If not, then, why is not everyone justified in maintaining an attitude of indifference?

Plausible as this view appears, sound judgment will not accept it. Does not the existence of hundreds of claimants suggest that *one* of them is likely to be a *genuinely* divine establishment and, therefore, that *one* may be a reliable teacher and guide?

If those of my readers, who are of the skeptical or indifferent class, will honest-

ly and with a free mind peruse religion's A B C's, they will not only admit the force of the same, but will agree that it is neither rational nor safe to oppose their evident implications.

*How about these postulates?*

A—In the natural order it is assumed, axiomatically, or without a demand for an explanation, that the mind should be instructed and the will trained. Now if there be a supernatural order, should it not also be axiomatically assumed that the mind should be instructed concerning it and the will cultivated in regard to it?

B—Every person acquires considerable knowledge through his senses. A limited amount of knowledge results from the exercise of one's mental powers or reason. But the greatest amount is gathered through faith—faith in one's school teacher; faith in books of history, geography, science. Surely, then, knowledge of the unseen world should be accepted by faith.

C—Thoughtful people of all centuries, observing that everything in this life is created for man, and concluding that man himself must have been created for

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a higher Being, have striven to know something more definite about Him, about the character of life after death, about the precise service exacted by a Heavenly Father desirous of rewarding.

Educated people of all times have contended that absolute certainty concerning these matters could result only from revelation, which, in turn, could be preserved unaltered only by a corporate institution, duly commissioned to teach mankind. Hence they have studiously striven to ascertain the identity of the institution and its accredited teacher.

## THE A B C's AND THE WELL-DISPOSED

In the preceding chat we pointed out how stubbornly unreasonable they are, who either scorn religion's *Alphabet*, or will not make that application of it which their best interests demand. We called attention to the indefensibly weak position of the professed atheist, of the agnostic, of the skeptic and even of the indifferentist, each of whom might be likened to the person who deliberately silences his radio lest he hear music which is permeating space incessantly.

In this instruction we would appeal to those better disposed, whether they hold membership in some form of organized religion, or belong to that large group, who seek to apply religious principles as best they know how without ecclesiastical direction. We would remind all of them that religious truths exist as objective facts whether the mind of the individual discovers them or not, just as many stars have existed as objective facts for millions of years without being discovered by the astronomer. Here are some plain A B C's of *logic*, which everyone should thoroughly assimilate:



A.—If our beliefs do not harmonize with religious facts, we are wrong, no matter how sincere we may be, just as the scientist is wrong, no matter how sincere he may be, if his teaching does not harmonize with nature's facts.

Hence do not make the serious mistake of confounding sincerity with truth. Numerous religious fanatics have been sincere, although wrong. Dentists sincerely believed a few years ago that the nerve of a tooth about to be filled must be killed, but they now teach that they were in error—to the injury of the people they served.

Did not Christ declare that we could positively *know* the truth, and that knowing it we would be free from religious error, to which no sane man should wish to remain wedded?

The mind of man should certainly *want* truth and not opinions, and the will of man should crave to be conformed to God's will. Which person possessed of self-respect prefers to be deceived, even honestly, or to be controlled by temperament or inclinations?

B.—No student could honestly reject *supernatural* religion because it contains mysteries. Knowing well that the *natural*

order contains many mysteries, he should *expect* the supernatural order to be *filled* with mysteries. As a matter of fact, the believer in God's revelation accepts far fewer mysteries than the believer in the teaching of human science or of the book of nature.

While it may be human to rebel against the acceptance of doctrines which are not clear to the mind, and against laws which impose duties and sacrifices, man actually rebels only against the doctrines and morality imposed by a Divine Teacher. He is willing to be taxed heavily for the *privilege* of acquiring human knowledge on faith, and concedes the right to civil authority to curtail his liberty by a thousand human laws.

No one presumes that he may be a law to himself in matters outside religion. He may have his own ideas about taxes, government, education, the wages his services are worth, etc. But he also knows that he is only a unit in society, and therefore must look for his well-being on earth by surrendering his personal ideas, and by yielding to authority.

Why is he not equally logical when there is question of promoting his well-being in the next world? Is he, as a

creature, less subject to his Creator, than he is to civil authority? Does he really believe that he may dictate his own terms of salvation to Almighty God, while he concedes to a human employer the right to determine the character of the service he must render and the extent of his remuneration?

