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A SHORT HISTORY OF

The Christian Church.

BY THE

REV. J. H. VAN BUREN.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A SHORT HISTORY OF
The Christian Church.

SIX SERMONS

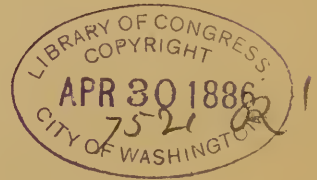
PREACHED IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, NEWBURYPORT, MASS.

BY THE



REV. J. H. VAN BUREN.

“ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.”—EPH. IV: 3-6.



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To

The Rev. Fernando C. Putnam, D. D.,

A Venerable Priest

in the Church of God,

Worthy of Imitation, for His Pure Faith, Sound Learning,

and Abundant Labours in the Gospel,

This Book

is, by Permission,

Respectfully Dedicated.

INTRODUCTION.

These sermons are published at the request of many who heard them when they were preached. It is hoped that they may prove useful in suggesting a deeper study of the topics they outline. For there is need to-day of a positive Churchmanship, based upon principle; and not merely the result of a gratified æsthetic perception, or of release from outworn systems of human device.

That so large a proportion of the serious and reflective element among the people of the United States are turning away from sensational claptrap and secular topics, which in many quarters take the place of the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, is a fact to inspire devout thanksgiving. Attracted by the reverence and decorum of the Prayer Book, the daily accessions to our parishes, indicate in what direction religious thought is tending. Official figures show that in 1875, the number of our communicants was 280,000. In 1885, it had reached 398,098—an increase of 42 *per cent.*; whereas the increase of population in the United States during the same decade was estimated at only 25 *per cent.* But the increase in parishioners, regularly enrolled or semi-detached, during the same period, has far exceeded that of the communicants. How far cannot be told, as statistics are not reported. Among these people vestiges of former prejudice, misconstruction and misinformation need to be removed, that the way may be opened to those highest blessings which the Church has to

offer to all sorts and conditions of men ; in the ways of Confirmation and Holy Communion. In the spirit of a sincere desire to serve this end, and with a deepening sense of the responsibility resting upon us, to tell abroad what things the Lord hath done for us, and for our fathers, this course of sermons was undertaken. Where topics have been touched with enforced brevity, needful references will point to fuller information. The bitter spirit of controversy has no place in these pages.

J. H. V. B.

March, 1886.

I.

THE FOUNDATION OF APOSTLES AND PROPHETS.

“Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”—EPHES. ii : 19, 20.

The history of the Christian Church deservedly claims a place in the foremost rank of important studies. Many religious questions that perplex the minds of our people would be seen in their true relations, did they consider them in their historical aspect. Many customs and appliances would be better appreciated if their history were more generally understood. A better charity is always begotten of a fuller knowledge of that truth in which charity rejoiceth. A deeper confidence in the verities of our most holy faith ever follows the learning which explores the territory of conquest which has been won in fulfilment of the words: “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.”

Not long ago I was permitted to examine before you in a course of sermons, the Foundations of the Faith. The attention and interest which you evinced in that study and the many kind expressions of appreciation which I was so thankful to hear, have emboldened me to think that a similar series having the Christian Church for its theme might be equally

serviceable. In the nature of the case, I must, now, as then, repeat some things which are well known to many of you. I hope I may also have the good fortune to tell you some things which have escaped your attention.

It shall be my endeavour to tell "a plain unvarnished tale," to indulge in no theories, to avoid speculations, to withhold no fact of importance to the story, so far as truth may be reconciled with brevity. I shall not shrink from laying bare the deformity that has marred the record of some who were children of the Church. There will be pages I shall be sorry to read but none that I shall be afraid to open. We shall look upon phases of Christian History when lethargy seemed to have laid hold upon the very life of the Church. We shall trace the origin of sect and division, in no spirit of contentious pride or bigotry; but taking shame and sorrow to ourselves where they are due, for the occasion that gave them excuse. We shall come, I trust, to a more perfect understanding of the work the Christian Church still has to do, and a more intelligent use of that part of the Creed wherein we say, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church."

