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No. 1.

The Church of the
New Testament.

BY THE

BISHOP OF FOND DU LAC.

MILWAUKEE, WIS.:

THE YOUNG CHURCHMAN CO.

5 CENTS EACH: \$3.50 PER HUNDRED.

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Decidifed

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

BY THE BISHOP OF FOND DU LAC.

A GOOD many earnest Christians are asking themselves the question: What is the Church? They know they must have some better reason for belonging to a religious body than that they were brought up in it. They keenly feel the inexpediency of trying to sustain in small towns so many places of worship, and the expensive burden it imposes upon the people. They try to meet the burden, perhaps, by the union meeting-house plan, but it has not been very successful. Some may possibly feel the hindrances caused to Christ's work by these sad divisions. Touched by the Holy Spirit they ask, on their bended knees, and with their Bibles in their hands: What does God's Word say about this matter? They humbly ask for light to know God's Will, and grace and courage to embrace it. Make one such utterance to Him, dear reader, that you may be so guided; for "This," says Canon Hammond, "is a pivot question,



and lies at the root of nearly all our schisms and differences. Amongst all the questions of the hour it stands first in importance."

What is the Church?

The Church is
a Kingdom.

I. The Scripture record about it is this: The Gospel was given to man by Christ in the form of an Institution. The Gospel Christ preached was not an abstract Gospel. It was not a revelation of truth only. It was not a rule of life. It was not the giving to us of a great example. It was not a redemption effected by Calvary's sacrifice, and a mere proclamation of pardon to penitent believers, but it was "the Gospel of the Kingdom." How constantly this is recorded: "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom."¹ This is the pure Gospel, the Gospel that Christ preached. Christianity came into the world (this is the first great truth), not as a doctrine, an idea, but as an institution. It was a Kingdom.

A Visible
Society
spiritually
endowed.

II. Christ's Kingdom, we next observe, was not a kingdom of this world.² It was not like an earthly kingdom founded by a son of earth, because Christ was not of this world.³ Nevertheless it was a kingdom. And

¹ S. Matt. iv. 23. See also S. Matt. ix. 35; xxiv. 14.

² S. John xviii. 36.

³ S. John iii. 13.

like other of God's works, it was double. It had an outward and visible form, and an inward and invisible spirit. It had the outward form of a visible society, and an inward life. Its outward form would be the product of human action and Divine power. It would be both like a "net"¹ constructed by human skill, and it would be like a "great tree,"² the product of Divine power. It would also have an inward invisible spirit. It would be a new life-power sown within a man, like a "seed,"³ or like "leaven"⁴ hidden in the measures of meal. "The Kingdom of God is within you."⁵ Though visible and having outward form, it would be hidden in the world like a treasure that must be sought for;⁶ and as an invisible spiritual power to be gained by man, it was like a pearl of great price, more valuable than all man's other possessions.⁷

III. This visible Society or Kingdom, possessed of a spiritual power, Christ called His Church. "I will build," He said, "My Church."⁸ We read, "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it."⁹ It was to

It was so formed by Christ.

¹ S. Matt. xiii. 47.

² S. Matt. xiii. 31.

³ S. Mark iv. 26.

⁴ S. Luke xiii. 20.

⁵ S. Luke xvii. 21.

⁶ S. Matt. xiii. 44.

⁷ S. Matt. xiii. 45.

⁸ S. Matt. xvi. 18.

⁹ Eph. v. 25.

be a "City set on an hill."¹ A "Temple"² of "lively stones."³ "The Family"⁴ of Jesus Christ. "The household of God."⁵ It was to be a City set on a hill, not only visible, like a modern city, but like one of the ancient cities, set on high; a city surrounded by walls, a protected dwelling-place for human habitation, entrance into which was only through a guarded gateway. It was to be a Temple, one in design, purpose, structure; a unit in itself, yet composed of thousands of living souls, like stones builded together into one Temple. It was to be the Family of Jesus Christ, organically one,⁶ because sharers in His Nature,⁷ like brothers and sisters of a human family who are one as descendants of a common parentage. It was to be the household of God; for over those thus gathered into God in Christ, God would be the abiding Householder and Head. It was to be like a city, a temple, a family, a visible society filled with Divine life.⁸

It was so declared by the Holy Ghost.

IV. To this truth of the double aspect of the Church, the Holy Ghost speaking by the mouth of S. Paul bears witness. The Church

¹ S. Matt. v. 14.

² Eph. ii. 21.

³ I Peter ii. 5.

⁴ Eph. iii. 15.

⁵ Eph. ii. 19.

⁶ Gal. iii. 28; Eph. iv. 5.

⁷ II Peter i. 4.