Much has been written recently about the ability of human nature to save itself independently of any supernatural helps, and this teaching is being crystalized into a movement headed by Irving Babbitt, Norman Forester, Charles Potter, Paul Elmer More, Harry Emerson Fosdick. As might be expected these men are not in complete agreement, and therefore the religion of Humanism, which they advocate, is not very definite. But do you really need proof that a supernatural end cannot be reached by purely natural effort or means?

C.—We have all well learned in recent years that there is little truth to the saying "the world owes us a living." There is less truth to the seeming prevalent notion that God owes us Heaven. The most He owes us is a *chance* for Heaven conditioned on the fulfillment of very definite terms. How foolish is the one

who does not even try to discover precisely what those terms are!

### *Christ's Kingdom*

But one is a Christian not chiefly because he accepts a set of revealed truths, nor chiefly because he governs his conduct in harmony with God's Commandments. He is rather a Christian because he holds citizenship in the spiritual Kingdom established by Jesus Christ in this world nineteen hundred years ago, wherein he has access to divine means of supernatural soul culture, which alone can dispose him for his exalted supernatural destiny.

Citizenship in this Kingdom is conferred by an ordinance instituted by Christ Himself, whose effect is to impart to the soul a new and higher life (John III, 5), a life of divine grace, in perfect keeping with the soul's eternal destiny. God surely lives in a higher order than we here on earth, yet we were created to share the glory and bliss of that order (Rom. VII, 15-18; I Peter I, 9; Galat. IV, 6, 7; 1 John III, 2; 1 Peter I, 4; 2 Peter I, 4).

Does it not seem plausible enough that God's Kingdom in Heaven should be reached through a Kingdom set up by

Himself here on earth, and that a supernatural destiny should be attained by the aid of supernatural means dispensed through His Kingdom here?

Hence when we speak of the supernatural in religion we do not have the miraculous in mind, as so many people wrongly imagine. We rather mean that the religion of Christ is a part of the *Kingdom* of Christ, which is the custodian of God's revelation, the duly commissioned medium of preserving it and of teaching it with authority, the distributor of the merits of Christ to individual souls through sacramental agencies of divine institution. As man does not baptize himself, neither does he teach himself, nor dispense to himself the supernatural means of salvation.

It need not be stated that no man uncommissioned, may presume to act in the name of God. What would be the standing of one who should pretend to represent the United States Government in England without a clear commission? The teacher who instructs your child in school does not do so without a commission; he or she is engaged for the purpose by a Board vested with authority. The physician, who guides and directs

you along the way of health, may not do so uncommissioned or unauthorized. He must be properly licensed and officially recognized as competent for such guidance.

Now just as the promotion of secular education is the function of the state or local government; just as the lawyer and the physician must have a commission from authority centered in some sort of government, so evidently must the "minister of Christ and dispenser of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. IV-1) have a commission, a delegation and must be able to prove it, or who would entrust his eternal salvation to him?

You readily admit that one bereft of physical life cannot act at all; then why not admit that one bereft of supernatural life cannot act supernaturally? But man *must* act supernaturally if he would hope to reach his supernatural destiny.

Bereft of the supernatural life, a man can earn nothing but natural merit when he does good and avoids evil. By such merit he might reap a natural reward in the life to come, but not the supernatural reward for which he is destined. One who is never lifted out of the purely natural order can perform works having

a value only commensurate with that order. But through the rebirth provided for man in God's plan of salvation, all the good works one performs, and all the evil one avoids, have a supernatural value, and therefore purchase eternal bliss of the character which belongs to the very life of God—and we beg to repeat that God certainly does not live in the order of an unelevated human soul.

Too much emphasis cannot be laid on this fact, which is overlooked entirely by those who claim that they can, by their own efforts, attain unto salvation, which consists in sharing the very supernatural glory of God.

Just as a high degree of material civilization itself is not attainable outside a well-ordered state, so it would seem that a high degree of spiritual civilization would not be attainable outside a well-ordered religious system.

Religion, which is to be professed and practiced, to be taught and enforced by authority, has been understood by the people of every nation as a corporate or organized thing. It is only in these latter days that we hear of a distinction between Christianity and churchianity. It has always been assumed that the whole

human family should acknowledge, serve and worship God "with one heart and one mind," that all should be members of "one flock under one shepherd."

Such was the infant Church under the Apostles, the expanded Church after the three centuries of state persecution, the historical Christian Church from the time of her founding down to our day.

*Christ's Kingdom On Earth An  
Organized Society*

Why is it not clear to people that there should be an organized society in this world for the promotion of the eternal well-being of man, just as there is an organized society for the promotion of the temporal well-being of man?

