

stop until it has effected its end? Why should not the *voluntas antecedens* and the *voluntas consequens* ultimately coincide? There is time enough for it to run its course, and as the first may be last, so the last may gain an entrance into the vineyard and receive a reward. Then will come the end, when God will be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 28). So Schleiermacher reasons. His Lutheran disciple is more cautious. Admitting that grace may be resisted unto the end, that a state may supervene analogous to that of those beings who say, 'Evil, be thou my good,' Martensen can only express a hope that no human being will in fact pass into such a state; to the detriment, however, of the consistency of his theory. Since the assumptions here involved belong to the topic of Eschatology rather than to the present subject, it will be expedient to postpone the further consideration of them until that topic comes under discussion. If the restoration of all fallen creatures is the ultimate issue of redemption, it is obvious that election can only mean their earlier or later entrance into the kingdom of God.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS¹

THE visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in the which the pure Word of God is preached and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite, to the same' (Art. xix.). 'Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace and God's goodwill towards us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in Him. There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. Those five commonly called sacraments—that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction—are not to be counted for sacraments of the Gospel. . . . The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same have they a wholesome effect

¹ It is well known that this clause of the Apostles' Creed is of later date than the rest (see Pearson, note, vol. ii., p. 473. Oxford Edit., 1833), and that it has been variously interpreted. By Luther and the earlier Reformers it was taken to be a definition of what the 'holy Catholic Church' is—viz., a society or congregation of saints. Thus Conf. Augs.: 'Item docent, quod una sancta ecclesia perpetuo mansura sit. Est autem ecclesia congregatio sanctorum.' The word *κοινωνία* will hardly bear this meaning; it means properly participation of some common benefit. But if the emphasis is laid on the word 'saints,' the clause may be understood as such a definition or description. 'What is the holy Catholic Church? Saints, or a communion of saints who have fellowship in certain particulars with each other.' In this sense it forms the heading of this part of the volume.

or operation' (Art. xxv.). 'Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the ministrations of the Word and sacraments, yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by His permission and authority, we may use their ministry both in hearing the Word of God and in the receiving of the sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness' (Art. xxvi.). 'Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer to God. The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable to the institution of Christ (Art. xxvii.). 'The supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have one to another, but rather it is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; inasmuch as to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ, and likewise the cup is a partaking of the blood of Christ. Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine) in the supper of the Lord cannot be proved by holy writ, and is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given rise to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner, and the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper is faith' (Art. xxviii.). 'The wicked and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth the sacrament, yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ' (Art. xxix.). 'The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the laity' (Art. xxx.). 'The sacrifice of masses, in the which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of sins or guilt, were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits' (Art. xxxi.). 'The Bp. of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England.' 'It is lawful for Christian men, at the command of the magistrate, to serve in the wars' (Art. xxxvii.). 'Christian religion doth not prohibit but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth' (Art. xxxix.). 'Docent quod una sancta ecclesia perpetuo mansura sit. Est autem ecclesia congregatio sanctorum, in qua evangelium recte docetur, et recte administrantur sacramenta. . . . Quamquam ecclesia proprie sit congregatio sanctorum et vere credentium, tamen in hac vita multi hypocritæ et mali admixti sunt' (Conf. Aug., vii., viii.). 'Ecclesia non est tantum societas externarum rerum et rituum, sicut aliæ politiæ, sed *principaliter* est societas fidei et Spiritus S. in cordibus' (Apol. Conf., c. iv. 5). 'Hæc ecclesia sola dicitur corpus Christi quod Christus Spiritu suo renovat, sanctificat, et gubernat' (*Ibid.*). 'Sic definit ecclesiam et articulus in symbolo, qui jubet nos credere quod sit *sancta* Catholica ecclesia. Impii vero non sunt sancti' (*Ibid.*). 'Ecclesia non potest ullum aliud habere caput quam Christum. Nam ut ecclesia est corpus spirituale, ita caput habeat sibi congruens spirituale utique oportet' (Conf. Helv., Expos. Simp., c. 17). 'Unde et ecclesia invisibilis appellari potest, non quod homines sint invisibiles ex quibus ecclesia colligitur, sed quod oculis nostris absconsa, Deo autem soli nota, judicium humanum sæpe subterfugiat' (*Ibid.*). 'De baptismo docent quod sit necessarius salutis, quodque per baptismum offeratur gratia Dei' (Conf. Aug., ix.). 'Baptismus nihil est aliud quam verbum Dei cum mersione in aquam secundum ipsius institutionem et mandatum' (Art. Smal., v.). 'In baptismo signum est elementum aquæ ablutioque illa visibilis quæ fit per ministrum. Res autem significata est regeneratio vel ablutio a peccatis' (Expos. Simp., xix.). 'De cœna Domini docent quod corpus et sanguis Christi vere adsint et distribuuntur vescentibus in cœna Domini' (Conf. Aug., x.). 'In cœna Domini signum est panis et vinum sumptum ex communi usu cibi et potus, res autem significata est ipsum traditum Domini corpus. et sanguis ejus effusus pro nobis, vel communio corporis et sanguinis

Domini' (Expos. Simp., xix.). 'Vera et Christiana est excommunicatio quæ manifestos et obstinatos peccatores non admittit ad sacramentum et communionem ecclesiæ donec emendentur et scelera vitent' (Art. Smal., ix.).

THE CHURCH

That Christ came into the world not only to reveal certain truths, or to establish an unseen fellowship between Himself and the believer, but to found, in the words of Butler, 'a visible church,' or rather visible churches, 'to be the repository of the oracles of God; to hold up the light of revelation in aid to that of nature, and propagate it throughout all generations to the end of the world,'¹ lies on the surface of Scripture. Butler might have added, to satisfy the social instincts of human nature, and to promote mutual edification by the exercise of discipline, and of the various spiritual gifts of which the Holy Ghost is the Author. No complete form of ecclesiastical organization can be traced to Christ Himself; but the foundations were laid by Him. He appointed two visible ordinances, one to mark the admission of converts into the Christian society; the other their continuance therein; and by anticipation He committed to the society (that is, to each one) the powers of 'binding or loosing' (whether by these terms we are to understand the promulgation of the Gospel, or framing and abrogating ecclesiastical regulations), with the power of discipline (Matt. xviii. 15-18). He attached a special blessing to social prayer (*Ibid.*, 19-20). After His departure from the world, the visible church, in the persons of the Apostles and first Christians, came into actual existence. They that received the message of salvation were baptized; 'they continued steadfastly' under the Apostles' teaching, in fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayer (Acts ii. 41-42); and thenceforth it was the rule of the Divine administration to 'add to the church the saved' (*Ibid.*, 47). Every accession to converts was to an already existing body, and through the agency of that body; and the Holy Ghost who united each believer to Christ united him at the same time to the community of those who had already been made temples of the Holy Ghost.

§ 76. DEFINITION

The name which a Christian society usually bears in the New Testament is ἐκκλησία, which is the LXX. translation of the Hebrew word ^{לְקָהֳל}, 'the congregation' of Israel, that is, of the whole elect nation, not of any portion thereof. In Greek authors ἐκκλησία signifies a popular assembly convened by authority (Acts xix. 39), as distinguished from the βούλη, or senate. It is needless to say that

¹ Anal., P. ii., c. i.

in the New Testament it never means the building in which Christians assembled for worship. The term was adopted partly as expressing the fact that Christians are the called—called out of a sinful world; and partly to distinguish the Church from the Jewish synagogue. The latter term is occasionally used for the Church (Jas. ii. 2), but it gradually fell into disuse. Another name is founded on the transfer of the idea of the Jewish temple to a Christian application; Christians are individually spiritual stones in the new temple, and collectively the new temple itself in which God dwells (1 Pet. ii. 4-6). Hence the term *κυριακὸν*, or Lord's house, with its derivatives, church, kirk, kirche, etc. The nature and constitution of the Christian Church has now to be considered; and in the first place we have to ask, In what does its essential being consist, what is its true idea? Or in other words, how are we to define it?

The records of revealed religion, which alone are the sources of dogmatic theology, present us with two forms of ecclesiastical organization, intimately connected with each other, and yet distinct—the Mosaic and the Christian—the former standing to the latter in the relation of prophecy to fulfilment, but, as a religious institute, founded on a different principle. What God has thus joined together we may not separate; but we may and must distinguish between them, if the specific character of either is to be ascertained. What the Christian Church is in its idea cannot be understood without some remarks on its predecessor; on its mode of operation, its sanctions, its objects, and its results; what it naturally led to, and how it naturally passed into its fulfilment in Christ. We may add that Romanism, in its various phases and stages, is nothing but the literal re-introduction of the law of Moses under the Gospel.

Why more than four thousand years were permitted to elapse between the promise of a Saviour and its fulfilment must remain a difficulty; but one reason, we may surmise to have been, the necessity of mankind's passing through a process of preparation for the reception of the Gospel. The sacred history teaches that the corruption of man after the fall was speedy and universal; and it was consistent with the Divine wisdom to allow the evil to run its course until the effects were fully developed, as they were in the heathen world. In the latter case the preparation was negative. Enlightened heathens, at the coming of Christ, were ready for the Gospel, because every mythical system, and every school of philosophy, had proved its inability to curb the corrupt passions of human nature, or to meet its spiritual necessities. But it is obvious that something more than this was needed, viz., a positive historical basis, especially in the

locality in which the Saviour was to appear, directly preparing the way for His Advent, and securing a footing for the Gospel whenever it should be promulgated. Such was the object of the Mosaic dispensation. It may be considered under a twofold aspect: as a school of discipline, and as a system of prophetic symbolism.

The law was a school of discipline. It presupposed in the subject a lack of spiritual insight and self-determination which needed the guidance and constraint of an external rule. Such, according to inspired authority, was the Jew, especially in the earlier portion of his history; though an heir he differed nothing from a servant, and was under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father (Gal. iv. 2, 3). Now a system of education works mainly from without inwards, and by means of discipline and habituation. Innate capacities on which virtuous habits may be engrafted are all that the teacher expects to find at first; the habits themselves he proposes to form by rules which necessarily wear an arbitrary aspect, and obedience to which is enforced by temporal sanctions. Such, according to the great philosopher of antiquity, is the object of law-givers in framing their codes; they aim at educating the citizens by the force of habit.¹ The Jew was compelled to practise what was, at first, irksome, and the meaning of which he did not comprehend, until habit had wrought its effect, and he had learned to do a willing service. But many generations had to elapse before this result was attained, before the pious Jew could exclaim, 'Oh how I love Thy law! it is my meditation all the day' (Psa. cxix. 97). For centuries the wayward pupil rebelled against the yoke of Divine ordinances, and to the last the carnal part of the nation misunderstood them. Religion in such a stage was necessarily rather drastic than contemplative; the act had a value in itself irrespective of the motive that prompted it. The undisciplined impulses of human nature were met and overcome by external authority; acting, indeed, not capriciously, but still from without, in the way of positive enactment and sanctions appealing to sense. And it is evident that the more the enactments were multiplied, the less the pupil was left to his own discretion, the more efficacious the system would be for its appointed end.

But the Mosaic law, especially the ceremonial, was also a system of prophetic symbolism. Symbolism is the remedy dictated by nature for immaturity in the powers of reflection and abstraction; as young children are best instructed by pictorial representations. The didactic element of the law was scanty in proportion as the symbolism was rich and varied. And this symbolism had a prospec-

¹ Ἐθίζοντες ποιῶσιν ἀγαθούς. Arist., Eth. Nic., ii. i.

tive reference to the Christian dispensation ; it was nothing less than the place where the Lord lay (Heb. x.). The elect nation, elect not to eternal life, but to be that from which the Author of life should come, typified the New Jerusalem, or mystical body of Christ ; the legal sacrifices pointed to the one all-sufficient atonement for sin ; the Levitical priesthood foreshadowed the incommunicable priesthood of the glorified Redeemer. But at the time of their institution this prospective reference was not revealed, and therefore it would not have been safe to leave the Jew at liberty either to curtail or to add to his ritual, still less to introduce changes into it. He could not know what might be a true prophetic symbol, and what the reverse. Therefore, as little scope as possible was allowed to human phantasy, and the worshipper found himself anticipated by a Divine law in all the essential parts of his religious service. And this law was enforced by temporal sanctions, which are out of place where religion exists in its essential character, as a service of 'spirit and of truth' (John iv. 23). Idolatry, properly a sin not a crime, was made a crime, an act of treason, against the Sovereign : in no other way, in the existing state of spiritual illumination, could it be effectually suppressed : the rights of conscience must have been, as with us, respected, and the punishment of the idolater transferred to a future state. The dispensation presented a perfect fusion of church and state ; the only one which has ever had Divine sanction. It is only in an improper sense that it can be termed a church ; for no church but the Jewish has been armed with sovereign power to secure at least external obedience to its ritual, and by penalties which properly belong to the state. The Jew found himself, as regards his religious duties, hemmed in on every side by a law which, by its incessant and importunate demands, placed him under a yoke of bondage, which he confessed it was difficult to bear (Acts xv. 10).

A system of this kind, however necessary in the infancy of religion, was manifestly unfitted for it in its maturer stage ; and, indeed, it tended, by a natural process, to its own dissolution. In proportion as the discipline of the law succeeded in its object, it prepared the way for a more spiritual system. The Jew, as he advanced in spiritual perspicacity, could not but perceive that the ordinances by which he was taught the elements of religion (*στοιχεῖα*, Gal. iv. 9) could only have a provisional use. By the application of the moral law to the conscience he gained ever deeper views of the nature of sin and of his own sinfulness ; and this must have led to the conviction that the legal expiations were insufficient—that the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin (Heb. x. 4). He came to feel that a broken and contrite heart is better than sacrifice, and that a religion

which consisted chiefly in a round of ritual observances could not be the ultimate object of the revelation of God. Yet the ideas of expiation, atonement, remission of sin through blood, so constantly pressed on him, must have inspired an expectation of some more perfect sacrifice to supersede the legal appointments, and to effect what they could not effect. At this juncture prophecy came in, and confirmed every anticipation of the longing heart. It stamped with the Divine approval the dictate of an enlightened conscience, that moral duties are more acceptable than outward service ; it did not hesitate to speak of the Levitical ritual itself, compared with such duties, in the language of depreciation.¹ But further, it opened up the prospect of a better covenant, founded on better promises, of which the leading features should be, the plenary remission of sin through the vicarious sufferings of a Redeemer (Isa. liii.) ; its expansion beyond the limits of Judæa (Isa. lix. lx.) ; its spiritual nature (John ii. 28) ; and its corresponding new worship (Mal. i. 11). Instead of the twilight of typical ordinances, the Sun of Righteousness Himself was to appear, and shed spiritual light upon the world. ' This,' God declared through His prophet, ' is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ; and will be their God, and they shall be My people ; and they shall no more teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord ; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more ' (Jer. xxxi. 31-34). And thus, through these various influences, it came to pass that at the coming of Christ there were many who were ' waiting for the consolation of Israel,' and it only needed the joyful *εὐρήκαμεν* of a Philip to transform the Israelite without guile into a Christian believer² (John i. 45).

The progression was manifestly from a symbolical religion to one of spirit and truth ; from a religion working from without inwards to one working from within outwards ; from a coercive law to the liberty of a law of spirit and life. When the fulness of the time was come the Saviour appeared, but was preceded by one who should prepare His way. The preaching of the Baptist was no enforcement of the existing ceremonial law nor the introduction of a new one ; but the recalling the attention of a people sunk in formalism to the lessons which their own prophets had inculcated—that religion is primarily a matter of the heart, and that mere natural descent from Abraham

¹ Isa. i., lxvi. ; Jer. vi. 20 ; Amos v. 21.

² Twisten, Dog., § 22.

was of little value in God's sight. The entrance into the kingdom of heaven must be through repentance and a change of heart (Matt. iii. 2). When Christ commenced His ministry the Baptist's type of teaching was not exchanged for another. Christ was the end of the law, not merely as the fulfilment of its types, but as the Expositor of its inner meaning. His first considerable discourse is throughout occupied in enforcing the moral law in its full spiritual import, as distinguished from human glosses and immoral formalism. He chooses disciples (learners) to be instructed, not subjects to be ruled. A ministry of the Word is inaugurated, to be afterwards a vehicle for the ministration for the Spirit. The Christian church did not as yet exist, but so far as the Saviour laid the foundations of it, He proceeded on a method opposed to that of the Mosaic institute. No ceremonial law can be traced to Christ Himself; still less a system intended to form habits by repetition, and working *ex opere operato*. The two sacraments which He appointed were not, as regards the symbols, new ordinances, but adaptations of already existing ones. Lustration by water was a prominent feature of the ceremonial law, and familiar to the Jew¹; so was the Passover, on which was engrafted the Lord's Supper; and so was the synagogue, destined by Divine Providence to form the basis of the polity and worship of the visible church. Above all, these ordinances were not appointed by Christ for His church, except on the presumption of a living faith in the recipients or celebrants. Not to produce, or vivify, faith, but to manifest it, when already produced by the ministry of the Word, was the office of the sacraments. They were, as the old writers say, a *verbum visibile*, declaring the same truths as the Word, but after a peculiar manner and with a more individual application. Had Christ come as a lawgiver in the sense in which Moses was, He would, in instituting a visible church, have commenced by establishing a graduated hierarchy, liturgical formularies, and a prescribed ritual, apart from which the ordinances would have been invalid. Such, indeed, in after-times, was the mode of proceeding ascribed to Him;

¹ It is by no means certain, as is commonly assumed, that the baptism of proselytes was usual in our Lord's time. In the Old Testament no mention is made of any other ordinance for the reception of Gentiles into the covenant than circumcision, to which sacrifice was afterwards added. The same may be said of the Apocrypha, of the writings of Philo and Josephus, and of the older Targumists. The first allusion to proselyte-baptizing appears to be that in the Gemara, babyl. Jebamoth, 46, 2, the date of which is uncertain. The practice appears first distinctly in the fourth century. But the various lustrations of the law, and the figurative language of prophecy (Isa. lii. 15, Ezek. xxxvi. 25) were sufficient to account for the question of the Pharisees to John, 'Why baptizest thou, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?' (John i. 25). See Fairbairn, Herm. Man., p. 274; and Winer, Real W. B., Proselyten.

but the New Testament knows nothing of it. Believers are to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; baptized Christians are to eat the bread and drink the wine in remembrance of Christ's death ; this is all that is positively commanded : and the ordinances themselves were only invested with their full efficacy when the church was formally constituted by the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost.