⁸ Eph. i. 23.

is called by him "The Body of Christ."¹ Now a human body is something visible, material, substantial. The term "body," applied to the Church,² signifies, therefore, that the Church is an organized, visible community. The word body which S. Paul so applied "had come into recent use to describe the guilds of workmen, the trades union of the Roman Empire."³ They were visible and organized societies. From this word "corpus," or body, our word corporation comes. But then the Church is something more than a legal corporation. It is endowed with a spiritual life. It may therefore be called a Spiritual Body. This does not mean a body which would be like pure spirit, for this would be nonsense, and no body at all. The term, Spiritual Body, signifies a real, visible, tangible body like our Lord's Risen Body, which is called a Spiritual Body. A Spiritual Body means a real, true body,⁴ but one controlled by the Spirit. And this Body, Holy Scripture calls the "Church of God,"⁵ the "Church of the Living God."⁶

V. The Church, then, though possessed of a latent spiritual power, is a visible society founded by Jesus Christ. Any society which cannot trace its origin to Him as its Founder

Of this Church
Christ is the
Founder.

¹ I Cor. xii. 27.

² Col. i. 24.

³ Canon Hammond.

⁴ *Vide* S. Luke xxiv. 39.

⁵ Acts xx. 28.

⁶ I Tim. iii. 15.

cannot be His Church, or part of His Church. Bodies which have a man for their founder, like Calvin,¹ or Luther,² or Wesley,³ or Roger Williams,⁴ are not the Church of Christ, nor are their organizations parts of the Church of Christ. Moreover, Christ founded *one* Church. He did not found many churches. He founded only one. This is a fact patent on the face of Holy Scripture. As there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, so there is but one Church.⁵ The Bride is one.⁶ Within the Church Christians may associate themselves together for pious and religious purposes, and Christ will be in the midst of them,⁷ but the association will not be a Church. The association together of a number of Christians does not make a Church; it only makes a congregation. There are within the one organization of the Christian Church, local ones, which are in Holy Scripture called the Church in such a place: the Church of the Thessalonians,⁸ the Church at Philippi.⁹ But to be

And there is
but one
Church.

¹The founder of a system called Calvinism. A.D. 1509-1564.

²The founder of Lutheranism. A.D. 1529.

³The founder of the Methodists. A.D. 1784.

⁴The founder of the Baptists. A.D. 1639.

⁵Eph. iv. 5.

⁶Rev. xxi. 2; see also II. Cor. xi. 2; Eph. v. 32.

⁷S. Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

⁸I Thess. i. 1.

⁹Phil. i. 1.

part of the one organization Christ founded, the local one must be a subordinate organization within the Church, and not be as the sects are, independent organizations separate and apart from it. The denominations, being of late origin, and having men, however learned and eminent, for their founders, are societies separated from the original organization founded by Christ. Their members, as baptized believers, are Christians, but their organizations are mere congregations, human and man-made societies, and not the Church or part of the Church, which is the visible Body founded by Christ and endowed with invisible and spiritual life.

VI. Now let us consider a further truth. The Church, then, we have seen, is a society which has for its Founder¹ and Head² the God-Man, Jesus Christ. But unlike all human founders of religions who have died and passed away, Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and ascended, and dwells in the midst of His Church. When He ascended He did not go away to a distant star. He transported His Humanity into the Divine Glory, and a cloud hid Him from sight. But He remained, though invisible, surrounded by His Apostles

In this Church
Christ abides.

¹I Cor. iii. 11.

²Col. i. 18.

He is the
source of truth
and grace.

and disciples.¹ He was in the midst of them—the centre of the new organization, or Church He had begun—the source of life to the new creation He was forming. He dwells in the midst of this new creation, which is His Church, just as Almighty God is present in the natural creation. Just as God sustains every created thing in the material universe by His power, so does the God-Man sustain all the members of the new creation by His Life. Out from His Humanity life and grace flow to its members through the Sacraments and means of grace, which He personally, or through His Apostles, ordained. No Christian can therefore rightly or for his soul's good, neglect Confirmation or the Eucharist or any other means of grace. If he does, he does two bad things—he wrongs Christ and injures himself. Christ did not leave any means of grace His followers do not need.

He acts
through His
Ministers.

VII. The Church which Christ founded, He, as its High Priest, Prophet and King, directs and administers. He did this primarily by His Apostles, whom He made sharers in His prophetic,² priestly³ and ruling powers,⁴ and subsequently by others whom the Apostles gathered by prayer and laying

¹ S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

² S. Matt. x. 7.

³ S. Luke xxii. 19.