The subject for this morning, is the Foundation of Apostles and Prophets, or the Church in the Bible Age. And here let me beg you to avoid that notion which I fear is too widely prevalent, that there is no connection between the Jewish and the Christian Church. Many people seem to think that God was trying an experiment in the Jewish dispensation and found it did not work. That is the Gospel according to Ingersoll but not according to St. Paul, who declares that "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." Not without deep significance does he link together in the text I have chosen, the words "apostles and prophets:" telling the Eph-

esian Christians that they are built upon the one foundation of them both. I have even heard people say that they had almost entirely given up reading the Old Testament, because they felt that most of it did not concern them. Such people never understand the Christian Church. For though it is written, "Old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new," yet, did not the Master say, also, "I am come not to destroy the works of the law, but to fulfil"? God made no vain experiment in the Jewish Church. He did not bring in the Christian Church because that one was a failure. The very thought is revolting if not profane. The way for the new was prepared by the old, and principles that were enshrined there, bloomed as plants removed from the nursery and set in the wide field to enjoy the sunshine and cope with the storm. The Gospel adds no new commandment, but it summarizes the ten in the new form of two. The first and great commandment "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," is the first four in shorter yet more comprehensive form, the second which is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour," was "writ large" in the last six. The Christian Church is the larger development of the Jewish. Its enemies at the first considered it as nothing but a Jewish sect. Said the Roman Jews who came to visit St. Paul when he was a prisoner, "We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest, for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against." Not only did our Lord Himself attend the worship and obey the ordinances of the Temple when He was in Jerusalem, and join in the forms prescribed for the synagogue when elsewhere, but His disciples also for a long time did the same. Corruptions had crept into the Jewish Church, it is very true, and our Saviour condemned them ; but the Church itself was

pure in its standards. Simeon was not corrupt, neither was Anna, nor Nathanael, "an Israelite indeed in whom was no guile." And so the transition from Jewish to Christian was not abrupt, it was gradual. Much that was fit to survive, passed into the new dispensation. Baptism was not new; sacrifice kept its spiritual part and laid aside only its outward shell; the Holy Communion was instituted in the very elements of the Paschal Supper, and sin offering was consummated in the one, full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction, that was offered on Calvary.

"There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin," while there do remain spiritual sacrifices to be offered up by the royal priesthood of all Christian believers. The idea of a chosen people was not obliterated, it was so deepened and expanded, that an Apostle finds inspiration guiding him to say to Christians "Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord." Both the Old Testament and the Jewish Church must be understood in order to an understanding of the New Testament and of the Christian Church. The foundation of apostles is never perfectly held, except when it is understood to embrace the foundation of prophets also.

A brief sketch of the Jewish Church will open the way to an intelligent pursuit of that study which we have set before us. Says Dean Stanley in the preface to his lectures on this subject, "The History of the Jewish Church, is divided into three great periods: each subdivided into lesser portions; each with its own peculiar characteristics; each terminated by a single catastrophe.

“The first commences, properly speaking, with the Exodus; and then, passing through the stages of the Desert, the Conquest, and the settlement in Palestine, ends with the destruction of the Sanctuary at Shiloh, and the new institution of the Monarchy. Its great characters are Abraham, Moses and Samuel.” This, he says, “embraces the first Revelation of the Mosaic Religion and the first foundation of the Jewish Church and Commonwealth.