This last-named event was, properly, the birthday of the Christian church. There is much truth in the observation that ' Christianity came into the world as an idea, rather than as an institution,'¹ if for the word ' idea ' we substitute the presence of Christ by His Spirit in the hearts of believers. Christianity did come into the world much more as a spiritual influence than as a visible institution ; and still more so than as a training institution, working, like the Mosaic law, from without inwards. It came, not as a new ecclesiastical organization, having its essence in rites or polity ; but as the full realization of the predicted relations between God and His people. It appeared in the persons of the primitive 120 on the Day of Pentecost, as a company of men of whom nothing more is said in the way of description than that they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and that they continued under the guidance and teaching of the Apostles (Acts ii. 42). There was the Church in its true idea, as distinguished from its subsequent developments in polity or ritual. And what it was in the first moment of its existence will for ever determine its definition to the end of time. It is, in its true being and essence, the temple of the Holy Ghost, founded and built up on the doctrine of the Apostles, transmitted to us in the New Testament. Its progress was in accordance with this beginning ; it followed the law of all societies which have their true being within ; it developed itself from within outwards—not in the reverse direction. When it became necessary to visibly organize ; but not until then ; the Church threw itself out, under Apostolic guidance, into such forms as were suitable to its nature and age. These forms grew up gradually, and as need required ; the want was always allowed to be felt before it was supplied. Deacons were appointed to relieve the Apostles of secular duties, and Bishops (if, which is doubtful, Timothy and Titus may be considered as prototypes of the office), to preside in the absence of the Apostles. Not because a covenanted virtue was, by Divine appointment, attached to any particular form of organization, but on common practical grounds of necessity, or of order, the work proceeded. As long as the simpler arrangements sufficed, they were suffered to remain ; when they proved insufficient further steps were taken.

¹ Newman, *Develop.*, p. 116.

Instead of passively receiving a superinduced stamp from without, the Christian society supplied its needs from within, and of itself ; that is, the invisible Church, as Protestants call it, preceded the visible. No doubt the arrangements proceeded under Apostolic sanction, or precedent ; and therefore possessed a *relative* fixedness of form and continuity ; but no Christian ceremonial law, taking the place of the old, is visible ; no independent and intrinsic virtue, as if the true being of the Church consisted therein—still less, any virtue *jure divino*—belongs to the external framework. This has its appropriate place and sanctions, but they are of another kind.

The result is, that when we come to define the Church—when the question relates to its essence, not to its accidents—we must adopt the old explanatory addition of the Article in the Creed, and speak of it as ‘ the communion, or congregation, of saints ’¹ ; of saints not merely by profession, or external dedication (though this, of course, is included), but in reality and truth. And now let us turn to the Romish doctrine on the subject. It is simply the degeneration of Christianity, by a retrograde movement, into Judaism. ‘ If any one,’ the Council of Trent declares, ‘ shall say that Jesus Christ was given to man as a Redeemer to trust in, and not as a Legislator to obey, let him be anathema.’² At first sight there appears nothing remarkable in this—Christians, no doubt, are bound to obey Christ ; but on closer examination we perceive why the word ‘ Legislator ’ was used, and not, *e.g.*, ‘ Master.’ In fact, it was used of set purpose—to convey the notion that the Gospel is a ceremonial law like that of Moses, only freed from defects which unfitted the latter for a universal religion. It is the ‘ new law,’³ an unhappy expression with which the errors of many centuries are connected. The ‘ new law ’ is, like the old, a system of coercive discipline ;⁴ with priests by

¹ : The Holy Catholic Church, *Communio Sanctorum* : this part ‘ (the latter clause) ‘ of the Art. in the creed hath a manifest relation to the former, in which we profess to believe in the Holy Catholic Church ; which church is therefore holy, because those persons are such, or ought to be, who are within it ; the church itself being nothing else but a collection of such persons.’ Pearson, *Creed*, A. ix. Comp. his observations on the clause in note A.

² Sess. vi., Can. xxi. ³ *Sacramenta novæ legis*, Conc. Trid., Sess. vii.

⁴ ‘ The church, as God’s vicar upon earth, subjugates the whole energy of man which struggles against the will of God. By her inward discipline the will is once more enthroned supreme, and its energies united with the will of God. Obedience passes by little and little from deliberation and conscious effort to a ready and almost unconscious volition. We are brought under the discipline of childhood. And since to a law, if it is not to remain a dead letter, there must be added a living authority to enforce its provisions, God has constituted an order’ (the clergy) ‘ which shall bear rule over His people, and shall bring them under the yoke of obedience to Himself.’ Manning (Archdeacon), ‘Unity of the Church,’ pp. 230–251. The writer was not then a Roman Catholic, but the passage is the more valuable, as showing the real tendency of the school to which he belonged. So another writer, whose career was similar :

ordination instead of priests by birth ; with the sacrifice of the Mass instead of the legal sacrifices ; with a corresponding ritual ; with episcopacy *jure divino* ; and a visible, infallible head of the Church, also *jure divino*. That is, the essence of the Church is made to lie, not in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but in the sacraments which work *ex opere operato*,¹ and an external succession, failing which the sacraments themselves are robbed, partially at least, of their efficacy. The worship and polity of the Church became, not the expression of its inward life, but the instruments of forming that life, and forming it on the principle of the preparatory dispensation. Thus Christians are once more brought under the yoke of the law, or, as Luther expressed it, delivered into Babylonish captivity. And it is obvious that it is immaterial whether we stop short at an intermediate halting-place (the *via media*), or go on to the full development of the theory in the Papacy. Every definition of the Church which makes the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, in His quickening and sanctifying agency, a separable accident thereof, and places its true being in its ritual or visible organization, deviates so far from the sense of Scripture, and is inconsistent with the genuine doctrine of the Protestant Churches.

It does not follow, as the Romanist would have it,² that inasmuch as Christ the Incarnate Son was given to the Church from without, the true being of the Church consists in what is visible in it. It is true that the kingdom of God, so far as it was present in Christ, could not propagate itself amongst men save through the human nature of the Saviour—this is a self-evident truth ; but what the Saviour was, or what He came to do, did not reveal itself to all who came into external contact with Him. Multitudes saw and heard Him who never recognized that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God ; and of that Apostle who is especially mentioned as having arrived at this knowledge it is declared by Christ Himself that the conviction was grounded, not upon what was visible in the Saviour, but upon a special revelation from above (Matt. xvi. 17).

'Catholic Christendom' (*i.e.*, the Church) 'is a vast assemblage of human beings with wilful intellects and wild passions, brought together into what may be called a large Reformatory or training school, for the melting, refining, and moulding, as in some moral factory, the raw material of human nature, so excellent, so dangerous, so capable of divine purposes.' Newman, *Apol.*, 391. As in the previous passage, the agent of this moulding process is not, as Scripture asserts, the Holy Ghost, but the clerical institute, of which the Papal infallibility is the crown. See pp. 389, etc.

¹ Ut aliquis dici possit absolute pars vera ecclesiæ, de quâ Scripturæ loquuntur, non putamus ullam requiri internam virtutem, sed tantum externam potissimum fidei et sacramentorum communionem, quæ sensu ipso percipitur. Bellarm., *De Eccl. Mil.*, iii., c. 2.

² Möhler, *Symbolik*, § 48.

Nor does the conclusion above mentioned follow, as the same author argues, from the fact that the ministry of man, first the Apostles, and then of their successors, was employed to found the Church. No doubt this was the method employed; God does not, as a rule, implant religion in the heart by an invisible and immediate operation of grace: 'How shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?' (Rom. x. 14). But the Apostles were not to execute their mission until a certain spiritual change had passed over them; nor did they depart from Jerusalem until the event had occurred. Christ was first fully formed in them by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and then, but not until then, did they set forth to preach. And this relation of the inward gift to the outward commission established the rule for all succeeding ages: the visible Church, in its various manifestations, has ever proceeded from the invisible, not in the reverse order. The Church may, and must always, be viewed under a twofold aspect: as the manifestation and as the instrument of Christ's saving power; it is both the evidence of the Holy Spirit's unseen operation, and the means whereby, from age to age, He gathers men into the visible enclosure, and thence into His mystical Body.¹ But this proves nothing as to the precedence to be assigned to either aspect, any more than the fact that a man consists of body and soul decides which of the two is more properly the man. To the full idea of humanity both are necessary; yet, while the body without the soul turns to corruption, the soul may exist, and perhaps be active, without the body. The Church came into being on the Day of Pentecost, antecedently to the visible organization which it afterwards assumed; and, apart from the life within by which it was animated, the organization would not have advanced, or must have soon collapsed; as the new-born child develops his bodily organs by force of the principle of life within, so in the Church all healthy expansion and outward activity proceed from the animating Spirit from heaven. And so, indeed, writes Möhler himself, who thereby undermines his own theory: 'It is not to be doubted that Christ maintains His Church in spiritual energy by means of those who live in the faith of Him, who are spiritually united to Him; that in these lives His truth, which otherwise would be forgotten, or degenerate into an empty form. Yes; these, who are transformed into His image, are the true supporters of the visible Church, whereas mere professors would not for a day maintain it even in its outward

¹ ¹ This is one way of putting the process. But the more ideal process is the New Birth placing the man into personal relation with Christ, and *therefore* into relation both with the mystical body—the invisible Church—and also with the outward, visible Church.—Ed.

forms.'¹ Nothing can be more true. It is the members of Christ who are in Him as the living branches in the vine that are the true source of the visible activity of the Church, in public worship, in works of charity, in missionary effort ; without these, the animating soul, the mechanism of polity and ritual would decay, and in time come to an end. But what is this but an admission, even on the part of the Romanist, that the specific difference of the Church, that which distinguishes it from earthly communities, and especially from its predecessor the Mosaic institute—that, therefore, which constitutes its true definition stripped of accidental adjuncts—is, that it is a company of men filled with the Holy Ghost (*congregatio sanctorum*) ?

77. VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE CHURCH

In the foregoing observations the expression ' visible Church ' has been more than once used, and it may be proper to explain what is meant by it. In the Gospels by Christ Himself, and in the Apostolic epistles, especially those of S. Paul, the Church is spoken of under a twofold point of view—as a local society of Christians or the aggregate of such societies, and as one body under one head, Christ. Thus we read of a church in a single house (Rom. xvi. 5) ; of the churches of Ephesus, Rome, Philippi, etc. ; of the churches of Asia (1 Cor. xvi. 19). There is no reason why we should not extend this mode of speaking, though Scripture seems to furnish no instance of it, to the aggregation of Christian churches throughout the world ; which, therefore, may be termed the visible Catholic Church. It is however, not a strictly accurate term ; for it is not one Church under one Head, but a collection of independent societies, that would be meant by it. But we also read of a Church which is the Body of Christ, Christ bearing the same relation to it as the head does to the human body. ' We being many,' S. Paul says, ' are one body in Christ ' (Rom. xii. 5) ; ' By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body ' (1 Cor. xii. 13) ; ' There is one body and one Spirit ' (Ephes. iv. 4). As regards Christ, He is said to be ' the Head over all things to the Church ' (Ephes. i. 22)—a Head of vital influence, and not merely of authority (*Ibid.*, iv. 15-16 ; Col. ii. 19) ; for enemies can be ruled by force, but this Church is in willing and loving subjection to Christ. Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it that ' He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word,'² so as to ' present it to Himself ' as His bride, inchoatively at

¹ Symbolik, § 49.

² If the sacrament of baptism is here alluded to, it follows that the church which S. Paul calls the bride of Christ is cleansed by baptism ; not that all who receive baptism belong to it.

present, perfectly hereafter, ' a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish ' (Ephes. v. 26, 27). This bride of Christ is spoken of in the Apocalypse under another figure, as the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven (chap. xxi. 2). The other Apostles use similar language. By S. Peter Christians are said, from the analogy of the Jewish fabric, to form a spiritual temple, into which each Christian is built as a lively stone, and for the purpose of offering spiritual sacrifices ; the Church here intended being collectively a holy priesthood (1 Pet. ii. 5). In the Epistle to the Hebrews these Jewish converts are described as having been incorporated into ' the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, who are written in heaven ' (Heb. xii. 22). The expressions of Christ Himself are anticipatory of this twofold aspect of the Church. He directs that an offending brother, who cannot otherwise be reclaimed, shall be reported to ' the church '—that is, the local Christian society to which he belongs ; but to Peter He says that on the rock of the Apostle's confession He will build a church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail (Matt. xviii. 17 ; xvi. 18). He speaks of His sheep, which are to form one fold under one Shepherd, but who are also to be, under another aspect, a scattered flock (John x. 16). Of the prophecy of Caiaphas the beloved Apostle, who best knew the mind of his Master, says that it had a meaning unknown to the high-priest himself—viz., that Jesus should by His death be the means of gathering together the children of God, dispersed throughout the world, both Jew and Gentile, into one body (*εἰς ἓν*). In accordance with this view of the Church, the Apostles' Creed teaches us to profess our faith in ' the '—that is, the one—' Holy Catholic Church.'

If we attempt to identify these two applications of the word ' church ' we shall find difficulties in the way. One attribute of the Church, as the body and bride of Christ, is that it is holy ; and Scripture will not allow us to understand thereby a mere external dedication to God, as the vessels of the tabernacle were called holy. The love of the bridegroom and the bride is reciprocal ; the sheep are not merely called so, but they hear the Shepherd's voice and follow Him, and He gives unto them eternal life (John x. 27, 28), which cannot be said of mere professors. From the head descends a quickening influence to all the members, uniting them both to Him and to each other ; among the spiritual sacrifices offered in the spiritual temple is that one, so difficult to the unrenewed heart, the sacrifice of self to the glory and will of God (Rom. xii. 1). But the aspect of the visible Church—of the Church *as it appears*—is any-

thing but this. While the general influence of Christianity may have banished from its precincts some gross vices which disfigured the best forms of heathenism ; while it has introduced milder sentiments and practices in many departments of national and social life ; vital religion, as proved by its fruits, is a rare thing in any local or national Church as such, to say nothing of the corruptions of doctrine which prevail in large portions of visible Christendom. That can hardly be the bride of Christ which exhibits no love towards Him, nor that the body, or any part of it, which manifestly does not derive life from the Head by vital union. It may be urged that this discrepancy is but an accidental circumstance—the misfortune of a particular age, and not a necessary feature. There is no doubt that the visible Church may approximate more and more to its ideal, according to circumstances. To be baptized was, in the apostolic age, as now in heathen lands, a surer test of inward renewal than in later times ; it involved greater sacrifices, and furnished a greater presumption of sincerity. Times of persecution, too, are, as regards the visible Church, sifting and purifying. This explanation, however, is insufficient, because from our Lord's own statements the discrepancy is normal and inevitable. The visible Church, or any one such, is always, from the nature of the case, a mixed body—like the field sown with tares and wheat, and the net containing good and bad fishes (Matt. xiii. 24-27, 47-48). And it is not in human power perfectly to separate the one from the other. Discipline can be applied only to acts of overt delinquency, sins of the heart it cannot reach ; and the latter, if habitual, as effectually exclude from saving communion with Christ as do sins of the life. The hidden tares and wheat must both grow together until the harvest, when an unerring judgment will separate the one from the other. The visible Church, therefore, never can be exactly co-extensive with the body of Christ ; or, in other words, the Church as it now appears is necessarily affected with imperfections which do not belong to the Church in its true idea. When the body of Christ becomes visible under the form of local Churches, some by external adhesion are connected with it who do not belong to it inwardly. Hence the error of sectarian movements, such as that of the Plymouth Brethren. Offended with the presence of sin in the Church in which he was born and baptized, the separatist endeavours to form a perfectly pure Church, only with the result of reproducing a mixed body ; on which a further schism takes place, and so on to the end of time. It is a vain attempt, because it ignores the conditions under which the body of Christ is at present compelled to exist in locally organized societies.

There is another reason, too, why the visible Church can never exactly correspond to the true Church—viz., that it furnishes only an approximation to the real position which each member of Christ's body occupies in it. The spiritual aristocracy of the Church, whether as regards personal holiness or special gifts, does not always occupy, as it ought to do, its true position. After every effort to secure its due recognition mistakes will occur: many are last who ought to be first; and a visible Church will never be, as regards its orders and offices, quite as it would be were Christ Himself to distribute them. Official position is not always a guarantee for sanctity or spiritual wisdom. In this respect, too, there is a hidden life of the Church which, in spite of attempts to ensure its manifestation, remains more or less a hidden one.