Just as the state is constituted of a large number of individuals united for a common purpose, under a common authority, so should there be a spiritual kingdom in which the same individuals are united for the pursuit of an eternal destiny under a common authority.



## THE CLAIMANTS

Having convinced ourselves that the New Testament religion was committed to a corporate organization, known as the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, through which the truth is preached, the Almighty officially worshipped, and souls sanctified, our next step should be in the direction of identifying this "Church of the living God" (I Tim. III, 15). Being a visible institution, now centuries old, and internationally established, this should be, it seems, quite easy.

Every person outside pagan lands will think of looking for the true Church of God in *Christianity*, the totality of which most non-Catholic writers divide into three groups, namely, the Protestant, the Schismatic or Orthodox Orientals, and the Roman Catholic. Let us take a brief survey of these three groups:

### *The Protestant Group*

While there are hundreds of divisions in Protestantism itself, each division calls itself Protestant, and each is *fundamentally* of the same nature as the other. Hence we are justified, as Protestants themselves do, in treating Pro-

testantism as a whole, although our observations apply equally to each of its component parts. Protestantism, embracing some 600 different divisions in the United States and Europe, claims about 170,000,000 members.

### *The Schismatic Orientals*

The Orthodox, or Schismatic Church, consisting of several independently governed organizations in Turkey, Egypt, Palestine, Greece, Russia, Roumania, Serbia, and Bulgaria, and only sparsely represented elsewhere in the world, antedates Protestantism by 500 years; but, like Protestantism, it is an offshoot of the much older Roman Catholic Church. This group, in round numbers, counts 100,000,000 members.

### *The Roman Catholic Group*

This large organization, which is called by its own communicants "*THE CATHOLIC CHURCH*," constituted practically all of Christianity throughout most of Europe for fifteen centuries. Now comprising 400,000,000 adherents, or 130,000,000 more than all Orthodox and Protestant groups combined, it is still one and undivided. Historians of every land credit the Catholic Church with nineteen

centuries of life, and frequently refer to her as the Mother Church.

High Church Episcopalians insist that they belong to the Catholic group because, they claim, they possess Apostolic succession and valid orders the same as the Greek Schismatics. They like to consider themselves one of three branches of the great Catholic Church, of which the Roman and Greek are the other two.

The emptiness of this claim must be evident to the one who considers that a branch must be connected with and draw its life and nourishment from the trunk, and that by rejecting the very center of government and authority instituted by Christ they were guilty of schism, which necessarily cuts them completely from the trunk.

The Episcopalians, of whatever grade, are the product of a national church, while the Church of Jesus Christ is essentially international.

It is true that Episcopalians might have had valid Orders the same as the Greeks, but when those responsible for the schism not only repudiated the Mass, but actually prohibited its celebration, there was evidently no intention on the part of consecrating Bishops to con-

fer Holy Orders in the Catholic and historical sense. In fact, the ritual of ordination was so altered that it could convey no transmission of the principal powers and purposes of the priesthood.

### *Application of the A B C's*

Success in discovering the genuinely divine among the three Christian groups should attend the application of our A B C's.

A—We are now in the year 1944 after Christ, Who is believed to have died in the year 33. This means that the Church which He established is more than nineteen centuries old. Religious organizations, which cannot trace their origin back to Christ, evidently cannot have been founded by Christ, cannot have been commissioned by Christ to teach or to minister in His name. They must then be separate entities, no matter by what name they may be called, or to what extent they may borrow from the original Church, or with what zeal they may preach doctrines of that Church. Similarity and sameness are widely distinct if

B—If the existence of other Christian bodies of post Apostolic origin, whether

they belong to the Greek Schismatic or Protestant groups, be traceable to doctrinal disputes which led to rupture, then we are forced to accept one of these two conclusions: Either the divine Church had fallen into error, or those who left her and formed separate churches erred. The former conclusion is not only irrational, but blasphemous. It is worse than that, for by attacking the veracity of God it denies His very existence.