“The second period covers the whole history of the Monarchy. It includes the Empire of David and Solomon; and then dividing itself into the two separate streams of the Northern and Southern kingdoms, terminates in the overthrow of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Chaldean armies. It comprehends the great development of the Jewish Church and Religion through the growth of the Prophetic Order and the first establishment of the Jewish Commonwealth as a fixed institution. It is marked by the rise and fall of the tribe of Judah. The third period begins with the captivity. It includes the Exile, the Return, and the successive periods of Persian, Grecian, and Roman Dominion.” Out of this period, he adds, grew “the last and greatest development of the Prophetic Spirit, out of which grew the Christian Church, and the consequent expansion of the Jewish Religion into a higher religion; whilst at the same time the dissolution of the existing Church and Commonwealth of Judea was brought about by the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple in the war of Titus, and by the final extinction of the national independence, in the war of Hadrian.”

I have quoted these words of the late Dean of Westminster not only for the clear language in which they sum up the entire history from the Exodus to the Pentecostal Birthday of

the Christian Church, but also because they furnish a most convenient and orderly presentation of the grand subject of the Jewish Church itself, in a method most easily remembered. Please bear in mind this threefold division, and the Old Testament will be very much more clear to you as you understand to which period its writings belong. There are the writings which refer to events before the Exodus, and then come the three great periods of the History of the Jewish Church viz.: From the Exodus in the days of Moses to the Monarchy in the days of Samuel. From the Monarchy to the Babylonish Exile, and from the Exile to Christ.

Now through all these ages, the Jewish Church had an identity. It could always be discerned. The ten tribes of the north lapsed into idolatry and you will find the story of it in the books of the Kings, and in the twelve Minor Prophets, beginning with Hosea. The writings of Isaiah and Jeremiah also are burdened with it. Judah and Benjamin kept the true worship, not perfectly indeed, but with many a tradition overlying the truth, begotten of the dreary formalism of Scribes and Pharisees. Still that part of the nation called Judah did not fall into idolatry, and we can see very clearly what was the nature of the Jewish Church. Look at whatever age of that Church you please, as the nation passed from one condition to another you will always find four dominant ideas pervading its whole fabric, viz., these : (a) The Oneness of God in distinction from the many gods of the heathen. (b) The idea of Sacrifice as a means of communion with God. (c) A divinely appointed Priesthood to represent the ideal holiness of the nation and to offer sacrifice as their representatives, and (d) The onlooking toward a Future in which they were to conquer all other nations, under the leadership of One

whom they called the Messiah. These four things are always present in the varying history and fortunes of the Jewish Church. As time went on, Prophets appeared and sacred books were multiplied. Armies were organized, and cities built, a throne was erected, and a nation formed, battles were fought and won or lost, part of the nation became idolaters ; but, all along, these four things belonging to the very nature of the Jewish Church are plainly visible : The worship of one God, the system of Sacrifice, the office of the Ministry, and the expectation of Messiah.

The sweep of centuries transformed the tribal and nomadic people into a settled commonwealth ; the commonwealth became a kingdom ; the tent or Tabernacle gave place to one majestic Temple, with splendid ritual and elaborate ceremonial, its minutest details ordered by Divine direction. High Priest, Priest and Levite, each as an order in the threefold ministry, had his official station and duty. A Synagogue was built in later days, in every considerable town, modelled after the one great Temple both in architecture and in ritual. But always these four things were the predominant features of the Jewish Church. Whatever might be the variations in outward form, they remained unchanged, wherever the Jews were true to their own religion.

Without entering minutely at present into the features of the regular worship and discipline in Temple and in Synagogue, it will be sufficient to point out a fact to which we shall return later on, viz : that the Jewish worship was liturgical, after a prescribed order. To that prescribed order our Saviour conformed and upon it the worship of the Christian Church was afterward framed. The forms of prayer in use in the Synagogues were the means of worship to which Christ

was accustomed, as is abundantly manifest from frequent references in the New Testament. The Synagogue had its annual round of festivals and fasts, its weekly Sabbath, its special offices, its appointed hours of prayer, and its attitudes of devotion. It had its regular table of lessons from the Law and the Prophets, its Hymnal was the Book of Psalms. Its Creed was the *Shema*, composed of three passages from the Old Testament beginning "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." It was called the *Shema* from the Hebrew word meaning "Hear," which began it. It had its sermon for teaching, and its benedictions. Such in its principal features was the public worship to which our Saviour lent the sanction of His own observance. We shall revert to this point when we come to consider how the Book of Common Prayer grew out of the Synagogue worship.