These remarks may be particularly illustrated by a reference to the attribute of unity which, as in the Creed, we assign to the body of Christ—not merely oneness, but organized unity.¹ It is obvious that there can be only one Holy Catholic Church, out of which, ordinarily, there is no salvation, two universal Churches being a contradiction in terms. This one Church is described in Scripture as being in organic unity with Christ, as the members of the human body are with the head, animated by one spirit, with a diversity of offices, but all governed and directed by a central source of influence. But this is not the aspect which the normal state of the visible Church presents. Unless we adopt the Romish theory of one supreme visible head, it is an aspect of division and independence. To say nothing of subordinate forms of schism, the only unity of which local churches, as such, are susceptible, is *sameness* of polity, faith, and sacraments, or brotherly recognition; in no proper sense are they one society, one *respublica* which implies a central government; they are independent communities, formed on common principles, and with the same object, and only so far are one: they are one as the monarchies of Europe are one. The following remarks of a writer who at an earlier period of his career was the chief advocate of the Anglican, or Cyprianic, doctrine of unity, but who subsequently became sensible of its incompleteness, except as a stepping-stone to the Papacy, are deserving of attention: 'It may possibly be suggested that this universality which the Fathers ascribe to the Catholic Church lay in its apostolical descent, or again in its episcopacy, and that it was one, not as being one kingdom, or

¹ By organic unity is meant a vital connection of the members of an organism with the head and with each other; like that which prevails in the human body. It implies more than mere oneness in the sense of singularity, and more, too, than mere sameness.

civitas, at unity with itself, with one and the same intelligence in every part, one sympathy, one ruling principle, one organization, one communion, but because, though consisting of a number of independent communities, at variance (if so be) with each other even to a breach of communion, nevertheless, all these were possessed of a legitimate succession of clergy, or all governed by bishops, priests, and deacons. But who will in seriousness maintain that relationship, or resemblance, makes two bodies one? England and Prussia are both monarchical, are they, therefore, one kingdom? England and the United States are from one stock, can they, therefore, be called one state? England and Ireland are peopled by different races, yet are they one kingdom still. If unity lies in the apostolical succession, an act of schism is, from the nature of the case, impossible; for as no one can reverse his natural birth, so no Church can undo the fact that its clergy have come by lineal descent from the Apostles. Either there is no such sin as schism, or unity does not lie in the episcopal form, or in episcopal ordination. Nothing more true was ever written. Now, Scripture *does* assign this organic unity under a single Head, 'with one sympathy, one ruling principle, to *some* Church', as appears from the passages already quoted. The 'body of Christ' is described exactly in such terms as the above, as no mere aggregation of independent communities, but as one organism under one central authority. The Romish theory of the Papacy does really succeed in producing something like this; those who reject that theory, and stop short at brotherly intercommunion of independent units, do, and must always, find themselves confronted with the difficulty which this writer states as having lain in his way.

The distinction, then, between the visible and the invisible Church is imposed upon us by facts, and is sanctioned in Scripture. The Romanist does not deny that within the visible Communion, to which alone he gives the name of the Church, there is an inner circle of those who are in saving union with Christ, and who are the real strength, the very soul, of the visible Church; but he will not allow that in this inward life lies the true being of the Church, nor does he admit the propriety of applying the term 'Church' to the aggregate of these true members of Christ. According to the teaching of Rome, a man is a member of Christ who has received baptism and acknowledges the supremacy of the Pope, whatever he may be inwardly; and the Church itself is defined to be in its essence a visible body, as visible as the republic of Venice, or any other secular community. But if, as has been attempted to prove (preceding §) what is invisible in the Church, viz., the work of the Holy Spirit,

constitutes its true being, we argue from the facts of experience and the notices of Scripture that the Church in its visibility never, in the present life, perfectly corresponds to the Church in its truth. That is, that the distinction between the Church visible and the Church invisible is a legitimate one, and deserving of the prominent place which it holds in all the Protestant Confessions. In fact, next to the doctrine of justification by faith, it is one of the leading points of controversy between us and Rome. Our great divines of the Elizabethan age, and even later, were well aware of this (see the passage cited in the next section from Jeremy Taylor). *Instar omnium*, let Hooker be heard: 'That Church of Christ, which we properly term His body mystical, can be but one; neither can that one be sensibly discerned by any man, inasmuch as the parts thereof are some in heaven already with Christ, and the rest that are on earth (albeit, their natural persons be visible) we do not discern under this property whereby they are truly and infallibly of that body. Only our minds by intellectual conceit are able to apprehend that such a real body there is; a body collective, because it containeth a huge multitude; a body mystical, because the mystery of their conjunction is removed altogether from sense. Whatsoever we read in Scripture concerning the endless love and the saving mercy which God showeth towards His Church, the only proper subject thereof is this Church. Concerning this flock it is that our Lord and Saviour hath promised, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish" (John x. 28). They who are of this society have such marks and notes of distinction from all others as are not object unto our sense; only unto God, who seeth their hearts and understandeth all their secret cogitations, unto Him they are clear and manifest.' And he adds, not without reason, 'For lack of diligent observing the difference between the Church of God mystical and visible, the oversights are neither few nor light that have been committed' (Eccles. Pol., B. iii. 2, 9).

§ 78. CONTINUATION

Since the Protestant does not (as is sometimes alleged) make two Churches, or even a Church within a Church, it is necessary to point out how the invisible Church is connected with the visible. The persons who compose it are, of course, visible. It is not a Platonic republic, or a company of pure spirits; it is not an idea, in the sense of having no actual existence. But it is invisible, to use the words of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, 'in respect of that quality and excellence by which Christians are constituted Christ's members, and distinguished from mere professors and outsiders of Christians. All that

really and heartily serve Christ *in abdito* do also profess to do so ; the invisible Church ordinarily and regularly is part of the visible, but yet that part only which is the true one ; and the rest but by denomination of law, and, in common speaking, are the Church—not in mystical union, not in proper relation to Christ. They are not the house of God, not the temple of the Holy Ghost, not the members of Christ ; and no man can deny this. Hypocrites are not Christ's servants, and therefore are not Christ's members, and therefore no part of the Church, but imperfectly and equivocally, as a dead man is a man ; all which is summed up in those words of S. Austin, saying, " that the body of Christ is not *bipartitum* ; it is not a double body. *Non enim revera Domini corpus est quod cum illo non erit in æternum* ; all that are Christ's body shall reign with Him for ever." Nor, again, is it accurate to speak of two Churches, or, like some of our own divines,¹ of one society within another. It is one and the same Church, but considered from different points of view, according as we fix our attention on its external notes and its visible condition in this world, or on its true essential being. Thus Field ' On the Church,' chap. x. : ' Hence it cometh to pass that we say there is a visible and invisible Church ; not meaning to make two distinct Churches, as our adversaries falsely and maliciously charge us, though the form of words may seem to insinuate some such thing ; but to distinguish the divers considerations of the same Church ; which, though it be visible in respect of the profession of supernatural verities revealed in Christ, use of Holy Sacraments, order of ministry, and due obedience yielded thereto, and they discernible that do communicate therein ; yet in respect of those most precious effects and happy benefits of saving grace, wherein only the elect do communicate, it is invisible ; and they that in so happy and gracious and desirable things have communion among themselves, are not discernible from others to whom this fellowship is denied, but are known only to God. That Nathanael was an Israelite all men knew ; that he was a true Israelite, in whom was no guile, Christ only knew.' What, then, is the bond of connection between the two ? The means of grace ; that is, the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments ; which are the instruments whereby members of the visible Church are transferred into the invisible ;² so that we must never go beyond the visible pale in search of the true Church. *Extra vocatorum cætum non sunt quærendi electi.* The invisible Church is neither to be sought nor

¹ ' For because this visible church doth enfold the other, as one mass doth contain the good one and the base alloy,' etc. Barrow, ' Unity of the Church.'

² But see note above on p. 366.

found except in local Christian societies ; it is not, indeed, co-extensive with those societies, but it cannot at present manifest itself except through them, and in the imperfect form of which they admit. That is to say, the true Church cannot at present manifest itself in its corporate capacity, as one body under one Head ; but only under the form of an aggregate of visible Churches. Of this aggregate, or of any portion of it, Christ is not the Head directly, not a Head of vital influence, but only indirectly, in so far as the Christian faith is professed by these Churches. Of the Church of England, for example, as a local Church, ecclesiastically the Archbishop of Canterbury, politically the King, is the head. This imperfection, however, belongs to the invisible Church only during its earthly pilgrimage ; the time is coming—that of ‘ the manifestation of the sons of God ’ (Rom. viii. 9)—when it will appear in its proper unity, purged from the heterogeneous elements which here cleave to it. The Church militant will then become of one quality with the Church triumphant, which latter even now contains no admixture of evil ; and together they will form the full body of Christ. The Romish conception, and every kindred one, of the Church militant as a body containing good and bad, united merely by the external bonds of polity and Sacraments, fails to explain how the Church triumphant can eventually coalesce into one body with it ; for this conception is obviously consistent with the supposition that not a single member of the Church militant may be in saving union with Christ. Two bodies so essentially different in quality cannot form one Church. Hence we may perceive the true meaning of the notes of the Church in Art. xix. They do not belong to that Church which is the mystical body of Christ, but to visible Churches. ‘ The ’ (or rather ‘ a,’ for there is no one visible Church on earth) ‘ visible Church is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments be duly administered.’ The word ‘ faithful ’ is here used for professing the Christian faith ; and for a visible Church to be a true one it is enough that in it the pure Word is preached and the Sacraments are administered ‘ according to Christ’s ordinance ’ ; *i.e.*, in all essential points. That local Christian societies are here meant is plain from the mention of the ‘ Churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch ’ in the latter part of the Article. It is not said that any of these is the one Holy Catholic Church. What is laid down is that if any professing Christian society has within itself the pure preaching of the Word and the due administration of the Sacraments, it has a right, as against the pretensions of Rome, to the designation of a true branch of Christ’s visible Church. But fur-

ther, we may confidently assume that in every local society a portion of the invisible Church will be found, since the preaching of the Word and the Sacraments are the appointed means of gathering it in. The connection, therefore, between the Church visible and the Church invisible is a necessary one ; the former administers the means of grace, the latter is the result of their saving operation. The two are indissolubly united, but they do not cover the same ground. It is on account of this connection that the attributes of the body of Christ, which really belong only to it, are transferred presumptively to a visible Church collectively ; as when S. Paul addresses the Ephesian Church as 'saints,' 'faithful brethren,' 'chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world,' etc. He did not, as is sometimes contended, use these expressions in a lower, but in their full and proper sense. He describes the whole Church according to its idea, which idea is to be found only in the Church considered as invisible. It must not be supposed that the Apostle was ignorant of the mixed character of every visible Church ; but since it was not given him to determine who were and who were not real Christians, he was compelled to assume that all were so. On no other ground could he proceed, as he does, to urge motives, reasonings, and exhortations, which his correspondents could not be conceived either to understand or admit unless they were led by the Spirit of God. Nor does it affect this conclusion that he censures various members of the Church for errors of doctrine or inconsistencies of practice : for it only follows from this that, in his view, they were not perfect Christians, but babes in Christ ; and babes still are living beings. The Corinthians, with all their deficiencies, were presumed to be spiritually quickened ; otherwise the Apostle's admonitions would have been *unintelligible* to them. Even the incestuous person is supposed to have fallen from grace, as many saints have done ; and to be restored as they have been. It may be remarked that the question is not about the indefectibility of grace, but of grace existing at the time. The introduction of the Calvinistic controversy is irrelevant to the point here at issue. It may be remarked, too, that liturgical formularies are, and must be, constructed on the same principle ; that is, on the presumption that those who are to join in them are real Christians. We cannot frame confessions of sin, prayers for pardon or spiritual blessings, and hymns of praise, avowedly for mere external professors. The forms must be made to express sentiments and desires which none but the spiritually regenerate do or can feel. It is not forgotten that there may be tares among the wheat ; but the necessity of the case compels us to take no account of the tares, and to treat them as non-existent. It is not the tares,

but the wheat, who are supposed to be worshippers. We deal with the congregation, not as it may be in fact, but according to the idea—according to its *profession*; which profession is to be an assemblage of real Christians, in various stages, it may be, of Christian proficiency. In like manner the visible Church is described in terms which really belong to the invisible; for if we suppose the imperfections removed which prevent the full manifestation of the latter in its essential sanctity and its corporate unity, as they will be one day, the distinction disappears, and the visible and invisible Church become co-extensive and identical—the one body and bride of Christ.

§ 79. CONTINUATION

It is a common mode of speaking, and sanctioned by Scripture, to call Christ the Head of His mystical Body; but, however He may stand in that relation to the Church triumphant, that part of the Church which is in paradise, in strict accuracy He, as the Incarnate Son, is not the Head of the Church militant on earth. For He is no longer upon earth Himself, nor will be until He returns in His proper person; and in the meantime He has delegated the active administration of the Church militant to His divine Vicar, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity (John xiv. 16). It is, therefore, the Holy Ghost who is the active and operative Head of the Church upon earth; though, by reason of the unity of Persons, where the Holy Ghost is Christ is: whence these terms are used interchangeably in Scripture for the Divine indwelling presence. Formally, however, the Head of the Church militant is a Spirit, and is invisible; and to an invisible head an invisible body (invisible in the senses explained, corresponds.

It is only the Protestant who can really make the Church an article of faith. We believe in the one Holy Catholic Church because we cannot see it—see it in its true glory, its undivided unity, its sanctity, its perpetuity founded on Christ's promise. The Church of Romanism is an object of sight, and has no proper place in the Creed. According to it, the one Holy Catholic Church is an earthly polity, as conspicuous, as mixed, as destitute (in its idea) of living, sanctifying faith, as the kingdom of England is. Thus it is robbed of all that gives it value in a dogmatical point of view. Such is the aspect of the Body of Christ which the Romish Catechism presents us with ¹

¹ Bonos igitur et improbos ecclesia complectitur. Hæc autem ecclesia nota est, urbique supra montem sita comparata, quæ undique conspicitur. Nam cum illi ab omnibus parendum sit, cognoscatur necesse est. Ecclesia est una; rector visibilis is est qui Romanam Cathedram Petri legitimus successor tenet. . . . Appellatur sancta quod Deo consecrata dedicataque sit.

What is it that we believe in respecting the Church ? That, in spite of its apparent divisions, its apparent imperfections, its scandals, its errors, as it meets the eye under its present manifestation in the shape of particular visible Churches, it is still there in its essential being ; invisible to the eye of man in its corporate unity, but known to God ; the holy seed, hidden but indestructible ; the true source of all fruitfulness and progress in the visible Church ; the Church against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. In spite of sense, we believe all this ; and so, with other spiritual verities which belong not to sight but to faith, it forms an article of the Creed.

It may still be thought an improper use of the word ' church ' to employ it in this sense, since a church, it is urged,¹ must consist not only of visible persons, but of some bonds of union, and modes of expressing that union, among its members ; without which it becomes a mere union of opinion or sentiment, lacking local habitation or name. A Protestant theologian of reputation, Rothe, sides on this point with Bellarmine, and, admitting that the inward communion of saints is something real, asks, How can it be called a church, to the conception of which a visible manifestation is essential ? The Reformers, he observes, found themselves in a difficulty ; they held fast to the article of the Creed, the Holy Catholic Church, but could discover nothing, especially after the breaking up of the Romish Communion, in the visible state of Christendom corresponding to it ; they were compelled, therefore, to transfer the unity of the Church, with other attributes, to an invisible body, which is a contradiction in terms.² It is unnecessary to ask how far the learned author's theory that the state is the form in which the Church must eventually lose its distinctive character may have influenced him in his opposition to a fundamental tenet of Protestantism ; but the objections themselves do not seem of much weight. In the first place, the attribute even of corporate visibility is not absolutely denied to the invisible Church ; it is only postponed. What is affirmed is that in its present imperfect state, in which neither the aggregate of visible churches nor any one visible church (did such exist) can be a perfect manifestation of it, its substantial

. . . Apostolica, Spiritus enim S. qui ecclesiæ præsidet eam non per aliud genus ministrorum quam per Apostolicum gubernat. Cat. Trid., De Symb., A ix.

¹ Non dici potest societas nisi in externis et visibilibus signis consistat ; nam non est societas nisi se agnoscant ii qui dicuntur socii ; non autem se possunt agnoscere nisi societatis vincula sint externa et visibilia. Bellarm., De Eccl. Mil., L. iii., c. 12. The Protestant may admit this, and yet hold that there are other vincula besides the sacraments and the Papal hierarchy, and, generally, besides the external organization of a church.

² Rothe, Anfänge der christlichen Kirche, § 14.

and most real unity cannot be an object of sense ; an imperfection, however, which will in due time be supplied by the ' manifestation of the sons of God ' under a visible head, Christ. But, further, it is a narrow and superficial view of the ' communion of saints ' to suppose that it can only be manifested by joint use of sacraments, or joint submission to ecclesiastical authority. Far deeper, far more real, are the spiritual ligatures which even now knit the body of Christ into a whole : one faith by which all its members depend on Christ ; one Holy Spirit by Whom they are all quickened and sanctified ; one hope which they all entertain ; one principle of love by which all are animated. The members of the body may be scattered here and there, in the various Churches which make up visible Christendom ; but the unity of the Spirit survives local separation, and wherever two or three real Christians are gathered together with Christ by His Spirit in the midst, whether to hear the Word, or to engage in prayer, or to join in the anthem of praise, or to form plans for the evangelization of the world, they know that all other real Christians are one with them—even those whom they have never seen or can see in the flesh. Compared with this spiritual communion, what would be *e.g.*, the spread of episcopacy or of a liturgical ritual throughout the world ? The chaff to the wheat. Such external bonds of union would, after all, possess value only as a manifestation of the unseen unity of the Spirit ; apart from it they would be a forced, artificial product, without power of growth and adaptation to circumstances. We may ask, too, how could the departed saints have fellowship with us if these external bonds of union are the only essential ones, since they are confessedly but provisional and temporary, and do not pass into the world of light and love beyond the grave ? Certainly *some* mode of manifesting its existence is essential to the Church invisible ; but the demand is abundantly satisfied by the fruits of the Spirit, active and contemplative, which make Christians the salt both of the visible Church and the world, the instruments of arresting decay in the mass of professors and of reviving spiritual life where, through adverse influences, it has lost its vigour.

§ 80. THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

The Confession of Augsburg thus expresses itself on this subject : ' That we may attain to saving faith, the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and the Sacraments as instruments, the Holy Spirit, the Author of faith is given. ' They ' (*i.e.*, the Protestants) ' condemn the Anabaptists, whose opinion it is that the Holy Spirit is given to men apart from

the external Word.’¹ And so the first Helvetic Confession (or Expos. Simp.) : ‘ God has always employed ministers to establish and govern His Church. He employs them now, and will do so as long as there is a Church upon earth. The origin, therefore, institution, and office of Christian ministers are from God Himself. God, indeed, could by an immediate exercise of His power gather a Church out of mankind ; but He chooses rather to deal with men through the ministry of men.’² Nor do the Romish formularies, in the abstract, speak otherwise.³ All branches of the Christian Church then, agree in holding that the Christian ministry, whatever different notions may be entertained of its nature and constitution, is of Divine institution. This, however, is not sufficiently to the point. In a certain sense, all the natural relations of superior and inferior by which society is held together are of Divine origin ; as, for example, those of parents and children, governors and subjects. ‘ The powers that be are ordained of God ’ (Rom. viii. 1). But it is not thus that we speak of the Christian ministry as of Divine appointment. It is a part of the special economy of grace—one of the supernatural provisions of the religion of redemption. It is the gift of Christ to the Church ; and our present inquiry is, how far and in what sense it can be traced to the appointment of Christ. Everything in Christianity, really *jure divino*, must, directly or indirectly, be derived from this source.