If you would resort to the Bible to guide your judgment, you could find only one answer, namely, that those who broke away from the unity of faith, are the ones who erred. Did not Christ declare that He would be with *His* Church "all days even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. XXVIII, 20)? That "the gates of hell would not prevail against it" (Matt. XVI, 18)? That "the one God could not be author of more than one faith" (Eph. IV, 4)? Christ speaks of *My* Church, *The* Church, indicating that He founded and recognized only one religious Kingdom, of which, according to St. Luke (I, 33) "there will be no end." Keep the idea of "*Kingdom*" in mind, when you think of the Church, and you will readily concede that there could not be several hundred Kingdoms of Christ

C—If you have read, and truthfully, that in some periods of her life, there was much of moral evil in the government and membership of the old Church, the only justifiable conclusion is that she needed an *interior* reformation, which, because divine, she was always capable of effecting herself without the destruction of her unity. No reformation of *doctrine* could be conceived without the absurd implications that God's teaching could be changed, and that He violated His solemn promises. The Church is human in her members, but in her character divine. Her own mission is to "reform" not only the world outside, but her own membership, which was to comprise many sinners. As God's work she cannot be reformed; the truths and mandates proceeding from God cannot be reformed. The long calendar of her saints, many of whom lived in those alleged "days of corruption," is living proof that the Old Church has been a better reformer than her later rivals. She is admittedly the most consistent champion of the moral law in the world today, and is persecuted principally because she defends it against the worldly-powerful, who would alter it.

The difference between the Protestant

and Greek Orthodox groups is more radical than that between the Greek Orthodox and Catholic bodies. Both seceded from the Mother Church, but the Greek Orthodox retained nearly all beliefs and practices of the early Church, such as Purgatory, the efficacy of prayers for the dead, the Mass, all seven sacraments, devotion to Mary and the Saints.

The founders of the original Protestant sects in the sixteenth century and those who, in turn, have since subdivided the same into several hundred parts, rejected many beliefs and practices which can be traced back, even through the Greek Church, to the days of the Apostles, to whom, and to whom alone, Christ said: "He that heareth you heareth Me" (Luke X, 16); "As the Father has sent Me I also send you" (John XX, 21); "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound also in Heaven" (Matt. XVIII, 18); "Go, teach ye all nations . . . and behold I am with you all days" (Matt. XVIII, 20).

While other reasons may be alleged for the breaking of the unity of faith, as it had been accepted and practiced from the beginning, it was actually effected through civil rulers, and for their selfish ends. The Orthodox Schismatic

Church had such a beginning; and according to a large host of reliable Protestant historians the Reformation in Germany and England would never have resulted in independent churches without the aid of the civil power. Worldly kings and princes, craving to be completely independent and to owe no allegiance, even spiritual, to another authority, backed rebellious ecclesiastics with all their might, as they later enriched themselves with the possessions of the international Church, to which they closed the national doors.

The mission of the true Church is to convert and teach *all* nations. The so-called Orthodox Churches, which, like Protestantism, had a nationalism basis, have remained dormant in the countries into which they were first introduced. They have never converted a nation. This is also true of Protestantism. While it has had missionaries at work in many countries for years, no one of its constituent parts can lay claim to the conversion of a single nation, outside of the land of its birth, where it was ultimately made the official religion by law, rather than by the free choice of the people.

The Catholic Church, on the contrary, born in Jerusalem, converted the whole



pagan Roman Empire within a few centuries, then the people of every country in Europe, then practically all the people of Central and South America, and of many islands. Hers is now the predominant religious organization in the United States, Canada, and even in the pagan missionary lands of China, India and Africa. No other religious organization can lay claim to universality with half the validity that she can, any more than they can claim unity, direct divine origin, and apostolicity.

According to the A B C's of *logic*, whereby it must be held that "possession is nine-tenths of the law;" that the Church of Jesus Christ, if founded by Himself, must be now 1900 years old; that if once divine it could not, even apart from God's promises, fall into error—according to this elementary logic, only one among the present day three large Christian groups could justify its claim to divine authorship.

If millions are not convinced by such irrefutable logic, it is because they have entertained an altogether erroneous concept of the Church.

A complete definition of the Church, as it was assumed by all Christians for

many centuries, might be stated thus  
A divine organization or Kingdom established by Christ Himself to exist visibly among all nations till the end of the world; an organism possessed of a living spokesman, representing God in the capacity of Teacher of nations, and Sanctifier of individuals; an organism, which, enjoying God's guidance, is competent to proclaim the whole set of truths taught by Christ in their original genuineness; an organism, a divinely instituted official form of public worship as well as God-given ordinances to confer supernatural life on the soul, to increase it, and even to restore it after it will have been forfeited by sin.

Loyal citizens of this Kingdom, co-extensive with mankind, cheerfully accept all her teachings and have peace, because security, in believing; they are faithful in attendance at her public worship; they make meritorious use of the means of sanctification she offers; they allow themselves to be directed in spiritual matters by her divinely constituted authority.