Passing on now from the foundation of prophets to the foundation of apostles we must briefly touch upon the Gospel which the Christian Church has to proclaim. That Gospel is the history of the Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ from His Advent to His Ascension, together with the doctrines which logically grow out of that History. The facts and the doctrines of the Gospel, together with the two institutions of Baptism and Holy Communion, our Lord's own appointment, we find to be the treasure committed to the Christian Church. And from the very outset we find four predominant features by which the Christian Church is to be distinguished. Four features marked the Jewish Church, four also mark the Christian; for we read in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that "they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in [the] prayers." ¹ Here were reproduced in fullness the

features of the elder Church. Here was preserved the identity of the foundation of apostles and prophets. As time went by, the life of Jesus Christ was written, and the Christian Church added to the Old Testament the four accounts of the one Gospel, together with epistles in which the doctrines of the Christian religion were stated by those whom our Saviour had appointed to proclaim that Gospel. But we must never forget that the Christian Church was founded long before a word of the New Testament was written. Accordingly, we look, in the New Testament, to find the history of things already begun, and not to find directions of things yet to be done. We look not to find commandments about the foundation of the Church, but to find the account of that foundation which had been already laid.

And thus in the beginning it is plain that the Church was not Episcopal, neither was it Presbyterian, nor yet Congregational, nor Methodist, nor Baptist, nor Quaker, nor Unitarian. What then was it? It was Apostolic. The little company of eleven apostles added one to their number after the apostacy of Judas, and restored the original number of twelve; the number of the twelve tribes of God's ancient people, and waited for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It came; and they began, under that inspiration, to build up the apostolic Church in the one apostolic faith of the gospel. Their appointment as ambassadors for Christ did not come from the people, it came from Christ. Their commission came not from below but from above. Gradually as the numbers of disciples increased, new officers appeared, increasing the number of apostles. Their original purpose was to be witnesses to the people of the Resurrection of our Lord; but, by divine appointment, Saul was added to the

number, who was not an eye-witness of the Resurrection ; at least not as the others were.

Barnabas was likewise ordained an apostle, showing that there were some duties belonging to the apostolic office which were not to be confined to the twelve. An emergency arose in the distribution of alms ; the apostles were ready for it. "Look ye out seven men," said they, "of honest report whom we may appoint over this business." Upon these seven the apostles laid their hands and thus arose the order now known as deacons. These deacons could preach and baptize, both of which things they did ; but there were other offices which they could not perform ; as for example, when Philip, one of the seven, went down to Samaria and preached,² they who believed were baptized ; but Philip could take them no farther, and so we read that "when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, and they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost." The same thing happened at Ephesus. That was Confirmation. By and bye we find mention of presbyters or elders, with no record of their first appointment, and after that we read that the apostles ordained elders in every city. These elders were also called bishops, or overseers, as well as presbyters, (the Greek word presbyter, is the same as elder,) and thus we find in the New Testament these three orders in the Christian ministry, (1) Apostles, (2) Bishops or elders or presbyters, and (3) Deacons. The old ordering of the Jewish ministry was reproduced. High Priest, Priest, and Levite found their fulfilment in Apostle, Bishop or Presbyter, and Deacon. It is not for me to say whether this was right or wrong. I am here to tell you the facts. These three offices