On examining the New Testament we find that Christ appointed the ministry, in its outward form, no further than that He appointed Apostles for various functions and with special qualifications. He chose the twelve to be His constant associates, in order to receive at first hand the impress of that personality which stands alone in history, and which they have transmitted to us in the gospels ; to be the chosen witnesses of His resurrection ; to receive from His lips, after that event, such instruction in ‘ things pertaining to the kingdom of God,’ its nature and ordinances, as they were able to receive (Acts i. 3) ; to be present at His ascension ; and after His departure to exercise supreme authority in the Church when it should formally come into existence. Their properly ministerial function dates from an early period, but it was also the last charge committed to them by their Master. They were to go forth and preach the Gospel to every creature, to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile. The Sacrament of Christ’s body and blood had already been instituted in their persons, and now they were commanded to admit disciples of all nations into the visible Church by baptism. Not

¹ Conf. Aug., Art. 5.

² Expos. Simp., c. 18.

³ Conc. Trid., Sess. xxiii., c. 1.

merely a missionary, but a pastoral charge was laid upon them ; for we cannot suppose that the command to Peter to feed the sheep and the lambs of Christ's flock (John xxi. 15, 16) was given to him in a personal capacity, and not rather as a representative of the Apostolic college.¹ The Apostles, may, in fact, be regarded under three aspects. On some occasions they represent the whole body of believers, as at the institution of the Lord's Supper. After the departure of Judas the Apostles were ' clean through the word ' that Christ had spoken unto them (John xv. 3)—fit representatives of the blessed company of all faithful people to the end of time. To them, in this capacity, our Lord gave the symbols of His body broken and His blood shed, and in them, to His Church, until He should come again. Here their official character is merged in their Christian. Again, they were to be the special instruments of the Holy Spirit in founding and building up the Church ; the ultimate authority in matters of faith and practice ; for the discharge of which office they received, as no Christians have since received, the gift of inspiration. And, lastly, they were, as has been observed, ministers of Christ—prototypes, in their offices of preaching and pastoral work, of the ordinary Christian ministry, and as such a distinct order in the Church. From this it will be seen in what sense they have successors. As inspired teachers and rulers of the Church they can have no successors. We are built upon ' the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles ' (Ephes. ii. 20) ; but a foundation does not repeat itself. We may have ten thousand instructors in the faith, but we have not, and cannot have, many fathers (1 Cor. iv. 15). Nor is there any necessity for such a personal succession. For though the men were removed one after another, their place was taken, under a superintending Providence, by their writings, in which, though dead, they yet speak. The New Testament Scriptures are the only real Apostolate which the Church

¹ The passage (John xx. 21-23), usually understood to refer to the Apostles alone, has not been quoted in this connection, because the evidence is not clear that it does refer to them alone. In Luke xxiv. 36, we have evidently another account of the same transaction. On the evening of the day on which Christ rose, it is said by that Evangelist that the two disciples whom He accompanied to Emmaus returned to Jerusalem, and reported what had occurred to ' the eleven and them that were with them ' (v. 33) ; that is, to the whole body of believers then present. To this body, then, the commission recorded in John xx. 21-23 was addressed. The Church is sent as Christ Himself was sent, and to the Church it belongs to remit and retain sins (Comp. Matt. xviii. 18). It is thus that Augustine correctly understood the passage ; viz., as applying not to the Apostles only but to the whole Church. ' Deus habitat in templo suo, hoc est in sanctis suis fidelibus, in ecclesia sua : per eos dimittit peccata qui viva templa sunt.' Serm. xcix. 9. ' Ergo si ecclesiæ personam gerebant (Apostoli), et si hoc dictum est *tangam ipsi ecclesiæ diceretur*, pax ecclesiæ dimittit peccata.' De Bapt. Cont. Don., iii. 18.

now possesses ; and, we may add, the only one which is suitable to the spiritual constitution of the Church, as the temple of the Holy Ghost. In every Christian society which is in a healthy state Matthew, John, Paul, Peter, still decide points of doctrine, order its affairs, and preside in its councils with undisputed authority. As representatives of the mystical body of Christ, the Apostles have successors only in the sense that the true Church never can fail nor the gates of Hades prevail against it. But, as ministers of Christ, they are the predecessors of all Christian ministers ; their office stripped of its personal prerogatives, propagates itself ; the functions of preaching and teaching never can become obsolete. Their example, especially that of S. Paul, is that to which Christian ministers must evermore endeavour to conform. In this sense it is true that no ministry deserves the name of Christian which is not Apostolical or derived from the Apostles.

What notion we are to form of this derivation from the Apostles is a matter of primary moment. There are but two theories on this point, substantially distinct. We may suppose either that the sacred office is constituted from without, and descends in a certain line, irrespectively of moral or spiritual qualifications ; or that it springs from within, and descends, it may be, in an ascertainable line of succession, but not without regard to the *fitness* of the possessor. The former is the mode peculiar to the Law of Moses ; the latter belongs to the Gospel. The Levitical priesthood was instituted *ab extra*—that is, a certain family was arbitrarily chosen to discharge the office—and the priesthood descended from father to son by natural birth, liable, no doubt, to forfeiture for misconduct as in his case, but otherwise independent of personal qualifications. This was quite in harmony with a system, typical in structure, and intended to operate on the subject from without inwards. Natural birth, the holy garments, anointing with oil, and typical sacrifices, consecrated the priest of the old covenant (Exod. xxviii., xxix.). And this is the theory of Rome. Faithful to its fundamental principle of transmuting the Gospel into the law, it approximates in this point more closely to the legal institute. There is the same idea of a purely external succession with inherited powers, for the absence of which no fulness of natural or spiritual endowment can compensate ; only, instead of priests by natural, we have priests by spiritual descent ; the existing body of Bishops having the power, in and by the Sacrament of Orders, of spiritually generating pastors for the Church. If we ask, what is the gift transmitted ? the answer is, the sacramental grace of orders ; that is, not increase of sanctifying grace, not grace to use natural or acquired endowments aright, but a mystical grace of priest-

hood for the valid performance of holy functions ; which grace is quite separable from spiritual renovation. And as the priests of the law were always priests, no one having it in his power to reverse his natural birth, so in order to confer the same permanency of office on the priests of the new law, the doctrine of the ' impressed character,' or spiritual stamp, was invented ; which, conferred at ordination, forever distinguishes him who receives it from his brethren in Christ.

The point in debate is not concerning an Apostolic succession of *doctrine*, which, as our article declares, is the test of the legitimacy of a visible Church. 'The pure Word of God preached' in any Christian society, whatever may be its history or its constitution, connects that society with the Apostolic Church. That is to say, the claim of that society to be a true portion of the visible Church depends not on episcopal succession, but on the correspondence of its professed doctrine with that of the Apostles, as found in Holy Scripture. Nor is it the question whether the ministerial commission is to descend from the existing body of ministers or to be derived from the popular voice. Although the consent of the general body was always required to the appointment of ministers, we find no trace in Scripture of the rule that the delegated authority to preach or to rule proceeded from it. The Apostles themselves received their commission from Christ, and from no lower authority. When it became necessary to appoint deacons the Church was directed to select qualified persons, but the Apostles formally set them apart to the new office by the imposition of hands (Acts vi. 6). When a further addition was made to the ministry the Apostles are said to have 'ordained elders in every church' (Acts xiv. 23) ; not, we may be sure, without the consent of each church, however expressed, but still reserving to themselves the formal act of investment. In the Apostolic epistles to churches we find no allusion to what, had it belonged to them, would surely have been one of the most important duties ; viz., the appointment or removal of their pastors. In the pastoral epistles it is to existing ministers—Timothy and Titus, Apostolic delegates—to whom directions on this point are given. But if so, the Apostles are the first link in the chain, and there is no reason why a succession, as regards the external commission, should not proceed from age to age, the existing body of ministers handing down the official authority to their successors, and these latter in turn to theirs. It is obvious that an important counterpoise would thus exist to popular influence, sure to make itself unduly felt wherever the minister is looked upon as a creature of the congregation. It is one of the many defects of the Independent, or Congregational, regimen that, in the point before us, it is not in harmony with

Scripture precedent. The erroneous notion that a single congregation under its pastor, and that only, is a Church in the Scriptural sense of the word, not only reduces the Christian body in any locality to a collection of atoms, lacking in higher forms of unity, but excludes the idea of a ministerial devolution of office. On the removal of a pastor the congregation proceeds to elect a successor ; but there is no recognized body of ministers to transmit the commission. An attempt is sometimes made to remedy the defect by inviting neighbouring pastors to assist in the setting apart of the new minister ; but this is only regarded as an act of brotherly recognition. The qualifications of the candidate are not formally authenticated by any official college, and his call proceeds not from above, but from below.

It is with the inner constitution and origin of the ministry that we are at present concerned ; and as against the Romish doctrine of a transmission of certain gifts and powers, mystical but not moral, with its indelible character (this too mystical, not moral), we gather from the New Testament that the Christian ministry is primarily a gift from above, not tied to any official act, but proceeding directly from the Holy Ghost, and only secondarily an office. It is founded on the spiritual priesthood of all Christians, as that principle was recovered and enunciated at the Reformation. Each Christian, and the whole Church, is a temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19 ; 2 Cor. vi. 16) ; each Christian is empowered and exhorted to exercise priestly functions, to offer up spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and of the willing devotion of the heart. Invested with this privilege, he needs no earthly priesthood to intervene between himself and God ; through the one incommunicable priesthood of the Redeemer he draws near to the throne of grace, in the full assurance of faith. If it be suggested that the Jewish people was also called a kingdom of priests, and yet had earthly mediators, we reply that this dignity was indeed promised to the Jews, but on a condition, which condition never was or could be fulfilled by the Jew as such. ' If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then shall ye be unto Me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation ' (Exod. xix. 5, 6). The command stood over against the Jewish people, but it was never obeyed ; and this because the law was not written on their heart. The privilege was conditional, and failed through the weakness of the flesh ; and so they never collectively became a kingdom of priests. And the Divine prescience had arranged for this defect, by providing from the first an earthly priesthood to mediate between a sinful nation and a holy God. The Law issued requirements which unaided human nature could never satisfy, and therefore it only convinced of

sin. The Levitical institute was a standing memorial that the ideal set before the typical Church could not be reached under that dispensation, and by it there was 'a remembrance of sins' daily and yearly (Heb. x. 3), sins not yet taken away. But the promise of the Gospel is that the law shall be written on the hearts of believers—they shall be all taught of God; and the true Church, the mystical body of Christ, is really a holy priesthood, though not as yet perfect. Hence all priestly, all ministerial functions, reduced to their essence, belong to the whole Church, and to each member thereof. In the last resort the Christian ministry is constituted in the very being of the Church, and is no mere appendage *ab extra*.

Yet not every Christian is called to the exercise of special ministerial functions. For on the basis of the universal priesthood there was vouchsafed to the Church, as an essential feature of the New Dispensation, a vast variety of particular spiritual gifts, all manifestations of the same Spirit, and all intended for edification. 'As the human body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ' (Christ and His Church). 'To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit; to another, faith; to another, the gifts of healing; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will' (I Cor. xii. 8-11). Some confusion of thought has arisen from supposing that S. Paul here intended to enumerate different *orders* of the ministry,¹ but no permanent orders (the Apostolate was not such), except presbyters and deacons, appear in the New Testament. What the Apostle is speaking of is not offices, but gifts, as appears from the fact that several of the functions named might be united in

¹ 'To make us understand that we must not confound the functions in the Church with the gifts of the Spirit, much less mistake the one for the other, let us number the gifts of the Spirit that are noted in this one chapter (I Cor. xii.), and see whether the public functions of the Church can in any way be proportioned unto them. Here are nine gifts of the Holy Ghost mentioned; and I trust there were not so many distinct offices in the Church. He (St. Paul) speaketh indeed (Rom. xii.) of divers gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; of divers offices he speaketh not.' Bilson., Perpet. Gov., c. x. 'I beseech them, therefore, which have hitherto troubled the Church with questions about degrees and offices of ecclesiastical calling, because they principally ground themselves upon two places (I Cor. xii., Ephes. iv.), that, all partiality being laid aside, they would sincerely weigh and examine whether they have not misinterpreted both places; and all by surmising incompatible effects when nothing is meant but sundry graces, gifts, and abilities, which Christ bestowed.' Hooker, E. P., v., c. 78.

one person. Thus an Apostle might be an 'evangelist' and a 'teacher'; and so might a deacon, as appears from the instance of Philip (Acts viii.); a 'prophet' might be a 'pastor,' and a 'pastor' a 'prophet,' and both might be 'helpers' and 'governors.' What we learn from these and similar passages is, that the ministry, as it comes directly from Christ, is a gift rather than an office; and that it is the Holy Ghost who, in the last resort, gives overseers to the Church. The natural ministry—that is, persons gifted but not yet commissioned—exists before the formal; the gift precedes the office; the office is supposed to be conferred on those who possess the inward qualification; and this latter comes from the Holy Spirit, Who refuses to be tied in His operations, and distributes to every man severally as He wills. That these miraculous gifts have long ceased is true; they were bestowed for a temporary purpose, and, having served it, gradually disappeared. The transition to the normal state is visible in S. Paul's pastoral epistles. In place of what we see in 1 Cor. xiv., when one member had 'a psalm,' another 'a tongue,' a third 'a revelation,' a fourth 'an interpretation,' a fifth 'a doctrine'; of none of which gifts does the Apostle discourage the exercise, only laying down the rule that 'all things be done decently and in order'; natural aptitude, moral qualifications, the habitual graces of 'power and love and of a sound mind,' are what S. Paul directs Timothy to require in presbyters and deacons. The gift of 'discerning spirits' gives place to examination of candidates for the sacred office; proved ability succeeds to miraculous 'helps and governments'; natural endowments, sanctified to holy purposes, are to be employed. But though circumstances may change, the principles of the new economy remain the same in every age; and these, on the point before us, are that even the permanent ministry is not given from without, but is inherent in the spiritual constitution of the Church: in its essence, or as it emanates directly from Christ, it is a gift rather than an office.

Yet due cautions are to be observed. Not every one who conceives he has a gift, and perhaps is not mistaken, is at liberty, without authority committed to him, to come forward as a teacher. In the earliest age great liberty prevailed on this point, as it did in the Jewish synagogue; and the Apostle Paul, far from desiring to abridge this liberty, exhorts the Thessalonians 'not to quench the Spirit' or 'despise prophesyings.'¹ With the cessation, however, of extraordinary gifts, as a counterpoise to which that of 'discerning spirits' existed in the Apostolic Church, other arrangements became necessary. False prophets and false spirits appeared in the Christian

¹ Had the Church of England always borne in mind this injunction, her history might have been a different, and in some respects, a more agreeable one.

assemblies ; doctrines not of heavenly origin began to be taught. It was no longer safe to trust to unpremeditated efforts, or to allow the natural ministry free scope ; for experience had shown that it might not be really an endowment of the Holy Ghost. Rules, restrictions, the application of tests became necessary to ensure, as far as might be, that the gift was from above. And then was seen the wisdom of the apostolic usage, already mentioned, of reserving the formal investiture of office to persons specially qualified for that duty. And who so likely to be qualified as those already in office ? Christ bestows the gift, but it belongs to the Church, represented by her officers, to ' call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard ' (Art. xxiii.) : to examine into the validity of a spiritual call, to authenticate it, and by prayer and the imposition of hands to confer the external commission. ' It is not lawful for any man to take upon himself the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same ' (*Ibid.*) ; and by this appointed channel the natural ministry passes into the formal, and the persons gifted into an order. What is divine in the ministry is the gift ; what is human in it is the commission, conveyed by fallible men, and therefore liable to the imperfection which cleaves to the Church in all its visible manifestations. And hence the formal ministry is never quite co-extensive with the natural, any more than the true Church is co-extensive with the visible Church. Mistakes may and do occur : not always does the gift find its way into formal exercise, nor is the external commission a certain guarantee of the possession of the inward qualification. The order and rule, as enunciated by our Church ; ' Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and ministration ? ' (Ord. Serv.) ; and yet, ' It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching before he is lawfully sent to execute the same ' (Art. xxiii.) ; hold good to the end of time.

§ 81. POLITY OF THE CHURCH

It has been shown that the visible organization of the Church, unlike that of the Mosaic institute, proceeds from within outwards, and as need required ; deacons being first appointed, then presbyters, while the apostolate, the only office which can be traced directly to Christ, passed away as soon as the volume of the canonical writings was completed and took its place. But it has not been explained why the particular form of polity (deacons and presbyters) should have been adopted by the Apostles. Why, for example, should they not have chosen—with, perhaps, modifications rendering it suitable

to the Gospel Dispensation—the organization with which they were so familiar, viz., that of the temple, with its graduated hierarchy of high-priest, priests, and Levites? It is asserted, indeed, that this was the pattern which they followed; but with no warrant as far as the Scripture evidence is concerned.