⁴ S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

on of hands, into fellowship with themselves.¹ In this way they were made partakers in different degrees in the Apostles prerogatives and office, and became ministers of Christ. Unless persons have been so gathered into the Apostolic fellowship by the Apostles or the Bishops who now represent them they are not rightly ordained.² They have no share in the Apostolic commission, they are not authorized ministers of Christ, through whom, as His agents or representatives, He has pledged Himself to act.³ They may be good persons, but they are not his legal ambassadors. Here we note a difference between the Law and the Gospel. Under the Law, the Prophets,⁴ the Priests,⁵ and the Kings,⁶ were representatives of Jehovah, the Invisible God. But the Christian ministry does not represent the Invisible God. The Christian minister is not an ambassador from the Court of Heaven. He is an ambassador of the Incarnate God, of God made visible, of the Man Christ Jesus. He must therefore receive his commission either directly from Him, as the Apostles did⁷ and as S. Paul⁸ did to whom He appeared,

Appointed by Himself.

Or those He commissioned to appoint.

¹ II Tim. i. 6.

² Acts i. 26.

³ Gal. i. 7, 8, 19.

⁴ Heb. i. 1.

⁵ Heb. v. 4.

⁶ I Sam. xvi. 13.

⁷ S. John xx. 22.

⁸ Gal. i. 1, 12.

or through the Apostles¹ whom alone He authorized to act in His name, and with whom He promised to be to the world's end.²

By Baptism
Christ makes
us members of
His Church.

VIII. The Church is a visible Society like a city set on a hill, and the gate through which we enter into it, is Baptism.³ It is a temple of living stones, and we are by Baptism made a part of it. It is the family of Jesus Christ, and we are made His when we are taken into it by Baptism. We are made His members, by being gathered into union with Him, who unseen, is yet in the midst of His Church. By Baptism the passive infant and the believing and penitent adult (who thereby puts himself in the same receptive condition as the little child) receive a seminal or seed principle of new life.⁴ This gift is bestowed by the action of the Holy Spirit.⁵ Our humanity is quickened by contact with the Humanity of Christ. We are made members of Him,⁶ and so become united to one another⁷—this makes all the baptized, brothers and sisters. Is not this that “generation”⁸ which shall not pass away until all be fulfilled; for it is written, His “seed”⁹ shall be counted as a generation? Persons not baptized, however they may pro-

¹ Acts i. 26; vi. 6.

² S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

³ S. John iii. 3-5.

⁴ I S. Peter i. 23.

⁵ Acts xix. 3; Titus iii. 5.

⁶ I Cor. vi. 15.

⁷ I Cor. xii. 12, 27; S.

Matt. xxiii. 8.

⁸ S. Luke xxi. 32.

⁹ Psalm xxii. 30.

fess to take Christ for their example, are not yet Christians. To be a Christian you must do something more than trust in Him, or follow Him, or take Him for your example.¹ You must be a member of Jesus Christ; and Baptism is the only way of becoming a member of Him. To be a member means you must be a part of Him, as really as the hand is part of the body.

IX. Now let us consider the difference between Baptism and Conversion. The Church requires both. The Church is known in Holy Scripture as a society of the "elect,"² or those "called."³ The word Church means *the called*. We are called by Holy Baptism. By it also the seed of the Christ-life is implanted within us, but without our coöperation, it lies dormant. It becomes active at our conversion. Then the soul becomes conscious of its regenerate condition. For in the spiritual, as in the natural order, life precedes consciousness. The gift comes before the knowledge of it. So the regenerating gift in Holy Baptism is one thing, and conversion is another. Both are equally necessary. Our Lord says: "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."⁴

The Baptismal gift must be corresponded with.

¹ Gal. iii. 27; S. John xiv. 15. ⁴ S. John iii. 3.

² Col. iii. 12; I Pet. v. 13.

³ I Cor. i. 26; II Tim, i. 9.

And with equal emphasis He declares, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."¹ Consequently, if baptized in infancy, you must be converted subsequently.² If, as an adult you have been converted, you must subsequently be baptized.³ But conversion may be a longer or a shorter process—gradual or instantaneous—calm or convulsed. If baptized in infancy, by your conversion you will come to realize your regenerate condition. If, as an adult you have been converted before Baptism, you will by your conversion realize indeed Christ's marvellous mercy in accepting you; but when baptized you will realize that you are by a new Divine gift UNITED to Him also. Note, you were God's child by your birth and creation.⁴ "We are His offspring." Though deserving of punishment as "children of wrath," we are nevertheless by the act of creation His children. Baptism does not proclaim that fact. It is not like the coronation of a king, who is a king by descent and before he is crowned. By creation we are all God's children,⁵ but by Baptism we become God's child-

¹S. Matt. xviii. 3.

²Acts viii. 13. Simon Magus, an example of adult Baptism *before* Conversion.