were distinct in some functions, in others they were identical. All were engaged in preaching and baptizing, but not all in ordaining, or in governing the various congregations. Miraculous gifts were gradually withdrawn, but certain functions remained. Apostles and Bishops or Presbyters united in ordaining to the office of the ministry, an act in which no Deacon is said to have taken part. The care of a particular parish or church was entrusted to a bishop or presbyter, who is called also (in Revelation) the angel of that church, and usually included the entire Christian community, not a large number, in each city or town. Deacons were joined with the Bishop or Presbyter in his parochial work, and the Apostles had care over all the parishes or churches. As time passed on, the original order was modified and the title of Apostle was confined to those who were so called in the New Testament. As in the Jewish Church there were prophets and teachers, so we read that there were the same in the early Christian Church, but these did not continue, or form, in either case, a separate order in the ministry. They served an end in time of critical emergency and were not perpetuated. We shall see in the next sermon how the sub-apostolic age modified the form while it kept the substance of the Church; adapting it as was done in Jewish times to the needs of the day. But through all the ages of the Christian Church the four things which distinguished that Church at the first are always to be found; they run like a golden thread through all her history, no place can be found where the thread is broken: no age in which there cannot be found the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the breaking of the bread, and the prayers.

True, we shall often find places where sin abounds. Often

we shall find the trappings and ceremonial of a corrupt and idolatrous practice stealing in and obscuring the true and primitive purity just as was the case in the history of the Jewish Church ; but we shall see the golden thread with its fourfold witness gleaming again and again when the impurities are rolled away. And these four things are in the world to-day, kept by the Christian Church from age to age;—the Christian Bible, the Christian Ministry, the Christian Communion and the Christian Liturgy;—the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the breaking of the bread and the prayers. Having these four things we are certified that we have a right to take those inspired words to ourselves, in this far off century, and to be sure that we also “are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”

II.

THE SUB-APOSTOLIC AGE, AND THE TEN GREAT PERSECUTIONS.

“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you : and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake.—
ST. MATT. xxiv : 9.

The time covered by the New Testament writings had not elapsed before these terrible predictions began to be fulfilled.

We can see the spirit of persecution beginning to oppress the infant Church at Jerusalem, its birth-place, as though the Church were to be strangled before it had strength to defend itself. "The priests and the captain of the temple and the Saducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people." "Herod the King stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church, and he killed James the brother of John with the sword," and put Peter in prison "and delivered him to four quarternions of soldiers to keep him." "Unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles" at Iconium, "and made their minds evil affected at the brethren." At Athens, they cried out, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." These passages and others like them are familiar to every reader of the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

But notwithstanding, the number of believers increased, and churches were multiplied, so that when the time that is included in the New Testament Scriptures had ended, we find churches in the following places, Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Philippi, Colosse, Cenchrea, Rome, Thessalonica, besides the other churches of Galatia, of Syria and Cilicia where St. Paul "went confirming the churches," Crete, probably also in Cyprus, Cyrene, Lystra, Derbe, Iconium, and Cesarea, with indications of still others. These all had one religion, one common gospel. And we are told that the apostles as they went through the cities, "delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem, and so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." ³

We read also that the apostles "ordained them elders in every church,"⁴ and St. Paul writes to Titus, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:"⁵ adding these words: "if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God." In the opening verse of the Epistle to the Philippians we find these words: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." And again the Spirit of the Lord addresses, through St. John in the Revelation, those who were in charge of individual churches and calls them the "Angels" of those churches. The word angel means simply "messenger." Accordingly we find that all these apostolic churches were under the direction of elders, called also bishops, or angels, or presbyters; that is to say, they had one and the same form of government.

We are now to leave behind the apostolic days, and take up the history of the Christian Church during the sub-apostolic age, giving some account of what are commonly called the "Ten Great Persecutions." But first it may be necessary to say that as the word Bishop is from the Greek, "Episcopos," therefore, when we speak of a church as being Episcopal we mean simply that it is under the government of Bishops. And as was pointed out last Sunday, the Church at the first was not Episcopal but Apostolic. We are not to make any theories here, but to tell the history sincerely, and just as we find it; neither distorting the facts, nor colouring the record; neither biased by prejudice nor influenced

by feeling. The first writer in sub-apostolic times to whom I shall refer is Clement of Rome. He wrote the epistle from which I shall quote, about the year 95. The term sub-apostolic is preferred to post-apostolic because it means nearest or next to the apostolic times, whereas "post-apostolic," may mean any time after the apostles. I take the sub-apostolic age to mean from the times of the Twelve to the First General Council at Nicæa, in 325 A. D.