The reply sometimes is, that the various offices mentioned in Scripture were formally included in that of an apostle, and were by the Apostles shed off successively as they became necessary or expedient. That some of the *functions* discharged at first by the Apostles were delegated to others—such as attending to the poor, the local ministry of the Word, or the management of local ecclesiastical affairs—admits of no doubt; this was the very reason of their appointing deacons and presbyters. But this is not enough to establish the theory. It must be shown that such subordinate offices were ever formally conferred on the Apostles—that is, that they were by Christ, at some time or other, formally created, first deacons, and then presbyters. For, however a person may devolve certain *functions* on others, he cannot transmit an office unless he has been first invested with it himself. But there is no trace in Scripture of any such formal institution of these orders in the persons of the Apostles. The twelve were chosen to be simply Apostles, the apostolate including all the *functions* which were afterwards distributed among the various orders of the ministry, and a great deal besides; but they never were formally deacons, presbyters, or bishops. The notion may be dismissed as a fanciful one, resting on no sufficient evidence. Nor is there any need to resort to it; for, side by side with the legal hierarchy, there had grown up, and in the time of Christ come to maturity, an institution not directly of Divine origin, but providentially intended to become the cradle of the visible polity of the Christian Church—viz., the synagogue. To the synagogue, properly so called, a higher antiquity cannot be assigned than some period subsequent to the Babylonish Captivity; and this event sufficiently accounts for its rise. The exiles 'by the waters of Babylon,' deprived of the temple services, endeavoured to supply the want by such religious exercises as remained within their reach. They came together as opportunity offered, to hear at the mouth of a prophet words of instruction and consolation (Ezek. xiv. 1). Restored to their native land, they continued these weekly assemblies, the homiletic services of which would be the more valued when the gift of prophecy was withdrawn. In the Book of Nehemiah we have an account of a religious service closely resembling what afterwards became the stated worship of the synagogue: Ezra ascended a pulpit of wood; read portions of Scripture, which, since the Hebrew tongue

was no longer understood by the people, were interpreted by persons appointed for that purpose ; and the whole concluded with prayer and thanksgiving. The service on this occasion took place in the open air ; the first erection of buildings for the purpose is probably to be ascribed to the extra-Palestine Jews, whose example was speedily followed by their brethren in Judæa ; and synagogues so multiplied that in our Lord's time¹ there are said to have been hundreds in Jerusalem alone. The dispersion of the Jews after the Captivity produced a corresponding diffusion of the new mode of worship. The Jews of the dispersion maintained their connection with the temple by attendance at the principal feasts, while in the particular places in which they resided they were fain to content themselves with the simpler devotions of the synagogue. And thus in every considerable city of the Roman Empire synagogues, in the time of Christ, existed.

From the foregoing remarks the nature of the synagogical worship may be gathered. With the temple, or the Levitical worship, it had no immediate connection. The services were not sacrificial or symbolical, but homiletic ; a priest, as such, had no place in the synagogue. As to teaching, great latitude prevailed. While this office properly belonged to the rulers of the synagogue, and could not be exercised without their permission, it was commonly delegated to any qualified member of the assembly who might intimate his wish to discharge it. Thus it excited no surprise when our Lord, who was of the tribe of Judah, stood up in the synagogue at Nazareth ' for to read ' (Luke iv. 16) ; and when S. Paul and Barnabas entered the synagogue in Pisidia, the rulers sent them a permissive message, ' if they had any word of exhortation to say on ' (Acts viii. 14). Such is a brief sketch of the institution which had, in the lapse of ages, gradually established itself wherever there were Jews—that is, everywhere ; and perhaps there is no circumstance in the history of the chosen people more strongly indicative of a superintending Providence, more clearly intended to prepare the way for the Gospel. Christianity was to embrace all nations within its pale ; but if the Jews had not, after their dispersion, adopted this form of worship, there would not have existed any religious centres to which the new faith could have appealed, as the Apostles in the exercise of their mission traversed the world. But in the synagogue exactly what was wanting was supplied. These places of worship could be multiplied indefinitely without affecting the unity of the temple, or the connection of the worshippers therewith ; by them the Jewish mind became habituated to the offerings of prayer and praise instead of the legal sacrifices,

¹ Vitringa, *De Syn. Vet.*, i., p. 2, c. 12.

and to a ministry of the Word instead of a ministry of types. Thus on their arrival at any new scene of labour the Christian missionaries, themselves Jews, had but to repair to the local synagogue to find, as far as regards external preparation, the way smoothed for the successful promulgation of the Gospel.

With these two, and only these two, systems of worship, that of the temple and that of the synagogue, the Apostles were conversant; which were they likely to engraft on the Christian Church? Let it be remembered that, as long as the temple stood, no Jew, instructed in the principles of his religion, could ever have thought of setting up a counterpart of the temple in heathen lands; still less in close proximity to the sacred structure. It was a fixed maxim with this people that the Levitical ritual was to be confined to one spot, viz., Jerusalem: there alone, according to the law, God was to be approached with sacrifice. When Onias, driven from Judæa, and disappointed in his hope of succeeding to the high-priesthood, persuaded Ptolemy (B.C. 145-80) to permit the erection of a temple at Leontopolis, in Egypt, his greatest difficulty, as Prideaux observes, was to reconcile the Jews to this project, since they believed it sin to sacrifice to God anywhere but upon the altar at Jerusalem.¹ Nothing but a special revelation from heaven that the temple services were no longer to be confined to Jerusalem, or some providential catastrophe rendering these services impossible, could have overcome these objections. Such a catastrophe, did, indeed, occur, viz., the destruction of the temple A.D. 70, by which Christianity was released to pursue its independent career; but at this time the elements of Christian worship were firmly established throughout the world. And, far from there being any command of Christ in this direction, He Himself, in the few prospective hints which He gave, contemplated the Christian societies as assuming the synagogical form; as when He promised His presence to two or three gathered in His name, and still more distinctly when He committed authority to such societies to bind and loose, and the power of excommunication—functions which belonged not to the temple but to the synagogue. There is, indeed, no fact more significant, or more important to notice, than the light in which the first Jewish converts regarded themselves, and were regarded by their unbelieving brethren. They did not admit, nor was the accusation ever brought against them (except in S. Paul's instance), that they were separatists from the divinely appointed ritual of Moses. 'This way,' 'this sect,' was the usual title bestowed upon them. How could they entertain such a

¹ Prideaux, *Connect.*, p. ii., 64. Josephus calls this attempt of Onias ἀμαρτίαν καὶ τοῦ νόμου παράβασις. *Antiq. Jud.*, xiii. c. 3.

supposition when the temple and its ritual, which they believed to be of Divine origin, existed before their eyes, and no intimation was given of the immediate fulfilment of their Master's prophecy (Matt. xxiv. 2)? At any rate, it is clear what their attitude was. They frequented the temple at the appointed hours of prayer (Acts iii. 1); and it was the testimony of S. James, when advising his brother Apostle to make it clear that he was no subverter of the 'customs' of Moses by himself fulfilling a vow, that the believing Jews at Jerusalem were 'all zealous of the law' (Acts xxi. 20); and he mentions the fact without any mark of disapprobation. And the Apostle of the Gentiles, who so zealously vindicated the freedom of the Gentiles from the yoke of the law, thought it expedient for himself as a Jew to follow this advice. So far was the infant church of Jerusalem from assuming a hostile or even indifferent attitude towards the Jewish ordinances. It was regarded as a new sect among the many which existed side by side in the bosom of Judaism, the peculiarity of which was that its members believed Jesus of Nazareth to be the promised Messiah.¹ But to have established in the Christian Church a transcript of the temple and its sacrificial ritual, would have placed the new sect in direct opposition to the existing economy, and seriously impeded the progress of the Gospel. S. Paul could with truth challenge his accusers to gainsay his statement, that 'neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple' had he 'offended anything at all' (Act xxv. 8).

Such is the antecedent probability in favour of the derivation of the polity of the Church from the synagogue; and the facts convert it into certainty. The 'young men' who carried Ananias to his burial (Acts v. 6) do not seem to have occupied an official position; it was natural that the younger members of the society should undertake this office; but it is otherwise with 'the seven' formerly chosen by the Church and set apart by the Apostles with the imposition of hands (Acts vi.). These are justly considered as the prototypes of what afterwards became the diaconate. Vitringa, indeed, labours to prove that this was not so; that their office was an extraordinary one, and in many respects did not correspond to that of the deacons who appear in S. Paul's epistles.² There is no doubt that such men as Stephen and Philip play a more important part in the history of the early Church than that which we commonly associate with the name of deacon, but this was because they were filled 'with the Holy Ghost and with wisdom.' Such personal qualities would not be transmissible, but the duties

¹ This is exactly Gamaliel's view of them in Acts v. 34-39.

² De Syn. Vet., L. iii. p. 2, c. v.

to which they were appointed, such as distributing the alms of the Church, must have been permanent, and could be discharged by any trustworthy men. Once the office was established it gradually drew to itself other duties, such as those mentioned in 1 Tim. iii. ; the deacons of S. Paul probably took an active part in the office of instruction, public and private. In the lapse of time the diaconate lost much of its original dignity, especially in the extra-Palestine Churches. The deacons attended to the poor and sick ; but their main duty was to assist the bishop in the details of public worship ; to see ' that all things were done decently and in order ' ; to look after the vestments ; to select the portions of Scripture to be read ; to assist at the distribution of the Eucharistic elements ; and to convey them to those who through infirmity were unable to be present at the celebration. Now, the similarity between such an office and that of the Chazanim, or inferior ministers of the synagogue, as described by the Rabbinical writers, is obvious ; and no doubt can be entertained that, with the necessary modifications, the latter, under the form of the diaconate, reappeared in the Christian, especially the Gentile-Christian, Churches.¹ It has, indeed, been objected that the analogy fails, because each synagogue, as a rule, had only one Chazan ;² but this is by no means certain. The number seems to have varied according to the size and importance of the synagogue ; and Vitranga quotes a passage which speaks at least of two, and his inference is justified that if there were two there might have been more.³ But whatever uncertainty may rest on the derivation of the Christian diaconate, none such can attach to the next order of ministers, the Presbyters, first mentioned in Acts xi. 30. From what other source but the synagogue could the Apostles, all Jews, have borrowed this class of ministers ? There were no Presbyters, or elders, officially connected with the temple. But in the synagogue they were the ruling body, entrusted with the regulation of public worship, the care of the poor, and the administration of discipline. In the New Testament they sometimes bear the title of ' rulers,' or ' Ἀρχισυνάγωγοι,' but their proper Jewish name was **זקנים**, or elders. In the smaller synagogues one such elder presided ; in the larger there were several who formed a college

¹ Although the first deacons are never afterwards so called in the book of Acts, but always ' the seven,' the name is implied in *διακονία τῆ καθημερινῆ*, and *διακονεῖν τραπεζαίαις*, Acts vi. 1, 2.

² Lightfoot, Phil.

³ *Synagogæ passim unum habuerunt ministrum (ἑνὸν), ut ex iis quæ supra disputavimus, abunde constat : majores tamen habere potuerunt et habuerunt etiam plures, ut ex testimonio supra ex Colbo producto liquet, ' locus ubi duos facere solent Chazanitas.' Si duos, ergo et plures habere potuerunt Synagogæ diaconas, prout circumstantiæ suadebant. L. iii., p. 2, c. 23.*

(*πρεσβυτήριον*, 1 Tim. iv. 14); whence the varying statements of Scripture, which sometimes speaks of the 'ruler' (Luke xiii. 14), more commonly of 'the rulers' of the synagogue (Acts xiii. 15). The duties of Christian Presbyters, as described by S. Paul in 1 Tim. v. 17, correspond with those of the Jewish elders, only that labouring 'in the world and doctrine' is more particularly ascribed to and commended in the Christian office.¹ We may suppose, in short, that what took place on a certain occasion is a fair example of the formation of a Christian society. When S. Paul arrived at Corinth he repaired, as usual, to the synagogue, and claiming his right to speak, he endeavoured to convince his hearers that Jesus is the Christ. When he found that the majority refused to be convinced, he separated the believing Jews from their unbelieving brethren, and with the Gentiles who believed, formed them into a Christian synagogue, retaining as far as possible the features of the elder institution. It was the celebration of the Lord's Supper that formed the essential point of distinction between the two. This Christian synagogue was the nucleus of the visible Corinthian Church, but only the nucleus. As time went on, and the Church grew in numbers, other regulations became necessary; Christianity, after A.D. 70, began to crystallize itself independently, as regards its polity; the immediate occasion being the destruction of the Jewish temple. But not until a much later age did the Church quite lose sight of its synagogical parentage, as regards polity and ritual.

With the institution of deacons and presbyters the inspired writings fail us, except in the way of indirect precedent. The synagogue had no office corresponding to that of Diocesan Bishop, nor does the New Testament furnish us with any instance of the office. The 'bishops' of S. Paul's epistles are, as is now universally acknowledged, the same persons who are elsewhere called presbyters.² Timothy and Titus, usually cited as bishops in our sense of the word, were never permanently fixed in one place; at least, not during S. Paul's lifetime. They were Apostolic delegates, left for a time to 'set in order the things that were wanting' in certain churches (Tit. i 5); to do what the Apostle himself would have done, had he not been detained elsewhere; but when their work

¹ The notion that lay-elders, such as are found in the Calvinistic Churches, are mentioned in the New Testament, is conclusively refuted by Vitringa, L. 2, c. ii. The Apostolic Presbyters were both teachers and rulers; though one or the other function predominated according to circumstances.

² *Πρεσβύτερος* was the Jewish title; that of *ἐπίσκοπος* is of Gentile origin. The Athenians used to send public officers called *ἐπισκόποι* to inspect subject states.

was finished they rejoined their master, to be employed, no doubt, in the same way in other places.¹ The utmost that can be inferred from these instances is that it is not at variance with the mind of S. Paul that the chief management of a church, whether for a longer or a shorter time, should be vested in an individual ; and so far as this favours the episcopal regimen, let it prevail. But no order of diocesan bishops appears in the New Testament.² The evidence is in favour of the supposition that Episcopacy sprang from the Church itself, and by a natural process, and that it was sanctioned by S. John, the last survivor of the Apostles. The presbytery, when it assembled for consultation, would naturally elect a president to maintain order ; at first temporarily, but in time with permanent authority ; an office such as that which S. James appears to have exercised at Jerusalem. Thus it is probable that at an early period an informal episcopate had sprung up in each church. As the Apostles were one by one removed, and as local churches came to consist, not of one, but of several congregations, the office would assume increased importance and become invested with greater powers. Christianity, when not enfeebled by sectarian influences, tends to visible forms of unity, of continually expanding circumference. We need not refuse assent, with the necessary qualifications, to Möhler's remark, ' that the craving of the faithful in Christ for union cannot rest satisfied until it sees itself expressed in some type or representation. The Bishop is the visible expression of this longing—the personification of the mutual love of the Christians of a certain locality—the manifestation and the living centre of that Christian spirit which ever strives after unity.'³ That is to say, Episcopacy, like the inferior orders, developed itself from within outwards, and we have no need of a Divine prescription to account for it. With the departure of the living Apostolic authority, acknowledged by the whole Church, factions, and heresies, as Jerome remarks, began to prevail, and, in his view, the Episcopate was instituted as a remedy against these evils. ' When every man began to think those whom he had baptized to be his own, and not

¹ ' Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me,' 2 Tim. iv. 9. ' When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis,' Tit. iii. 12. The tradition that Timothy and Titus became, after S. Paul's death, diocesan bishops of Ephesus and Crete, may be well founded ; but it cannot be proved from the New Testament.

² It is a curious and characteristic circumstance, that of the three orders which have, for the most part, prevailed in the Church, that particular one which, as regards Scriptural evidence, has the least to say for itself, should, in certain quarters, be described as emphatically ' the divine element ' of Church polity.

³ *Einheit in der Kirche*, p. 187.

Christ's, it was decreed throughout the world that one chosen out of the presbyters should be set above the rest, to whom the care of the whole Church should appertain, that thus the seeds of division might be rooted out.'¹ The Cyprianic idea of the Episcopate followed in due time. Each bishop came to be regarded not only as a centre of unity to his own Church, but as a means of communication with all other Christian Churches; the office assumed an ecumenical as well as a diocesan character. The universal episcopate formed a kind of corporation, of which each particular bishop was in his diocese the representative. 'As the one Church,' says Cyprian, 'has been divided by Christ into many members throughout the world, so the one episcopate is everywhere diffused by the multiplicity of many bishops.'² Thus the universal episcopate was supposed to have taken the place of the Apostolic College, and each bishop to enjoy a portion of the Apostolic grace and authority. It is unnecessary to pursue the subject further. Bishops grew into metropolitans, metropolitans into patriarchs; and by the same law of natural expansion. It is easy to comment on the errors, doctrinal and practical, which disfigured the Christianity of those ages. None the less, it presents a remarkable phenomenon. A vast association, extending over the greater part of the Roman Empire, maintained its ground not only without the aid, but under the disfavour of the state; exhibiting everywhere the same general features, and pervaded throughout its parts by a common sympathy and a compactness of adhesion which to the heathen statesman or philosopher must have appeared inexplicable. It is easy, with the infidel historian, to ascribe the characteristic features of the visible Church of those ages to priestly ambition or other evil tendencies. The Christian of larger views and greater candour will see in them a proof of the power of his religion, even when declined from the Apostolic standard, to knit men together in a bond of union far exceeding in depth and comprehensiveness any the world had yet seen.

§ 82. POWERS OF THE CLERGY (THE KEYS)

According to the Council of Trent, the government of the Church is a hierarchy, or the relation of the clerical order to the Christian people is that of secular rulers to subjects;³ and, moreover, the clergy are a priesthood in the strict sense of the word—mediators

¹ Quoted by Bilson, *Perp. Gov.*, p. 268.

² *Epist.* 52, ad Anton. Comp. 'Episcopatus unus est, cujus a singulis in solidum pars tenetur.' *De Unit. Eccles.*

³ *Dominus noster Jesu Christus a terris ascensurus ad cœlos sacerdotes sui ipsius vicarios reliquit, tanquam præsides et iudices.* Sess. xiv., c. 5.

between God and man. But the relation of magistrate to subject belongs to the state, not to the Church ; and the New Testament knows no other proper priesthood but that of Christ Himself.

On the Romish theory, the laity are in a state of tutelage, under a paternal, but despotic government, to which has been committed ample means of subduing the refractory impulses of human nature, and enforcing implicit obedience ; viz., the power of the keys ; by which is understood, not the remitting and retaining of sins by the ministry of the Word, but the priestly prerogative of absolution, whereby the gate of heaven is opened or shut to the penitent. The priest has but to 'retain' sin by refusing absolution, and no pardon can be hoped for ; while excommunication is a complete severance from Christ. Not without reason is the *potestas jurisdictionis*, or power of government, assigned by Romish writers to the sacrament of penance ; for in truth this one 'nerve of discipline,' as the Council calls it, is sufficient, in all ordinary cases, to crush any symptoms of an insubordinate spirit.