³Acts ix. 17, 18. S. Paul, an example of Baptism *after* Conversion. ⁴Mal. ii. 10. ⁵Acts xvii. 28.

ren¹ by adoption and grace. We become by Baptism members of the God-Man, Jesus Christ, who is the Second Adam and the Head of the new Creation.

X. It is often objected that Christians are inconsistent. Their faults are fruitful topics for unbelievers. Persons say that they do not see that Baptism does any good. Truly the "seed" sown in Baptism will perish if it is not properly cared for. So the next truth we want to keep in mind is, that the Church into which by Baptism we are called, is an educational society. It is a society wherein by Baptism the imperfect, though converted, are gathered for their spiritual training and development. But it is a school wherein many by neglect of the means of grace fail of attaining their end. Thus we learn this other truth about the Church. The Church has within her the tares and the wheat.² The wise and the foolish virgins.³ The bad and the good fish.⁴ It is no reproach to her that this is so, for her mission is an educational one. She has her glorious martyrs, confessors, saints, her Religious Orders and her class of perfection. But still many walk carelessly. Some are like the Pharisees.⁵ Some are worldly Herodians.⁶

The Church is therefore an educational society.

With bad and good in it.

¹ Gal. iii. 27; *vide* Isa. 9, 6.

² S. Matt. xiii. 24.

³ S. Matt. xxv. 1.

⁴ S. Matt. xii. 47.

⁵ S. Matt. xxii.

⁶ S. Matt. xxii. 16.

Many are called by Baptism, but few chosen.¹ Only those who persevere unto the end will be saved.² Are you, dear reader, if a Churchman, earnestly striving after a closer walk with God? Do you mortify your body,³ discipline your soul,⁴ give freely of your substance,⁵ examine your conscience daily,⁶ love your enemies?⁷ Are you striving after perfection and using all the means of grace the Church offers you? Are the interests of Jesus and His Church your dominant ones, and do you love Him with all your heart? If you are a Christian, let reform begin with yourself.⁸ When Gideon set out to deliver Israel from idolatry, first of all went down the idols in his father's house.⁹ If you are not a Churchman, judge not of the Church by the lives of the careless and indifferent, but by the lives of the best. That consideration converted a great French infidel, and may convert you.

The Church
is a spiritual
organism.

XI. The Church is thus a visible society, an educational society, and it is something more, it is a Divine organization; we say this, for it has Christ the God-Man for its founder. And it is something more than an organization even; it is an organism. You know the difference. An organization man

¹ S. Matt. xx. 16. ⁴ S. Luke xxi. 19. ⁷ S. Matt. v. 44.

² S. Matt. x. 22. ⁵ Acts xx. 35. ⁸ S. Luke xv. 18.

³ I Cor. ix. 27. ⁶ II Cor. xiii. 5. ⁹ Judges vi. 25-27.

may make. An organism is something only God can make. There is all the difference between the two, as between a steam engine and a tree. An organism is something which has life in itself. The Holy Ghost, the Life Giver, dwells in the Church.¹ He came down at Pentecost,² and has dwelt in her ever since. This makes the Church a living organism. It is a spiritual organism having a reproductive power. It is the effectual instrumentality for the salvation and perfection of man. It is the organism through which Christ's Life and Light come to us. We are saved by the Church, or, rather, Christ saves us through the Church.³ Thus we must be in it, a living stone of a living temple.

We all need not only to be once converted but to be twice converted. We must be converted to Christ. He is the foundation. We must turn away from the world, and turn with all our heart to Him.⁴ We must surrender ourselves entirely to Him.⁵ Surrender our mind to His mind, to believe what He says because He says it,⁶ our heart to Him, to hate all that He hates and love all He loves,⁷ our will to Him, that He may have His way and Will with us, in all things.⁸ In

And we
need two
conversions.

¹ S. John xiv. 16. ⁴ S. Mark x. 21. ⁷ S. Matt. xi. 29;

² Acts ii. 1, 4. ⁵ Acts ix. 6. Ps. lxxxvi. 11.

³ Acts ii. 47. ⁶ II Cor. x. 5. ⁸ S. Matt. xxvi. 39.

this way will He be to us our Saviour, from the world, and self, and sin.

But, if we would fully know His will and have the grace to fulfil it, we must be also converted to the Church. To the Church He founded. The one organization founded at Pentecost. The Church He bought with His own precious Blood is the Church He loved. The Church which is the organ of His Life and Light. The Church must come to be our Spiritual Mother as Christ is our Saviour. We need both conversions. They must both be the work of the Holy Spirit. The man who has only experienced one of them is only a half converted man.

Dear reader, which are you?