St. John, the "beloved disciple," lived until about 100, A. D. Nearly one third of the history of the first three centuries of the Church occurred during his lifetime. Starting with all these apostolic churches, just as they were when St. John was yet living, each under the rule of a Bishop, or Presbyter, or Angel, what does Clement say? The epistle is full of exhortations to unity, humility, patience, faithfulness, and diligence. It was a time as we know, of suffering, and the exhortations are enforced by scriptural quotations in great number. The following words will be of interest as showing how in the year 95 the Church was constituted, all the Twelve having died but St. John. Clement says: "The apostles received the gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . So preaching everywhere in country and town, they appointed their first-fruits; when they had proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons." "And our apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife over the name of the bishop's office. For this cause therefore, having received complete foreknowledge, they appointed the aforesaid persons, and afterward they provided a continuance [gave instructions] that if these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministration." "Blessed are those Presbyters who have gone before, seeing that their

departure was fruitful and ripe." Clement is writing to the church at Corinth and we find him using the following entreaties against such divisions as we know had already begun to appear in the Corinthian church; "Take up the epistle of the blessed Paul the Apostle," he says: "What wrote he first unto you in the beginning of the gospel? Of a truth he charged you in the Spirit concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos, because that even then ye had made parties. Yet that making of parties brought less sin upon you; for ye were partisans of apostles that were highly reputed, and of a man highly reputed in their sight. It is shameful, dearly beloved, yes, utterly shameful, and unworthy of your conduct in Christ, that it should be reported that the very steadfast and ancient church of the Corinthians, for the sake of one or two persons maketh sedition against its presbyters. And this report hath reached not only us, but them also which differ from us, so that ye even heap blasphemies on the name of the Lord by reason of your folly, and moreover create peril for yourselves." I shall make but one more quotation from this writer and then pass on to a later one. "We ought to do all things," he says, "in order, as many as the Master hath commanded us to perform at their appointed seasons. Now the offerings and ministrations he commanded to be performed with care, and not to be done rashly or in disorder, but at fixed times and seasons. They therefore that make their offerings at the appointed seasons are acceptable and blessed; for while they follow the institutions of the Master they cannot go wrong."

It may be asked at this point, what those institutions were? The only answer that can be given is that found in the book of the Acts, "the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, the

breaking of bread, and [the] prayers." The "offerings" must have been spiritual and material.

The next writer to whom I ask your attention is Pliny the younger; but first I must ask you to remember again in what troublesome times the Christians of those early days were living. A period of persecution was that in which the sun went down on the life of St. Paul, in the days of Nero the Emperor, about the year 65. From that time to the year 95 was a time of rest. Then came the second of the "Ten Great Persecutions" as they are commonly called, under the Emperor Domitian. It was then that St. John was banished to the island of Patmos where he wrote the book of the Revelation. Eight years of peace ensued. When that was over Trajan came to the throne and from 104 to 117 persecution for the third time prevailed. Pliny was Trajan's nephew and we shall read some extracts from his letters to the Emperor, written when he was proconsul of Pontus and Bithynia. The fourth persecution followed another interval of rest and was in the reign of Hadrian, 125 A. D. Marcus Aurelius who reigned from 161 to 180, persecuted; and this made the fifth persecution. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, was slain at that time. Again peace lasted for 20 years, after which Severus persecuted the Church, especially in Africa, from 200 to 211. This was the sixth. After another interval of rest the seventh persecution came, in the reign of Maximinus, 235 to 237. The eighth was in the reign of Decius from 250 to 253. Valerian conducted the ninth persecution, 257; during which Cyprian was a martyr; and the tenth was under Diocletian, 303 A. D. All these persecutions were marked by great severity, and they had for their end the purpose of compelling the