It was not without expressions of dissent that the Tridentine Canons on this subject were promulgated. That Christian instinct, which has never been wholly extinguished in the Romish Church, even in its worst times, asserted itself against the despotic power claimed for the Pope over the bishops, for the bishops over the other clergy, and for the whole spirituality over the laity. The very name, it was remarked at the Council, carried with it an unchristian sound. The New Testament describes the clergy as the ministers, or servants, of the Christian people, and not as their rulers in a secular sense. But these protests were unavailing. The Gallican Church, indeed, as a whole, made a successful stand against the concentration of ecclesiastical power in the Papacy ; but to admit the laity to an effective share in the government of the Church would have been as strange a notion to Bossuet as to Bellarmine. The latter sums up the Romish doctrine thus : 'It has always been believed in the Catholic Church that the bishops in their dioceses and the Roman Pontiff in the whole Church, are real ecclesiastical princes ; competent by their own authority, and without the consent of the people or advice of the presbyters, to enact laws binding on the conscience ; to judge in matters ecclesiastical, like other judges ; and, if need be to inflict punishment.' The only popular element in the system, is that any one may become a member of the episcopate, or governing body.

The restoration—in theory, at least—of the laity to their proper place in the Church was an immediate result of the Reformation. The reassertion of the universal priesthood of Christians was incon-

sistent with any difference *in kind* between clergy and laity, and the doctrine of justification by faith robbed the confessional of its terrors. The lay members of the body of Christ emerged from the spiritual imbecility which they had been taught to consider as their natural state, and became free, not from the yoke of Christ, but from that of the priest. In some instances, as was natural, the recovered liberty of the Church ran into licence. In others, the rights of the laity, though acknowledged in treatises and confessions, were never fully restored, the secular government being made the depository of those powers which had formally been wielded by the Pope or his delegates. The proper adjustment of lay and clerical influence in the Church is a problem which yet remains to be solved by most of the Reformed Churches of Europe.

The distinction between clergy and laity, if considered one *of kind*, is at variance with Scripture. S. Peter speaks of the whole Church, and not any particular part of it, as the Lord's *κλήρος* or portion (1 Pet. v. 3); nor, in the view of any of the sacred writers, is the ministry more essential to the Church than the Church to the ministry. A distinction may, indeed, be founded on a diversity of spiritual gifts, but this is not one of kind. On the other hand, Scripture does assign an independent position to the ministers of Christ; they are not mere organs of the congregation, but presidents and leaders (1 Thess. v. 12; Heb. xiii. 17). Titus is directed to 'rebuke sharply' certain members of the Church (chap. i. 13), and the warning which S. Peter addresses to presbyters not to 'lord it over the flock' (1 Pet. v. 3) presupposes powers which they might be tempted to abuse. In short, the sovereignty of the Church resides neither in the people apart from their pastors nor in the pastors apart from the people, but in the whole body. There are three rules commended to us by Apostolic precedent, which, wherever they prevail, operate as a check to hierarchical despotism.

The first is the right of the laity to a voice in the councils of the Church. In the Council held at Jerusalem to consider the question of the obligation of the ceremonial law on Gentile converts, 'the whole Church' was present, and the decree ran in the name of 'the apostles, and elders, and brethren' (Acts xv. 22, 23). Whether the clergy and laity form one mixed assembly, or distinct ones, is not of primary importance; though the latter seems the better arrangement. What is of moment is an effective vote, or veto, to be possessed by the lay assessors, or chamber; otherwise their presence is of little use. It would be interesting, did space permit, to trace the steps by which the Apostolic model was gradually abandoned, until not only the laity, but the presbyters and deacons, were excluded

from any real share in the government of the Church. The synodal system, in itself beneficial, was the proximate cause of the change. The diocesan synods long retained that popular element which is the proper counterpoise to sacerdotal influence. Cyprian himself, the chief assertor of Episcopal authority, declares it to have been his rule, from the time that he became bishop, to do nothing without the advice of his presbyters and the consent of the people. 'Common decency,' he writes to his clergy, 'as well as a rule of discipline and manner of (church) life, requires that we, the bishops, with the clergy, and in the presence of the steadfast laity, should settle all matters by piously consulting together.' But when diocesan synods expanded into provincial it became the practice for the bishops only, as representatives of their respective churches, to be summoned; the presbyters, if any, appearing merely as attendants on their bishops; while the laity were excluded, or were present merely as spectators. At length, in the greater councils, whether provincial or general, the whole administrative power passed into the hands of the bishops; they alone possessed the right of voting, and if a few presbyters or laymen attended it was only to discharge subordinate functions. It is of little avail to urge that the bishop, being one with his people and the people with him, the laity were, in fact, represented at synods in and through their bishop: ¹ considerations of this mystical character are not found in practice to be of much value. A clerical corporation, like every other, inevitably tends to its own aggrandisement, and this without being conscious of the motives which influence it. It would be unjust to ascribe to the bishops of the third and fourth centuries a deliberate design to exalt their own order at the expense of the others; such, nevertheless, was the result. The circumstances of the times—especially the difficulty of keeping within bounds that singular class of persons, the 'confessors'—might be pleaded in excuse of Cyprian's assumptions; but these became the ordinary style of his successors; every contest between the presbyters or the laity and the bishop terminated in favour of the latter; and thus, by continual accretions, the hierarchical system attained the proportions under which it presents itself in the middle ages.

No church can be in a healthy condition which excludes from the administration of its affairs any constituent part of the body ecclesiastic. Those who are thus excluded lapse into a state of indifference to the spiritual welfare of the community, as a limb never used perishes of atrophy; or they secede to other religious bodies in which church-life is more active and diffused. The monarchical

¹ Möhler, *Einheit in der Kirche*, p. 211.

form into which the government of the English Church seems to have settled cannot be deemed favourable to the vitality or progress of that Church. The history of the disestablished Irish Church may read us some lessons, particularly as showing what can be accomplished by the cordial co-operation of the different orders of clergy and of the clergy and laity, each with recognized powers and duties, in the work of organization.

The second rule is that the laity should have a voice in the appointment of pastors. Such we gather to have been the mind of the Apostles. If on any occasion they might have claimed to act independently, the appointment of a successor to Judas Iscariot was such; yet they did not so act. The case was brought by S. Peter before the whole company of believers, and at his request they selected two individuals as best fitted for the vacant office; all joined in prayers for Divine direction; all 'gave forth their lots' (Acts i. 24-26). So it was in the appointment of deacons. The Apostles directed 'the multitude of the disciples' to choose from themselves whom they judged most competent. The persons thus selected were presented to the Apostles to be formally inducted into office (Acts vi. 5, 6). The mode of selecting presbyters is not so distinctly recorded; but the natural meaning of the word used (*χειροτονήσαντες*, Acts xiv. 23) is that of appointing by suffrage, and we gather from it that Paul and Barnabas followed the precedent of the diaconate. This is confirmed by the testimony of Clement of Rome. 'Those,' he writes, 'whom either the Apostles or other distinguished men' (their delegates) 'placed in the ministry, with the consent of the whole Church (*συνευδοκησάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης*), ought not to be deposed from their office.'¹ For several centuries after the Christian era the Apostolic rule was observed. 'The faithful laity,' says Cyprian, 'ought the rather to avoid communion with a delinquent bishop and sacrilegious priests, because it possesses the power both of choosing worthy priests and of rejecting unworthy.'²

The third and perhaps the most important of the rights of the laity is concerned with the exercise of discipline; which by Christ Himself is vested in the whole Church, and not in the clerical body alone. 'Tell it unto the church' is His command (Matt. xviii. 17); not to the rulers as a distinct class, but to the whole society, with which it rests, in the last resort, to inflict the penalty of excommunication. That the presiding bishop, or elders, should be the persons to pronounce the sentence may be admitted, but that the decision should rest with the community is clearly the sense of Scrip-

¹ Epist. i., p. 44. ² Epist. lxxviii. See also Apost. Const., viii., c. 4.

ture. When S. Paul, by virtue of his Apostolic authority, informs the Corinthians that, owing to their remissness, he had resolved to deliver a certain offender 'to Satan for the destruction of the flesh,' he takes care to associate, as far as he could, the Church with himself, and to make it a joint act. Absent in body he would be present in spirit when the Church was 'gathered together' to carry out the sentence. And he afterwards speaks of it as a 'punishment inflicted of many' (1 Cor. v. 4, 2 Cor. ii. 6). Now of all ecclesiastical acts the expulsion of a member is the most sovereign; indeed, it is the only sovereign act which a church, as such, can perform, and corresponds to capital punishment by the State. Wherever the clergy possess an uncontrolled power of inflicting spiritual censures, it is next to impossible but that a spiritual despotism, of a peculiarly oppressive kind, will be the result. The two dogmas, that the sovereignty of the church resides in the clergy, and that the latter are proper priests, were sufficient to enslave the mind of Europe for a thousand years. Nor were they to become again dominant, would they be found to have lost aught of their potency. These spiritual weapons may be despised by the philosopher, but with the multitude, especially where the light of Scripture is not diffused, the case is different.

If the relation of pastors to people is not that of governors to subjects, still less is it that of a mediating priesthood, such as existed in the preparatory dispensation. What has been incidentally observed in the notices of the synagogue, and its offspring the earliest Christian societies, sufficiently proves that the sacrificial element except in an improper and figurative sense, formed no part of the first Christian worship. And the direct testimony of Scripture confirms this conclusion. In no single instance does it assign to Christian ministers the proper title of a sacrificing priest (*ἱερέυς*, sacerdos). They are Presbyters (whence the word priest in our formularies), ministers, overseers, but never mediators between God and man. There are extant three epistles of S. Paul, addressed to Christian ministers, and directly on their duties; but among these duties we search in vain for any of a sacerdotal character. Timothy is directed to 'preach the word,' to 'give attendance to reading, exhortation and doctrine,' to exercise discipline, to ordain elders; but no instructions are given him touching the matter or ritual of the Christian sacrifice. Omissions of this kind in pastoral epistles are, on the supposition of the Christian ministry's being a proper priesthood, unaccountable. For wherever there exists a visible sacrifice and priesthood, they occupy a position of decided superiority to every other act of worship. So it was under the law

of Moses, and so it is in the Church of Rome ; in which latter the sacrifice of the Mass is the central feature of worship, around which everything else revolves. If S. Paul had regarded Timothy and Titus as priests, it is natural to suppose that directions concerning their sacerdotal duties would have filled as large a space in his epistles as they do in the Book of Leviticus.

But it may be urged that the question does not turn so much upon names as upon facts ; and, though it may be granted that neither the Apostles nor the two orders of the ministry traceable to them bear the name of priests, yet that sacerdotal functions are ascribed to them in Scripture. But the assumed fact is not a fact. Neither the Apostles, nor the presbyters, to say nothing of deacons, ever appear in Scripture as discharging such functions. When and where were the Apostles appointed priests ? The Council of Trent replies, when, in the institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus spake the words, ' Do this in remembrance of Me.' ¹ It is not easy to discover so momentous a doctrine in this simple direction. The words *Hoc facite*, which as spoken by Christ we hold to mean, Celebrate this ordinance, must, according to the Council, be translated, Perform the sacrifice of the Mass.² Which interpretation is the correct one let the terms of institution decide : ' When He had given thanks He brake it and said, *Take eat* ; after the same manner also He took the cup, saying, *As often as ye drink it* ; this do ye in remembrance of Me ' (1 Cor. xi. 24, 25). The eleven Apostles, Judas being separated from them, represented on this occasion the mystical body of Christ in every age, not a sacerdotal order. The remitting and retaining of sins, even if it had been a special Apostolic privilege, is sufficiently explained by such instances as those of Ananias and Sapphira, Simon Magus, and Elymas the sorcerer, in which a supernatural gift of spiritual discernment was exhibited ; but in fact, as has been observed, the commission was given, not to the Apostles alone, but to the whole company of assembled believers ; it is the Church, as the witness for Christ from age to age, that remits or retains sins, not a priestly caste by the power of absolution. It is remarkable that the baptismal commission should not have been insisted on in this connection, for this does seem to have been addressed to the Apostles only ; but the fact is, it would not have

¹ Si quis dixerit illis verbis, Hoc facite in meam commemorationem, Christum non instituisse Apostolos sacerdotes ; aut non ordinasse ut ipsi, alique sacerdotes offerrent corpus et sanguinem suum ; anathema sit. Sess. xii., Can. 2.

² ' The plea from Hoc facite, when first set up, was abundantly answered by a learned Romanist, I mean the excellent Pickerell, who wrote about 1562. Protestants also have often confuted it ; and the Papists themselves, several of them, have long ago given it up.' Waterland, Christian Sac. App., c. 3.

been convenient to press the passage, for, as is well known, the Church of Rome not only admits the validity of lay baptism, but in cases of supreme necessity allows a midwife to baptize. The following words, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world' (Matt. xxviii. 20), make it plain that the charge was given to the Apostles as representatives of the Christian ministry, not as inspired founders of the Church, for as such they were not to remain to the end of the world. The subsequent history also is silent on the point. They who on the Day of Pentecost received Peter's message were baptized; by whom we are not informed (Acts ii. 41). Philip, though but a deacon, baptized the Eunuch. Peter, beholding the sealing of the Spirit vouchsafed to Cornelius and his friends, 'commanded them to be baptized' (Acts x. 48); whether by himself or others is not specified. Paul declares that Christ sent him not to baptize but to preach the Gospel, and congratulates himself that he had only baptized a few of the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. i. 14-17); which, to say the least, negatives the supposition that he considered it a special part of his office to administer this sacrament. With respect to the Eucharist, the evidence is still more scanty. The first believers 'broke bread from house to house,' celebrating, probably, the Lord's Supper immediately after these love-feasts; they came together on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts ii. 46; xx. 7); but whether any, or what, ritual was observed on the occasion; what the form of consecration was, if any; by whom the elements were distributed—on these, and such-like points, which on the sacerdotal theory we should expect to find minutely described, the record is silent. In one passage (1 Cor. xi. 23-26) S. Paul treats at some length on the Eucharist; but on the question what is necessary to the validity of the ordinance he delivers no rule. 'The cup of blessing which we bless, the bread which we break'; from whose lips the blessing proceeded we are not told. It will not be contended that the Apostles themselves could be present at all celebrations, and no mention is made of presbyters taking their place. To 'make the sacrament'¹ was, as far as appears, not the prerogative of a priestly caste, but of Him from whom all ordinances derive their virtue; the true consecration was the living faith of the partakers. S. Paul describes himself and his fellow Apostles as 'stewards of the mysteries of God'; that is, as is known to intelligent readers of Scripture, of doctrines hitherto hidden but now revealed, not of ordinances;² stewards and dispensers of divine

¹ *Conficere sacramentum*—the usual expression employed by Romish writers.

² 'How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery . . . that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs,' etc. (Ephes. iii. 3-6).

truth, as indeed the requirement that they should be 'faithful' sufficiently proves. He does indeed speak of discharging a priestly office, but it was the preaching of the Gospel (*ἱεροουργοῦντα τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*), and the Gentile world was the sacrifice which he had to present to God (Rom. xv. 16). The Apostles had all their life been familiar with earthly priests and visible sacrifices; how came they in their promulgation and exposition of the Gospel to abstain so entirely from such associations? The whole scope of the Epistle to the Hebrews is that the Levitical institute, still in existence when the author wrote, having served its purpose, was 'ready to vanish away' (Heb. viii. 13); not because it was the Levitical institute, but because a human priesthood and corresponding sacrifices are incompatible with the eternal priesthood of Christ, and the sufficiency of His one sacrifice of Himself on the Cross; and therefore may not, under whatever guise, find a place under the Gospel. An analogy exists, on the point before us, between the relation of the synagogue to the temple, and that of local churches to the one true, or as Protestants call it, the invisible, Church. However synagogues might be multiplied, there was but one temple, one altar, one priesthood; and the synagogues, otherwise distinct societies, bore a common relation to the temple, and so were connected together. In like manner local churches, otherwise distinct, find their unity in the mystical Body of Christ, evermore offering spiritual sacrifices through its one High Priest; that is, the sacerdotal elements of Judaism, its temple services, have passed into Christianity, not literally, but figuratively, or rather in the spiritual antitype; while the synagogue, an institution which possessed nothing of a sacerdotal character, reappears literally and visibly under the form of local Christian Churches.