The Church
came into
being at
Pentecost.

XII. Let us now see when and how the Christian Church came into existence. The Church, or Spiritual Organism in which by Baptism we are new born to God, and which should be our Spiritual Mother, Christ began to form during His visible ministry. The Gospels only tell us of the beginnings of Christ's work in the formation of His Church.¹ Many persons think they can find the whole of Christ's revelation, in the Gospels. But this is not so. They only tell how Christ began to get disciples round about Him, and began

¹ Acts i. 1.

to form His Church. He had to lead them on little by little. There was a great deal He did not tell even the Apostles during His public ministry. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."¹ Neither could they understand His words and actions fully, till after they received the Holy Ghost.² Everything was inchoate and incomplete during Christ's ministry. The Church was in process of construction.

The Church was not completed and made a living, spiritual organism, till the day of Pentecost.³ Pentecost is the birthday of the Christian Church. It can no more be repeated than the birthday of Christ can be repeated. On the day of Pentecost the Holy Ghost came down, and came down once for all to dwell in the Church. Then the Church, which is Christ's Mystical Body, was born. It was complete in its structure, with Christ for its Head, and the Holy Ghost for its Heart, and the Apostolic priesthood for its organs of utterance and action. It was complete in its structure, and endowed with life, as an infant is complete in body and soul though it is to grow in strength and size.

¹ S. John xvi. 12.

² S. Luke xviii. 34; S. John xiv. 26.

³ Acts i. 4.

The four
marks of the
Church.

XIII. The Church had four distinctive marks upon it. It was One,¹ Holy,² Catholic,³ and Apostolic.⁴ If these marks are not to be found on any religious society calling itself Christian, it is a further proof that it is not a portion of the Church of Jesus Christ. Consider now these four marks. These are some of the things they signify: the Church of Christ is a Society that must be Apostolic in its government, Catholic in its doctrine, Holy in its transforming power, and One.

Apostolic.

She must be Apostolic. Her ministry must be gathered, by prayer and laying-on-of-hands, into union with the Apostles and their successors the Bishops, and commissioned by them. They are thus made Christ's Ambassadors, and their official acts bind Him,⁵ for He acts through them. They are Christ's stewards⁶ and He distributes His Sacramental gifts by them.

Catholic.

The Church must be Catholic, or Universal, because she endures throughout all ages,⁷ teaches all nations,⁸ and her doctrines (all such as she declares essential) must bear the

¹S. John xvii. 21; Eph. iv. 3-13.

²S. John xvii. 17; Rom. xi. 16.

³S. Matt. xxviii. 19; I Tim. ii. 4.

⁴Acts ii. 42.

⁷S. Matt. xvi. 18.

⁵S. Matt. xviii. 18.

⁸S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

⁶I Cor. iv. 1.

test of Catholicity. They must be doctrines put forth or believed in as essential, by the whole and undivided Church, not by any one part, Latin, or Eastern, or Anglican. They must bear the threefold test of Catholicity, being held from the beginning,¹ and by all the Church throughout the world,² and must be corroborated by Holy Scripture.³

The Church must be Holy.⁴ She is Holy, **Holy.** for the Holy Ghost came down to dwell within her at Pentecost, and abides in her to this day. Holy, because the opportunity of holiness for all her members, is secured within her by the preservation of the means of grace: of Orders,⁵ Confirmation,⁶ Baptism,⁷ Absolution,⁸ the Holy Eucharist,⁹ Holy Matrimony,¹⁰ Visitation of the Sick.¹¹ Her holiness is borne witness to by her Religious Orders, her Martyrs, Bishops and Missionaries, and she is the Mother of Saints.

She is One, as having One Head, Jesus **One.** Christ. Her Oneness is secured by the Sacramental union of all her members in Him, her living and ever present Head.¹² For this unity

¹ Jude 3.

² I Cor. iv. 17.

³ S. John v. 39; I Thes. v. 21.

⁴ Eph. v. 27.

⁵ S. John xx. 22.

⁶ Acts viii. 17.

⁷ S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

⁸ S. John xx. 23.

⁹ I Cor. xi. 23-26.

¹⁰ Eph. v. 31, 32.

¹¹ S. James v. 14.

¹² Eph. iv. 25; v. 23.

Christ prayed when He prayed that His members might be one, as He and the Father were One.¹ This prayer has been answered, for being made members of Christ, we are one by the participation in a nature common to us all. This is that indestructable unity which the gates of hell cannot prevail against.²

Union is, however, something different from unity, and union may be violated without unity being broken. A family may be a dis-united family and yet is but one family. The Church ought to be outwardly united. Her outward union among her members is provided for by the law which forbids the imposition of any uncatholic or unscriptural doctrine as a term of communion. Her discipline is preserved by subordination of her members in things spiritual to the Canons of the Church, and to the Bishop in each Diocese as Christ's representative.³ The discipline of the Bishops is guarded by Canon Law and their subordination to the solidarity of the Episcopate, apart from which they cannot declare doctrines authoritatively, and in whose name they administer discipline.