Christians to give up their new creed and conform to the religion of the empire. Says one writer, "Death itself seemed too slight a punishment in the eyes of these cruel persecutors, unless it was accompanied by the most painful and trying circumstances. It was by crucifixion and devouring beasts and lingering fiery torments that the great multitudes of those early martyrs received their crown. Racked and scorched, lacerated and torn limb from limb, agonized in body, mocked at and insulted, they were objects of pity even to the heathen themselves." ⁶

Pliny the younger was sent, about the year 105-110, as has been related, as proconsul to Pontus and Bithynia. He writes ⁷ that he there found that the temples of the national religion were almost deserted, that persons accused of Christianity were very numerous; of every age and both sexes, of all ranks, and were found not only in towns but in villages and country places. He wrote to the Emperor for instructions, stating that he had questioned the accused repeatedly; of those who persisted in avowing themselves Christians, he had ordered some to be put to death, and had reserved others, who were entitled to the privileges of Roman citizens, with the intention of sending them to Rome. "I had no doubt," he says, "that whatever they might confess, wilfulness and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished." "Some," he says, "worshipped thy image and spoke maledictions of Christ." (*male dixerunt Christo.*) "They affirmed that this had been the sum total of their guilt or error, that they had been accustomed on an appointed day to meet together before daylight and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as God, and that they bound themselves together by a sacrament, not to commit theft, or robbery, or adultery; and

not to break a promise or betray a trust and that when these things had been done, it had been their custom to disperse and come together again for the partaking of a common and harmless banquet, but that they had desisted from doing this since my edict, in which, according to your commands, I had forbidden fraternities to exist. Wherefore I thought it the more necessary to find out by torture, what was the truth, from two female servants (*ancillis*) who were called ministers (*ministrae*). I found nothing else but a perverse and excessive superstition." My friends, this celebrated letter of the zealous and inconsistent Pliny, the anxious young proconsul, who put Christians to death because he was not sure what they believed, is one of the good things that came to the Church in God's providence, out of those dark days of persecution. It tells its own story. We know from other sources that there were Deaconesses in the early Church, we know from Christian authors, of a sacrament which binds the disciple of Jesus Christ to renounce "all the sinful lusts of the flesh." We know of a banquet partaken together and innocent, we know of the ancient antiphons or anthems, sung responsively to Christ as God, but the testimony of a heathen ruler to the existence of these things in the Church as early as the year 110, is of unquestionable importance.

I quote next from another writer who lived in the days of Trajan and who was admitted to the honour of martyrdom Dec. 20, 116, A. D. That is, Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch. There are three epistles from him, of undoubted genuineness. One is addressed to "Polycarp, Bishop of the Smyrneans." Another is addressed "to the most blissworthy church which is in Ephesus," and the third "to the church of the Romans." The noblest language pervades these let-

ters and that you may see how he looked forward to martyrdom I quote from his epistle to the Romans ; "I am God's wheat, and by the teeth of the beasts am I ground, that I may be found God's pure bread." Ignatius, we are told by Eusebius, was the son of the second Bishop of Antioch after the days of St. Peter. He was a disciple of St. John. His writings are from ten to twenty years later than those of Clement of Rome ; and we find in them the distinction first recognized between the bishops and the presbyters. The following passage is remarkable for that very thing. And here again, I must disclaim any theory on the subject. I take the facts just as I find them and those facts disclose in the beginning of the second century, say in the year 110, an episcopal form of government just such as we now have. "Keep ye to the bishop," says Ignatius, "that God also may keep to you. I pledge my soul for those who are subject to the bishop and the presbyters and the deacons ; may my portion with God be with them ! Labour together, struggle together, run together, go to sleep together, rise together as God's stewards and intimate friends and ministers." "Let your baptism be to you as armor, and faith as a helmet and love as a spear and patience as a panoply." Earlier in this same epistle to Polycarp, whom he calls, "the Bishop of the Smyrneans," he says : "Let not those confound thee who, appearing worthy of truth, teach strange doctrines. Stand in the truth like an anvil to be struck, for it becometh a great athlete to be struck and to conquer. More especially on God's account it behoveth us to endure everything, that he also may endure us. Be careful more than thou art. Be discerning of the times."