It must be observed that the question is not what the law of order may have dictated, or rendered necessary, but whether a divine law, affecting the validity of the sacraments, can be produced. The law of order gave rise to many changes of ritual which, so far as they are not unscriptural, rest on their own foundation: only this foundation is not *jure divino*, but *jure humano*. Transporting ourselves in imagination to the fifth century, the spectacle which we behold is very different from that which we find in Scripture. An organized episcopacy extends like a network over all Christendom, each bishop being at once the chief pastor in his own church, and the instrument of union between it and other churches; the primitive upper chamber has given place to gorgeous structures: if we enter which, there will meet our eye, in the outer vestibule, the penitents and catechumens; then, in the nave, the faithful to whom access to

the Lord's Supper was permitted ; and at the upper end, divided by the chancel rail from the rest of the congregation, the bishop with his presbyters and deacons. Carefully-worked creeds test the orthodoxy of candidates for baptism ; formal liturgies lead the devotions of the people ; distinctions unknown to the Apostolic Church prevail, of inquirers from catechumens, of catechumens from the baptized, of the lapsed from the steadfast. The Eucharist, especially, is fenced round with restrictions, to guard it from profanation. In what light are we to regard these additions to the simple polity and worship of the first church ? As divine appointments ? or as corruptions, the offspring of superstition and priestcraft ? Strictly speaking, neither the one nor the other. If we cannot approve of all that we find in this age, if we cannot shut our eyes to the growth of superstitious doctrines and practices, a considerable part, nevertheless, of these external developments was the result of a natural and necessary effort of the Church to adapt herself to changing circumstances, and on this ground may be justified. A mixed multitude pressing into the sacred enclosure had to be handled otherwise than the primitive 120 upon whom the Holy Ghost fell ; external organization is the remedy which nature provides for a diminution of the animating spirit : when effervescence ceases, crystallization commences. And had the changes or additions been suffered to remain on this ground, they might, after the excisions necessary, have held their place. But the temptation presented itself, as it has always done, to discover, if possible, a Divine sanction for what was the result of a natural law ; and to insinuate into Scripture conclusions which it does not warrant. No distinction was made between what is commanded and what is merely recommended by precedent and example between the sacraments ordained by Christ Himself and Apostolic appointments, between the latter and those of the Church of after-ages, between the essential parts of ordinances and additions of human origin. The earlier dispensation had priests and sacrifices, therefore the Gospel must have something not merely analogous but similar ; and Scripture must be put to the question to yield a testimony thereto. That a believing deacon, for example, should not, while an unbelieving presbyter should, have power to consecrate the elements ; is this of Divine or of human appointment ? Not of Divine, but of human ; and as long as this is acknowledged, as long as the restriction is considered a matter of order, the arrangement stands on its own sufficient grounds. The case is different when it is made a law of Christ Himself, or of the Apostles ; and when violence is done to Scripture to make it support the statement. ' There is no

reason to establish the right of men without succession from the Apostles to administer the Holy Eucharist, which will not justify the taking away the cup from the laity ' ¹—did the writer of these words find his theory in Scripture, or introduce into the sacred page what belongs to the age of Cyprian or later? The law which has presided over the rise and progress of spurious Catholicism is to claim a divine origin, and a legally binding force, for developments in polity or ritual which can be clearly traced to natural causes; and this with the result, if not the object, of transforming the Gospel into a new ceremonial law, and replacing Christians under a yoke of bondage from which Christ has set them free. By spurious Catholicism is meant that which, not content with being itself, with being what legitimate Catholicism is, an adaptation of Apostolic precedent to changing circumstances, lays claim to a direct enactment from heaven. Among these spurious assertions is that of the clergy's being a proper priesthood. The more reason is there to guard against its first advances. It is connected, for example, not remotely with the notion that the visible church is the representative of Christ on earth, or as Möhler expresses it, the perpetual incarnation of the Saviour. ² For it is obvious that the whole Church cannot stand between itself and God, or be a representative of Christ to itself; and so the Church comes to mean the clergy, and the clergy a priesthood, whether we call them by that name or not. What is really meant by the Church's being the continued incarnation of Christ is that the Saviour, having completed the work of redemption, has withdrawn from the active administration of this dispensation in and by His Divine Vicar, the Holy Ghost: having previously delegated His powers, royal, priestly, and prophetic, to a certain order in the Church. But *vicarius est absentis, Christus est præsens*; present not as the incarnate Son, but as the Comforter whom He promised to send, and who, as regards the Godhead, is one with Him. He does indeed exercise sacerdotal functions elsewhere, and, by His perpetual intercession in heaven as our High Priest has for ever superseded the necessity, and the existence, of human mediators between God and man. ³

¹ Manning, *Unity, etc.*, p. 326.

² *Symbolik*, § 36.

³ At the Council of Trent a candid Portuguese theologian (George d'Ataïde) counselled the Fathers not to attempt to prove the doctrine of a human priesthood from Scripture but from tradition. His observations are worth transcribing; Il dit d'abord; qu'on ne pouvait pas douter que la messe ne fût un sacrifice, parceque les pères l'avoient enseigné ouvertement. Il rapporta la témoignage des pères Grecs et Latins, et parcourant ensuite tous les siècles jusqu'au nôtre, il soutint qu'il n'y avait aucun écrivain chrétien qui n'eût appelé l'eucharistie un sacrifice (and therefore requiring a priest to celebrate it). Mais il ajouta: que c'était affaiblir ce fondement que de lui en

§ 83. PRIMACY OF THE BISHOP OF ROME

What has been remarked concerning the visible organization of the Church in its earlier stages, that it proceeded by a natural law, and was engrafted on institutions already in existence holds good in all that followed. The destruction of the temple, about A.D. 70, relaxed the connection between Judaism and Christianity, and set the church free to pursue her own course. The first result, probably, was the episcopate, informal in its beginning, but afterwards consolidated into an order, and to all appearance either proposed or sanctioned by surviving apostles. From time to time it was natural for the bishops of a certain district to meet together for the purposes of mutual recognition and consultation ; on such occasions they were commonly accompanied by delegates of the presbyters and laity. This was the origin of synods. Nor did the centralizing process stop here. As the presbyters of each church formed a council presided over by the bishop, so the bishops developed from themselves centres of unity ; accidental circumstances, such as a church's having been founded by an Apostle, or its importance in a political point of view, determining where each centre should be. Thus it was that metropolitan sees, and provincial synods, came into being. The advantages were manifest, especially in the appointment of bishops to vacant sees. Popular election, even with the consent of the presbyters, had its dangers ; but these were mitigated by the rule that prevailed, that two or three, at least, of the neighbouring bishops, and always the metropolitan, should assist at the consecration, and that no appointment should be valid which had not received the approval of the other churches of the province. Still more extensive combinations succeeded, as indeed there was no reason why they should not. Provinces coalesced into patriarchates, considerations partly ecclesiastical, partly political, determining the patriarchal sees to Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria. Later on, Rome, the capital of the ancient world, is seen taking the lead in the councils of Christendom, not by any formal delegation of authority, or by Divine right ; for no such claims were either advanced or acknowledged for many centuries after Christ ; but because the dignity of the capital shed a reflected light upon its bishop, and made him the natural centre of the Western church.

joindre d'imaginaires ; et qu'en voulant trouver dans l'Écriture ce qui n'y était pas, on donnait occasion de calomnier la vérité à ceux qui voyaient qu'on l'appuyait sur un sable aussi mouvant. De-là il passa à examiner l'un après l'autre les endroits de l'ancien et du nouveau Testament rapportés par les théologiens, et montra qu'il n'y en avait aucun dont on pût tirer une preuve claire du sacrifice. Sarpi, vol. ii., p. 384. The historian adds that this theologian's presence at the Council was thenceforward dispensed with.

Nor was this advantage materially affected by the transfer of the seat of government to Byzantium, with its attendant patriarchate. New Rome never succeeded in supplanting the ancient mistress of the world, nor could its patriarch, though the attempt was often made, succeed in prevailing on other churches to acknowledge his supremacy. The Roman bishops displayed the same capacity for government which had distinguished civil Rome, and while the Orientals spent their strength in theological disputation, Leo and his successors were successfully employed in extending the practical supremacy of their see. Appeals to Rome from all quarters were encouraged, refugees from other dioceses were kindly received, and no opportunity was lost of making the influence of the Roman Church felt throughout Christendom. And thus by slow accretions the Papal power became what it was in the middle ages.

Such is what may be called the natural history of this remarkable institution. And as long as it was regarded merely as the topmost stone of the edifice of unity, it cannot be described as anti-Christian in character. If it was not unreasonable for the bishops of a province to evolve out of their body a metropolitan centre or the metropolitans a patriarchal, no more was it so, as long as the political conditions were favourable, for the whole Western Church to desire a visible symbol of unity. This is the position taken up by the philosophical school of modern Romanists. 'They,' says Möhler,¹ 'who demand before Cyprian's time incontrovertible proofs of the existence of the primacy demand what is unreasonable, the law of a true development not admitting of it; and *vice versa*, the trouble which some have given themselves to discover, before the same epoch, the full idea of a pope, or the notion that they have discovered it, must be considered vain, and their conclusions untenable. As throughout the inferior organization of the Church, so in this point, the want must be felt before the supply could be found.' 'It is evident that during the first three centuries, and even at the close of them, the primacy is not visible save in its first lineaments; it operates as yet but informally, and when the question is put, where and how did it practically manifest itself, we must confess that it never appears alone, but always in conjunction with other churches and bishops; though it is true that a peculiar character is already seen to attach to the Roman see.'² This view of the growth of the Papacy is not only historically true, but enables the author to dispense with the proofs from Scripture which his predecessors, *e.g.*, Bellarmine, are wont to allege, to the detriment rather than the advantage of their cause. Only a council which

¹ *Einheit in der Kirche*, A. 2, § 68.

² *Ibid.*, A. 2, § 71.

discovered that 'from the very beginning of the Church seven orders of ministry and their names existed,'¹ could have authorized its catechism to declare that the Papacy was instituted when Christ said to Peter: 'Feed My sheep'; or, 'On this rock I will build My church,' that is (according to the older and better interpretation of the passage), on the living faith exhibited in the Apostle's confession: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God' (Matt. xvi. 16); or, 'Unto Thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven,' which, if some personal prerogative may be thought intended, is explained by the fact that to Peter it was given to admit first the Jews and then the Gentiles into the Christian Church (Acts ii. x.); or, 'Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven' (Matt. xvi. 19), an authority, whatever it may mean, which was afterwards conferred on all the Apostles (*Ibid.*, xviii. 18). On no occasion in the sacred history is any pre-eminence assigned to this Apostle. The Apostle James has better claims to such precedence. Uninspired history is equally silent. There is no proof that Peter was ever at Rome, or that he was Bishop of Rome, or that if he was bishop, he could transmit his personal prerogatives to his successors. The chronology of his history is against the supposition. From the 18th year of Tiberius, when Christ was crucified, to the 13th of Nero, when, according to Romish writers, Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome, there is a space of about thirty-six years. At the council held at Jerusalem (Acts xv.), about A.D. 51, Peter was present, and the next notice is that he was at Antioch (Gal. ii. 11), about A.D. 58, where tradition reports that he resided some years. Little time remains for his alleged Roman episcopate. The Book of Acts, which narrates at length several important events in Peter's life, passes over his episcopacy, and even his residence at Rome in silence. S. Paul, writing to Rome, and writing from Rome, makes no mention of him. The view then which Möhler takes is the only one that has a semblance of historical truth. And, no doubt, there is some truth in it. In the writings of Cyprian the idea of a visible centre for Western Christendom is common, and already the see of Rome is invested with an undefined superiority. 'This' (the evil of schism), he writes, 'arises from men's not recurring to the fountain head of truth, and the doctrine of our heavenly Master. There is no need of prolix

¹ Ab ipso ecclesiæ initio sequentium ordinum nomina, et unius cujusque eorum propria ministeria, subdiaconi, scil. acolyti, exorcistæ, lectores, et ostiarii, in usu fuisse cognoscuntur. Conc. Trid., Sess. xxiii., c. 2. The two remaining orders, arc, diaconi and sacerdotes (presbyters).

argument ; the proof is short, and easy of comprehension. The Lord says to Peter : " Thou art Peter," etc., and again : " Feed My sheep." Upon him alone He builds His church ; to him He commits His sheep to be fed. And although after His resurrection He invests all the Apostles with equal power : " As the Father hath sent Me," etc., yet that He might exhibit the principle of unity, He, by His authority, so disposed matters, that that unity should take its beginning from one (Peter). All the Apostles, indeed, were what Peter was, endowed with an equal share of honour and power ; but Christ begins with one, and the primacy is assigned to Peter that it may be shown that there is one church and one chair. . . . Of this church how can he be supposed to hold the faith who holds not the unity ? How can he who resists the Church (who deserts the chair of Peter upon whom the Church is founded) hope that he is in the Church ? ' ¹ ' Where, and by whom, remission of sins is given is plain. For to Peter first, upon whom the Lord founded the church, and from whom He derived the origin of unity, was committed a power of remitting on earth sins which should be remitted in heaven. And after His resurrection, He declared to all the Apostles : " As the Father hath sent Me," etc.' ² ' In addition to their former misdeeds, they (the schismatics) having appointed a pseudo-bishop for themselves, dare to repair to Rome, and to the chair of Peter, the chief church whence the unity of the priesthood took its rise.' ³ ' Those who took their journey to you (Cornelius) we exhorted that they would acknowledge and hold fast by the root and mother of the Catholic Church. We directed letters to be sent throughout our province, exhorting all our colleagues to ratify your election, and steadfastly to maintain fellowship and union with you, that is, with the Catholic Church itself.' ⁴ Well may Möhler point to such passages as proof that so early as the third century ' the Pope was but waiting a summons to make his appearance.' ⁵

And if his appearance had been ascribed to human causes, and the providential course of events, it might have been acquiesced in. To make it either of Divine or of Satanic origin is equally wide of the truth : human passions, human sins, and, we may add, the love of unity inherent in Christianity, all had a share in bringing it about. The successive Popes as much obeyed as they led the tendencies of their age : western Christendom was as ready to confer upon the

¹ De unit. eccles. It is right to mention that the words enclosed in brackets are adjudged by Baluzius to be an interpolation.

² Epist. lxxiii.

⁴ *Ibid.*, xlv.

³ *Ibid.*, lv.

⁵ Einheit, etc., p. 247.

Bishop of Rome the supremacy as he was to receive it. De Maistre has reminded Protestants that where there is on one side a voluntary surrender of inherited rights, it is idle to talk of usurpation on the other ; and that the mediæval bishops of Rome only exercised powers which had been delegated to them by the free, or apparently free, consent of both churches and states. And this cannot be gainsaid. Moreover, a pious mind, contemplating the social disorders of the age, might well think that no remedy was likely to be so efficient as a central authority, feeble in a temporal point of view, but wielding spiritual powers of unlimited scope. A common Father to the half-civilized nations of Europe was no ignoble conception. The disapprobation which we must feel at the language and actions of certain Popes may be mitigated by bearing in mind that they were men, and that their position was one of difficulty and temptation. Who, in fact, will venture to ascribe to Leo the Great a deliberate design to erect a spiritual throne on the ruins of Apostolic Christianity ? The event, indeed, has proved that to no human hand can the sceptre of universal empire, temporal or spiritual, be safely confided ; but the evils which sprang from the Papacy were as yet in the womb of time, and unforeseen. In short, regarding the Papacy as a visible symbol of the unity of the whole Church ; as a sheltering enclosure for the fundamental truths of Christianity in periods of wild licence ; as a moderating influence amidst barbarism and anarchy ; we can neither feel surprise at its appearance, nor refuse to recognize therein the traces of a superintending providence bending human error and sin to its own purposes. It is worthy of note that at the commencement of the Reformation it was not the mere fact of the primacy of the Roman bishop to which its leaders took exception : they even declared that if the Bishop of Rome would acknowledge that his superiority to other bishops was but by *the custom of the Church*, they, on their part, would be willing to leave him in undisturbed possession of his Patriarchal relation to the churches of Europe. The passage of Melancthon to that effect is well known : ‘ Concerning the Roman Pontiff, my opinion is that should he admit the Gospel, the precedence which he has hitherto enjoyed, as compared with other bishops, may, to preserve the peace and tranquillity of those Christians who acknowledge his jurisdiction, be by us also accorded to him ; *but only jure humano.*’¹ Only *jure humano* ; the essence of the controversy lies in those words. It is the Tridentine dogma, not the fact, of the Primacy, which Protestantism repudiated, and must ever repudiate. The Bishop of Rome was asserted

¹ Art. Smal., ad. fin.

to be by *Divine appointment* the Vicar of Christ, and ruler of the whole Church; the Papacy was made an essential constituent of Christianity.¹ In matters of faith infallibility has lately been ascribed to it. It followed that no Church, however Scriptural in doctrine, or apostolic in polity, which did not acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope *jure divino* could be a true Church: its members are out of the pale of salvation, except through the uncovenanted mercies of God. 'He that reigneth on high,' so runs the Bull of Pope Pius against Elizabeth, 'to whom is given all power in heaven and earth, has committed the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, out of which there is no salvation, to one alone on earth; namely, to Peter, prince of the Apostles, and to the Roman Pontiff,' successor of Peter; 'to be governed with a plenitude of power,'² 'We declare, define, and pronounce,' says Boniface VIII., 'that it is necessary to salvation that every human being should be subject to the Roman Pontiff.'³ To establish these claims, and invest them with the sanction of antiquity, pretended decretals of the early bishops of Rome were made to speak the language of later times; just as in the so-called Apostolical constitutions, which were composed about the beginning of the third century, and which throughout favour the legal, hierarchical spirit which had begun to pervade the Church, the Apostles are introduced as laying down canons after the fashion of the age of Cyprian. In short, in the doctrine of the Papacy, as finally declared by the Council of Trent, we have a signal example of the principle on which spurious Catholicism, of every age and under all its forms, proceeds: viz., the transformation of ecclesiastical developments into Divine laws, of Christianity into a system of legal ordinances as essential to its being as those of Moses were to the Jewish economy. And we may ask, Of what avail is it to expend time, labour, and learning, in disproving the doctrine of the Papal supremacy, while we leave untouched the roots whence it sprang, and, which, if in its existing form it were abolished, would reproduce it or something like it? The efflorescence of the disease has been mistaken for the seat of the disease. If any form of polity, Presbyterianism, Episcopacy, Metropolitanism; if the distinction in kind between clergy and laity; if the appointments of ritual and worship save in their first elements; are held to be *jure divino*; no defensible position can be taken up against the errors of Romanism on these points.

¹ De quâ re agitur cum de primatu Pontificis agitur? brevissime dicam; de summâ rei Christianæ.' Bellarm. Præf. ad Lib. de S. P.

² Quoted by Barrow, Supremacy, etc., Introd. ³ *Ibid.*

§ 84. CHURCH AND STATE

There are points in which these two forms of social union seem to approximate to each other, and to aim at the same results. The State, not less than the Church, is of Divine origin, so far as it rests ultimately on the instincts implanted in man by his Creator, and on the providential government of the world. Like the family, it is natural to man, not the product of an imaginary social compact between governors and governed. It is not left to our choice whether our early life shall be passed under parental guidance, and the social influences of the family; the question is by Divine Providence decided for us. Neither is it a matter of choice whether we shall be members of a state or not; here, too, nature and Providence anticipate us. And, thus, in a real sense, the powers that be are ordained of God (Rom. xiii. 1).

The State, too, has for its object, or one of its main objects, the moral training of its members. To regard it merely as an institution for the protection of life and property (one, no doubt, of its chief purposes), would be as imperfect a notion of it as it would be to consider the family as merely intended for the physical nurture of children. Heathen writers, such as Plato, entertained juster views. They looked upon the State as the greatest of schools of natural education; and, in fact, in the absence of revelation, no higher or more comprehensive organization for that purpose presented itself to them.