XIV. The Anglican Church is an integral part of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. It is not like one of the Sects. It is

The Anglican Church has these four marks.

¹ S. John xvii. 21. ² S. Matt. xvi. 18. ³ II Cor. v. 20.

not a society founded by man. It is connected with the Apostolic Order. The Church of Christ founded at Jerusalem, having there its three orders of ministry and Sacraments, extended itself in early times to the British Isles. Thus it is part of the organization Christ founded. It is a branch of the Vine of which Christ said: "I am the Vine, and ye," including Peter (as only one) "are the branches."¹ It is built on the Rock² which Holy Scripture declares is Christ,³ and upon which Peter was to be laid as one of the twelve foundation stones.⁴ The continuity of the Churches organization was never broken. At the time of the Reformation, it did not break away from the other Churches. Canon XXX. declares: "So far was it from the purpose of the Church of England to forsake and reject the Churches of Italy, France, Spain, Germany," it "only departed from them in those particular points wherein they were fallen both from themselves in their ancient integrity and from the Apostolical Churches which were their first founders." It was because the Church of England would not have what was unscriptural and uncatholic, the Roman Church broke away from it.⁵ As Mr. Gladstone says: "The

¹ S. John xv. 5.

² S. Matt. xvi. 18.

³ I Cor. x. 4.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 14; Eph. ii. 20.

⁵ In 1570.

Church of England is the same Church that existed from the beginning. There was no new Church created in the reign of Henry VIII." And now this Anglican Church possessed of an Apostolic ministry extends throughout the world.

It holds the ancient faith as contained in the ancient Creeds and as declared by the consent of Christendom, but does not force on the laity a human-made scheme of doctrine. The Church teaches with authority but allows diversity of opinions in things unessential. It preserves all the means of grace, as the Sects unfortunately do not. It is full of missionary zeal for Christ. It points to the highest sanctity, and develops saints. It is, however, a field where are the tares and wheat, where are the careless and zealous, the beginners and proficients, the spiritual and the worldly. Within the Church are schools of opinion, like the High and Low—which are complementary one to the other. They are like the two sides of a man's face, and as needful for its perfection. They are like the waves which look divided, but are one as the sea. It is very easy to find points to criticise, but the sober wisdom of the Church, the dignity of her worship, and her real worth, Christians separated from her have often acknowledged.

Even if her claims are exaggerated, yet she is not a wicked Church, who would say that? She does not force anyone to accept what the Bible does not warrant, or antiquity does not witness to. If so, may she not ask Non-Conformists in England and their spiritual descendants in this country, Was it right to leave her? Was it right for Christians to break away from their Mother, and set up societies of their own manufacture? This is what the Methodists,¹ Presbyterians,² Congregationalists,³ Baptists⁴ and others have done. It is wise in our day to keep up these divisions and this multiplicity of Sect life?⁵ Is it well for Christians thus to hinder the more effectual work of the Holy Spirit? It is this which grieves Christ and hinders His work, which makes infidels sneer, which places such a heavy burden on the laity to support the gospel. The continuance of divisions by Sect-building is not the way to union. The way to union and to bring God's blessing, is to unite and return to the Church He founded.

The appeal of
the Anglican
Church.

¹ Founded by John Wesley, 1748.

² Founded by John Knox, 1520-60.

³ Founded by Robert Brown, 1583.

⁴ Founded by Roger Williams, 1639.

⁵ From statistics in *The World Almanac* (N. Y.) it may be seen that there are 138 sects, and sect divisions, among Protestant Christians in this country.

Objections.

Too much like
Rome.

XV. Let us now consider some popular objections to the Church. It is sometimes said you are too much like the Roman Church. Now we differ from Rome in five particulars. In Church government, in our rule of faith, in doctrine, in Church discipline, and worship. In Church government we repudiate the claim of the Pope to supremacy,¹ and to be the sole source of jurisdiction, and that to be in communion with the Roman See is the test of orthodoxy. In respect of our rule of faith, we believe in the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church as the appointed guardian and teacher of the Faith once for all delivered,² verified as it is by Holy Scripture, safe-guarded by the Creeds, witnessed by the Sacraments; but we deny that the Pope's dogmatic utterances apart from any Council and by virtue of his supposed infallibility are to be received and believed under peril of damnation. In regard to doctrine we accept all the doctrines, believe in all the means of grace, the Church in her Œcumenical Councils has ever declared and which are witnessed to by the common consent of Christendom;³ but we reject those modern additions to the Faith, which were not put forth by Œcumenical authority and cannot be proved by the Holy Scriptures and

¹ Gal. ii. 11.

² Jude 3.

³ S. Matt. xviii. 17.

the Fathers—*viz.*, the infallibility of the Pope, or the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. And there are other popular Roman teachings we do not hold, such as the penal fires of purgatory and the system of indulgences. In the matter of Church discipline, we allow of the marriage of the clergy and do not make confession to a Priest obligatory before communion. In our worship we continue the Apostolic order of having the service in a tongue understood by the people and according to the command of the Lord and the practice of the undivided and ancient Church give the Blessed Sacrament in both kinds to the people. And in all these matters the Anglican Church is one with the Orthodox Russian and Eastern Churches in opposition to Rome.

XVI. But it is said, if you are thus radically different from Rome, why do your clergy wear cassocks and surplices and stoles and other vestments just as the Roman Priests do, and why do you often adorn your Altars with flowers and have on it a cross and sometimes lights? We have these things because they are Scriptural and ancient, are part of our Church heritage and show our continuity with the past. These things, differing of course somewhat with changing fashions, have always been in the Church of Christ

You look like Rome.

since the time our Lord took S. John up into heaven and showed him the pattern of the Church's worship.¹

But are you not going to Rome? Have not a number of persons joined that Church? Yes. There is always some drift-wood, going one way and another. But, as a matter of fact, no persons of any marked distinction and learning have gone from us to the Church of Rome for a great many years, while on the continent of Europe, a large number of very learned priests have left Rome and taken up our position towards her, and in America more have come to us than have gone to them. Instead of our tendency being towards Rome it is just the reverse. We are, as the Sects cannot be, a bulwark against Rome. We have the Catholic Faith without Rome's additions. We preserve to the Laity their rights as Rome does not. We are a harbor of refuge for a number of dissatisfied Romans, who desire to be Americans and Catholics, but are too intelligent to be longer papists. Should our Church ever become, what it ought to become, in holiness and worship, it would attract a large number of Romans within its fold.

Objection that she is worldly.

XVII. Another objection is this: Sectarians say, sometimes, that the Church is world-

¹ Rev. i. 1.

ly—because it does not forbid its members to dance or play cards. Now the Church has her own discipline and standard of life set forth in the Prayer Book, which involves far greater self-denial. But she does not forbid these particular things because we are not now under the law, but under the Gospel.¹ And under the Gospel Christ gives us principles to act on, and leaves the individual to apply them, each for himself. The great principle is, that the evil world is to each man whatever he finds comes in between his soul and God, and separates them. But each man must apply that principle conscientiously for himself.

“But you Church people are so illiberal,” Illiberal. the sects say. “We are willing to recognize you as Christians, but you do not recognize us. We are willing to recognize your clergy, but you do not recognize ours.” Now, dear friends, you make a huge mistake. We do recognize every baptized believer as a Christian, though we think he is depriving himself of many means of Grace—Confirmation² and others, by remaining where he is. And about your ministers, we do recognize them to be, what they themselves claim to be. They claim to be Christian preachers—and so they are. But they do not claim to be part of the

¹ Gal. v. 1; Rom. xiv.

² Acts viii. 17, xiv. 6.

threefold Order of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, which have existed from Apostolic times, or to have the powers of a Priest. Is it illiberal, then, to deny these ministers to be what they themselves repudiate?

Close
Communion.

“But if you Church people acknowledge that we are Christians, why do you forbid us to receive Communion in your Churches?” We do not. We should be glad if you came always and received the Sacrament from us, and were prepared for it by previously receiving the Gift of the Holy Ghost in Confirmation. But we should do a harm to your souls if we allowed you to come, and did not let you know that there is a difference between your communion and ours. Yours is only a memorial service—this is what you claim it to be, and we admit that it is so. It is a memorial of a past event—the death of Christ. In ours, by the Priest’s consecration of the elements, and the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is really and truly present. We receive His Body and Blood.¹ To come and not discern that Body would do you a great harm.² It is out of love to you that we would have you prepare by receiving Confirmation. Is that illiberal? We have received great spiritual gifts from Christ, and we must

¹ S. Matt. xxvi. 26-29.

² I Cor. xi. 27.

guard them for His sake and yours. "Liberal" means "to make free with." A man may make free with what belongs to him. But the ministry and faith and the Sacraments do not belong to us. They belong to Christ, and we cannot make free with what is not our own.