The State, moreover, and the Church operate on the same material, viz., fallen human nature; the former on man in his secular, the latter on man in his spiritual, capacity; but both alike on man as he is actually found. The national life, in its complex relations, furnishes the matter on which the State operates; and, like the Church, it has to contend against the ignorance and sin which it finds. Hence the Church is in Scripture described in terms derived from the two inferior but Divinely ordered institutions, the family and the State: sometimes it is called the family of God, and sometimes 'the city of the living God' (Heb. xii. 22), the new Jerusalem: an intimation that these subordinate forms of union, Family, State, and Church, will one day be merged in the higher unity of the consummated kingdom of God.

And yet the distinction between the State and the Church is an essential one. The State promotes morality under the form of compulsion; the Church under the form of freedom. The State operates by the force of external law; the Church aims at making every man a law to himself. It is not, indeed, correct to say that the function of the State is confined to repressing outward crime, and maintaining

social order ; for laws possess a power of awakening and educating the slumbering conscience, by stamping the brand of criminality on practices which previously had been thought indifferent—or even praiseworthy ; as, for example, nations have been trained to abandon vices, or immoral customs, such as infanticide, which they had previously indulged in, with no sense of their being crimes. The effect of treating such things as crimes is gradually to produce a feeling that they are so.¹ Still it remains true that the State does not demand or anticipate free action : what it enjoins and prohibits, it does so from without ; it does not profess to furnish hidden springs of action, or to rectify the will. With such a moral standard, or such obedience as this, the Church is not satisfied. The inner man is the direct subject of the renovating powers committed to her administration ; and spontaneous virtue is her aim. Hence the distinction between sin and crime. The State deals with crime, the Church with sin. Innumerable moral delinquencies, with which the State cannot interfere, are condemned by the Church, such as ingratitude, covetousness, selfishness in its various forms, and the like ; often more repulsive than those which the State visits with penalties. The Jewish theocracy, as became its preparatory function, treated sin, in certain cases, as crime, *e.g.*, idolatry ; and so formed an external barrier behind the shelter of which spiritual religion might expand its blossoms. And the State occupies a somewhat similar position towards the Church : it stands between Christianity and the impulses of unbridled human nature, which, were they permitted to act unchecked, would leave no place for the peculiar mode of operation of the Church. So far it possesses a pædagogical character. It secures, at any rate, a negative basis ; life and property are protected, selfish violence suppressed. On this basis the Church prosecutes her mission.

The weapons, too, which the Church employs are different from those of the State. The State secures obedience by temporal pains and penalties, which the Church is forbidden to use. To attempt to employ the temporal power, whether in the shape of positive penalty or civil disability, to produce religious conviction, or rather conformity, is a blunder as well as a crime ; it is an assumption by the State of what does not belong to it ; it is an interference with the rights of conscience ; and can only issue in hypocritical compliance, or religious indifference. Internal discipline, and, in the last resort, expulsion from the society, neither of which ought ever to be associated with temporal damage ; are the only means which the Church possesses to secure obedience ; and if profanity bursts these

¹ Ἐθίζοντες (νομοθέται) ποιῶσιν ἀγαθοίς. Arist., Eth. Nic., ii. 1.

tender meshes, she must beware of attempting to strengthen them by an appeal to the secular arm.

From this it follows that the State and the Church never can become formally one. Let us suppose that a material identity exists between them ; that is, that all the members of the body political are also members of the body ecclesiastical ; still this would not affect the essential distinction between the one and the other. The same man might hold office in the State and in the Church ; but in the one capacity he would have to act on one set of principles, in the other on another. As a civil magistrate it might be his duty to condemn a man to death, whom, on apparent repentance, he might, as a member of the Church, console with the promises of Divine forgiveness. Still less can the State be regarded as the ultimate form which the Church will assume, when the latter has accomplished its mission and served its purpose.¹ The State never can become an instrument of *redemption*, which is the very essence of the Church's office. States, as such, have no existence hereafter ; but the Church, as the company of the redeemed, will exist for ever. The Church never can be conceived of, except as in spiritual union with its Head, Christ, that is, under the influence of His Spirit ; as perpetuated and sustained (in its earthly condition) by the means of grace ; modes of influence of which the State, as such, is not the depository. Yet their common origin from above, and their common objects, forbid that they should be antagonistic the one towards the other. The State prepares the way for the Church ; the Church leavens all departments of the State with a Christian spirit. Every citizen will perform his civil duties the better for being a Christian. Hence, on the one hand, the Christian will endeavour to further the interests of the State ; to awaken sentiments of patriotism, to promote beneficial changes in the laws, to correct social evils ; while the State, without infringing the rights of conscience, will lend the Church the protection of the civil power in securing its liberty of action, its endowments, and its rights of appeal in matters which fall under the cognizance of the secular courts. The term ' Church ' in the foregoing remarks needs to be defined. It is obvious that when speaking of the connection of Church and State, we do not mean the Church in its essential being, the invisible Church of Scripture and of Protestantism ; for this, as has been explained, is not yet manifested in its corporate capacity. As the State is a local body, so must the Church be, which is supposed to be in alliance with it. And yet the definition that a true visible Church is a society in which the pure Word is

¹ Rothe, Anfänge der Christ. Kirch., § 18.

preached and the sacraments duly administered, is too narrow for our present purpose ; for, however small the society, these notes may belong to it. To understand the connection of Church and State we must realize the conception of a national Church. A national Church is the particular form which the Christianity of a nation assumes under the circumstances of race, temperament, and history, which have contributed to make the nation what it is. It matters not how this form has been produced ; whether spontaneously, or by the direction which the national history has taken, or by an impulse from the civil power ; it is sufficient if in the lapse of time it has settled down into a certain type. It may be difficult to analyse in what the difference between national Churches consists ; but it is none the less matter of observation. The Church of England seems suited to the genius of the English people, as a whole ; the Church of Scotland to that of the Scotch. Either is a Christian Church, and a valuable embodiment of Christianity ; but the one cannot be mistaken for the other, even setting aside external differences. A really national Church is a great providential boon to any nation. It must be distinguished from a mere State-Church, the creature of conquest, or of law, or of choice for special purposes. For example, a Church which the government for the time being may select to hallow its public acts with the offices of religion, such as the coronation of a sovereign, or the inauguration of a president, thanksgivings for a victory or peace, humiliation in times of famine or pestilence ; may, for the nonce, be called the National Church. Most Christian States would desire, as most heathen did, to add solemnity to such public events by associating religious services with them. But the Church thus selected may be the Church of the minority ; and, moreover, it may give place to another Church, in succession, for similar purposes. In such a case it is not really the national Church : much less can it be so called if it depends for existence on the civil power. Any Church may be forced on a conquered people ; but if it does not express on the whole the national religious sentiment, it will be an exotic, and remain so. This was the position of the Established Church in Ireland, not through its fault but its misfortune ; and this would have been the position of an Episcopal Church in Scotland had the injudicious attempt of Charles II. and his advisers, at the close of the seventeenth century, succeeded. There can be no national Church of Ireland, for there is not, and never has been, a united Irish people ; in Scotland there was, and is, a really national Church, which has freely developed itself on the Presbyterian model ¹ ; and if

¹ There is no distinction on this point between the Established and the Free Church of Scotland.

the scheme of establishing Episcopacy by the secular power had there succeeded, nothing could have averted a civil rupture and grievous injury to religion. The counsels of a wise king and wise statesmen averted the calamity. In all such cases, the test whether a State-Church is also a national one is easy of application : if the pressure of the civil power were removed, would the nation freely and spontaneously adopt the form of Christianity sought to be imposed upon it ?

Where a national Church, in the proper sense of the word, exists, the problem of reconciling the rights of the State with the rights of conscience scarcely arises, or is comparatively easy of solution. Were the nation and the Church materially one—as Hooker supposed they might be, and, in his time, not without show of reason—intolerance or persecution would be simply impossible. A man cannot persecute himself ; and, in the case supposed, ecclesiastical legislation would be nothing more than the nation’s legislation for itself in its religious capacity, to which no objection could be made. Difficulties arise when either there is no national Church (as in the United States of America), or the dissentients from it are so numerous as to make it impossible to disregard the fact. In the former case the State must keep aloof from special connection with any religious body (as in the United States), in the latter great caution in religious legislation is needed. It must be accounted, therefore, a misfortune if, owing to unfavourable circumstances, the nation has not been able spontaneously to mould its Christianity into a national shape, with special characteristics and historical traditions. It may still, however, be a Christian nation ; as the United States justly claim that name. We may observe that of the United Kingdom as a whole there is no national Church, no one Church of the three kingdoms which are represented in the Imperial Parliament. England and Scotland have each their own Church, and if a national Church exists in Ireland, it must be confessed to be the Roman Catholic. Nevertheless, the United Kingdom is a Christian kingdom, and must be regarded as such. One advantage of a truly national Church is the bulwark which it raises against Ultramontane Romanism, the deadly foe of national independence. ‘ The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England ’ (Art. xxxvii.) ; the day on which the principle here asserted should be abandoned or practically forgotten, would be fraught with momentous consequences to the country. Of Churches, only a national one, such as the Gallican Church in its palmy days, can effectually co-operate with the State in resisting the Papal pretension.

Judicial oaths, the subject of Article xxxix., prove the necessary connection of religion with the State, but not necessarily of the Christian Religion. All that the State requires for the administration of justice is a recognition of the fundamental truths of natural religion, such as the existence of a God, and of a future state of reward and punishment¹; if it finds Christianity accepted by the nation, so much the better; it is, as Coleridge expresses it,² 'a happy accident,' on which the State has reason to congratulate itself; but well-ordered states have existed without the enjoyment of the privilege. It might even be supposed that the tendency of Christianity is to deprive the State of this particular support in securing the ends of justice; for, interpreted literally, our Lord's prohibition seems to extend to oaths of every kind (Matt. v. 34). And the passage in S. James' epistle, which evidently alludes to the former, seems to confirm this interpretation (chap. v. 12). But we cannot suppose that the prohibition is to be taken in this extended sense. In the Old Testament oaths appear as in common use, and are not forbidden; on the contrary they are enjoined in certain cases (Exod. xxii. 11). The law sanctioned the practice, but guarded it from abuse. The Jew was not to swear falsely (Lev. xix. 12), nor to swear by false gods (Josh. xxiii. 7); when he took a vow or oath to the Lord, he was to take care to fulfil it (Numb. xxx. 2); but he was nowhere commanded not to swear at all. Our Lord Himself not unfrequently passed beyond a simple affirmation ('Verily, verily'), nor did He refuse to reply to the adjuration of the High Priest to declare whether He was the Son of God (Matt. xxvi. 63). The Apostle Paul in many passages of his epistles appeals to God for the truth of what he says (Rom. i. 9; 2 Cor. i. 23, xi. 10; Gal. i. 20); and there is nothing in the passages to lead to the conclusion that his correspondents would otherwise have doubted his word. What, then, are we to understand by Christ's prohibition in the sermon on the mount? A system of immoral casuistry among the Jews had established distinctions between oaths in which the name of God occurred and those in which it did not, the former only they held to be absolutely binding. It was said to them of old time, 'Thou shalt not forswear thyself,' and thus, if His name is used, take His name in vain (Exod. xx. 7); all such vows thou shalt not fail to 'perform unto the Lord,' as a duty the violation of which He will visit;—such injunctions Christ did not mean to abrogate, but only to warn His

¹ See Warburton, 'Alliance of Church and State.'

² 'Idea of Church and State,' p. 59. In *Omichund v. Barker* (Smith's leading cases) it was held that the depositions of a Pagan idolater, sworn according to the custom of his country, may be received in evidence.

hearers against a corrupt interpretation of them. He reminds them that to swear by any of the creatures is, in fact, to swear by God who created and sustains them, and thus exposes the sophistry of the distinction which the Scribes and Pharisees had introduced. But solemn judicial oaths He does not allude to, or condemn. Thou shalt perform what thou hast promised, whatever be the object by which thou hast sworn ; this has nothing to do with oaths imposed by the State for the promotion of justice. A question, however, may arise, whether such voluntary oaths are in themselves permissible, and our Lord replies in the negative. If Christians were always what they ought to be, neither mistrustful of their brethren nor themselves liable to be tempted to mislead, their simple affirmation (Yea, yea ; Nay, nay) would be sufficient for all purposes of social intercourse. 'Whatsoever is more than these,' any strengthening of statement, whether by an oath or not, betrays a consciousness of the sin that still cleaves to the regenerate. In proportion as Christ is formed in us, the superfluity will disappear. Oaths in common life, like 'a writing of divorcement' (Matt. v. 31), were permitted, even sanctioned, under the law, because of the spiritual imbecility of those subject to it ; but both the one and the other, except in certain cases, are out of place under the Gospel ; and in this sense it is, but not as abrogating judicial oaths, that Christ has supplied what was wanting in the law. In short, the prohibition seems to glance at needless, thoughtless, expletives, such as too frequently occur in common life, and not, at least directly, to oaths in a court of justice. What may be in the consummated kingdom of God we know not ; we do know that at present the ideal is far from being reached. Even in Christians the State has to deal with those liable to temptation and to lapses, and, therefore, needing every support which religion can furnish to keep them in the path of duty. Just, therefore, as the analogous commands touching the *lex talionis* (verse 38-42), cannot be understood literally without injury to society (what, e.g., is of greater detriment than promiscuous and ill-regulated charity ?) ; nay, without going counter to the example of Christ Himself who did not turn His cheek to the smiter (John xviii. 23), and of the Apostle Paul, who did not hesitate to appeal to the law and the civil power for protection from popular violence (Acts xvi. 37, xxii. 25, xxv. 11) ; so the administration of judicial oaths is not forbidden in a Christian state. Required and taken in a proper spirit they serve to remind the parties concerned of their duty towards the Supreme Being, and their subjection to His authority. How the State is to proceed towards those who do not acknowledge any Supreme Being is a question for jurists to decide. Where oaths are

retained they should be freed from unnecessary additions, particularly those which in any way resemble heathenish adjurations, or invoke spiritual or temporal vengeance from heaven on perjurers. The penalty for false swearing, so far as it reaches beyond this world, must be left to Him who alone can mete it out with accuracy. It is possible that the objections which some pious persons entertain to even judicial oaths would be abated, if the wording and the ceremonial of them were freed from such associations.

May the Christian, as a member of the State, lawfully engage in war? Some of the ancient Fathers and some modern sects hold it unlawful, and, as they do on the question of oaths, allege certain passages of the Sermon on the Mount as justifying their opinion (Matt. v. 21, 38-41). And the foregoing remarks apply to this subject as well as to the other. When Christianity has gained complete dominion over the evil tendencies of human nature, whether in the millennium or afterwards, coercive laws will be no longer needed, and universal peace will prevail. And it is, no doubt, the duty of Christians to keep before their minds the ideal presented in this discourse of Christ. But the present state of things is an imperfect one, and Scripture recognizes the fact by never recommending violent attempts at reformation, content with enunciating principles which sooner or later work a change. Thus civil government, which involves the employment of force even in the extreme form of capital punishment, is not only left undisturbed, but commended as the appointment of God. Slavery is not denounced as inconsistent with Christian profession, while yet principles are enunciated which were sure in time to bring about its abolition. Still less is the division of mankind into nations, however the effect of sin and apparently favourable to the spread of the Gospel, interfered with, or the virtue of patriotism disparaged. This seems sufficient to establish the lawfulness of war. For if the normal state of mankind, under this dispensation, is one of separate political communities; if a universal empire under one government is a dream which never can be realized; then the judicial machinery, which in each particular state decides between the claims of individuals and controls, by force if need be, the undisciplined impulses of human nature, can as regards nations have no place. There is no external authority to which they are bound to render obedience. International law, from which so much seems sometimes to be expected, is in reality no law at all, if by that term is to be understood a tribunal by the decision of which the litigant parties are compelled to abide. On certain points agreements or understandings may be entered into by nations; but, on due notice given, they may be broken; and, in the last resort, each nation must

decide for itself what is or is not for its interests, or whether an aggression on the part of its neighbour is or is not justifiable. If the conclusion arrived at is that the national welfare, independence, or dignity is at stake, and may be compromised by yielding to what is demanded, resistance must be offered; and if no compromise is possible, war becomes inevitable. No doubt the guilt of the rupture lies at the door of the nation which allows ambition or the lust of conquest to prevail over the dictates of justice and moderation, but considerations of this kind do not in practice operate very strongly. If the aggrieved party submits, the national honour may be compromised, if it does not, this means war. Accordingly, Scripture contains no prohibition of war, and, indeed, furnishes examples of eminent piety in the military profession (Luke vii. 5; Acts x. 2). But although Christianity does not abrogate this ultimate arbitrament of nations, it has done a great deal in mitigation of its attendant horrors. As in every department of human agency, so in this, it has introduced a new spirit into what it does not forbid. The cruelties practised by conquerors in ancient times are not tolerated by Christian nations, and appliances in relief of suffering, never thought of by the polished nations of antiquity, now form a regular accompaniment of belligerent operations. Nor can it be doubted that the condemnation which the Gospel pronounces on wars undertaken from purely ambitious motives has done much to discredit frivolous and unnecessary appeals to arms.

MEANS OF GRACE

The local churches, of which visible Christendom consists, have a bond of union in their relation to the one true Church, or body of Christ; but this latter is replenished and sustained by outward means, ordained by Christ Himself to be channels of His grace, and committed to each local Church to administer; viz., the pure teaching of the Word, the celebration of the Sacraments, and common prayer in the name of Christ. These means of grace, as they are usually called, may be considered under a threefold aspect; as (especially the Sacraments) signs of admission into, or continuance in, the Church (*tesseræ*); as pledges of the presence of Christ, by His Spirit in the Church (*pignora*); and as forming the material of visible Christian worship. In idea they may be thus distinguished, in fact, each, in a greater or less degree, combines these aspects. If the Church were purely invisible, a union of sentiment merely, or, as Schleiermacher terms it,¹ of operations (◻*wirkungen*) of the Holy

¹ Christliche Glaube, §§ 126, 127.