But again—"I do not like your forms and ceremonies." Well, then, why are you perpetually copying them? Once you said, that it was wrong to have handsome churches, stained glass windows; that organs were a contrivance of Satan; chanting was rank popery; forms of every kind of worship was a quenching of the Spirit. Now you have them all in abundance. You see that your old Mother Church has been right all along. Maybe she is right in other matters which you now object to. You once thought it wrong to have a form of prayer—as not praying with the Spirit. Then some wise teacher among you noticed that S. Paul said we must "sing," as well as pray, with the understanding and spirit.¹ Well, how could we sing without a hymn book or form, so that all could unite in the singing? And how could there be united prayer unless there was a form of prayer, so all could unite in the praying? For either those who listen to an

Ritual and
Ceremony.

¹I Cor. xiv. 15.

extemporaneous prayer of their minister, just listen to him and so do not pray at all, or they adopt his words and so use a given form of prayer. If, dear friend, you are thus getting over some of your prejudices, why not get over all of them?

The sin of
schism.

XVIII. Schism is a sin.¹ It is only another form of lawlessness. It is only another manifestation of disobedience and self-will. It is man's saying "my way is better than Christ's way." "Where one Church has had exclusive sway," it is argued, "that Church has invariably become worldly and corrupt." Was the Church in the Apostles' days when it was one, worldly and corrupt? "Competition," it is said, "is as necessary in Church work as in business." And so there must be rival sects, one saying "I am of Luther," and "I am of Wesley," and "I of Calvin," and "I of Campbell," and "I of Channing," and "I of Joe Smith." "Or," it is claimed, "the Church that does not reach out in the present day will not grow." Was not the united Church aggressive when the great missionaries in early times brought whole nations to Christ? Must we not, then, in the Master's interests say again, that schism is a sin? What the human heart rebels against is submission.

¹ I Cor, xii. 25.

But what brings joy and peace unspeakable, is heart surrender to Christ as our Saviour, and to His Church as the organ in which He lives, and through which He acts.

XVII. But lastly it may be said by dissenters: "Why do not you Episcopalians if you want union for Christ's sake, join Rome, or come to us?" One reason is, we did not go out from either of you; you in England went out from us, and we ask you to come home. And another reason is:—We can give Romans all they have, and sectarians something more than they have; but you cannot give us any divine and gospel gift that we do not now possess.

Why unite
with the
Church?

We make no hard terms of Communion. We say: Here is the ancient order of Church government, and the Sacraments, and the ancient Creeds. Accept them, and then you can hold your own private opinion in things unessential. Such opinions should not separate Christians, and make them break up into expensive and burdensome sects. If a number of Methodist brethren come to the Church and want to keep up their class meetings—why not? They are at liberty to do so. A good Congregationalist believes in conversion. Thank God he does—so does the Church, and would have all her children

know what vital piety is. A Baptist wants to be immersed. Why should that lead to a sect, and schism? The Church provides for that mode of administering Baptism to any who so desire. A Presbyterian believes himself to be one of the predestinated—well, so long as it is a comfort to him and does not separate him from another, who, like S. Paul, fears that he may be a castaway,¹ let him hold his own opinion. High and Low Churchmen kneel at the same altar, and emphasize different aspects of the same truth, but are brethren of one household. Why should these schismatic and expensive separate organizations continue, and so grieve Christ and hinder His work? What, reader, God asks you, are you going to do? What prejudice, and feeling, and old association will you not lay as an offering at his feet?

Conclusion.

XVIII. Place again before you the fact that Christ created a spiritual organism which is His Church. It is the New Creation.² It is being evolved out of the old order of nature. It is to endure for Eternity. It is the sphere of light and bliss and progressive union with the Divine Life. This organism, One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, is in three different

¹ I Cor. ix. 27.

² II Cor. v. 17.

conditions. It is militant here on earth.¹ It is progressive in its condition of rest and purification.² It is reigning in heaven with Christ.³ The spiritual organism has for its Head Christ, who is not separate from her but dwells in His Church, and who manifests Himself in glory to His Saints in Paradise, and to us on earth under the sacramental veils which hide that glory in the Blessed Eucharist. Christ is thus the living and ever-present Head of His Church, which is His Mystical Body and which will be His future Bride.

Lift your heart above the strife of tongues, and let the vision of this wonderful organism become real to you, and live in it. It is not by living in the natural order your nature will attain its happiness. It is not simply by believing and trusting in Christ you attain perfection. It is by becoming a stone of the Living Temple, a member of the Church He founded. Christ and the Holy Spirit dwell within it. Enter it, if you do not now belong to it; if you do, be a more true, loving, devoted Churchman.

¹ I Tim. vi. 12.

³ Rev. xiv. 5.

² Philip. i. 6; I S. John iii. 2.