In what way these early Bishops regarded their office, will

appear from an extract taken from Polycarp, the Bishop to whom Ignatius was writing. He says in his letter to the church at Philippi, "I have not assumed to myself, brethren, the liberty of writing to you these things concerning righteousness; but ye yourselves encouraged me. For neither can I, nor any other such as I am, come up to the wisdom of the blessed and renowned Paul." He exhorts them to be "subject to the presbyters and deacons;" and in the opening words of his letter he says "Polycarp and the presbyters that are with him to the church of God which is at Philippi."

About the year 125, another Barnabas (not the companion of St. Paul) wrote a letter supposed to have been addressed to the Alexandrian Christians. A short extract from it will show how at that time the custom of keeping Sunday instead of the Sabbath had become fixed. After a somewhat lengthy argument on the subject, he says, "Look ye how he saith, 'your present Sabbaths are not acceptable unto me, but the Sabbath which I have made, in the which, when I have finished all things, I will make the beginning of the eighth day, which is the beginning of the new world.' Wherefore also we keep the eighth day unto gladness, in the which Jesus also rose from the dead, and, after that he had been manifested, ascended into the heavens."

Justin, called also the Martyr, was born about the year 100, and was put to death in the year 163. I quote next from his *Apologia*, as showing what was then the Church's doctrine of Baptism and the Holy Communion. "How we dedicated ourselves to God, being new made through Christ, I will explain, lest if I omit this, I appear to be cheating in my explanation. All, then, who are persuaded and believe that the things which are taught and affirmed by us are true; and who prom-

ise to be able to live accordingly, are taught to pray, and beg God with fasting to grant them forgiveness of their former sins ; and we pray and fast with them. Then we bring them where there is water, and after the same manner of regeneration in which we also were regenerated ourselves, they are regenerated ; for, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of all things, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, they then receive the washing of water." Infant baptism is mentioned frequently by the early Fathers.

In another place describing the celebration of the Lord's Supper, Justin says, "Then is brought to the president of the brethren, bread, and a cup of water and wine, which he receives, and offers up praise and glory to the Father of all things, through the name of his Son and of the Holy Ghost, and he returns thanks at length for our being vouchsafed these things by him ; when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people who are present express their assent by saying Amen. . . And when the president has celebrated the eucharist, and all the people have assented, they whom we call deacons give to each of those who are present a portion of the eucharistic bread, and wine and water, and carry them to those who are absent. And the food is called by us eucharist, of which no one is allowed to partake but he who believes the truth of our doctrines, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the forgiveness of sins and to regeneration, and who so lives as Christ has directed. For we do not receive them as ordinary food or ordinary drink ; but . . the food which was blessed . . . is, we are taught, both the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh." "Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God,

when he changed the darkness and matter made the world ; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead : for the day before that of Saturn he was crucified, and on the day after it, which is Sunday he appeared to his apostles and disciples and taught them these things which we have given to you also for your consideration.”⁸

The unity of the Church, and the New Testament Scriptures to which all sacred writers of those days refer, are testified by a writing of unknown authorship, which is assigned by scholars to the year 170 or thereabouts, and called, from the name of its discoverer, the “Muratorian Fragment.” It gives a partial, almost a complete list of the books of the New Testament, and says, “The blessed apostle Paul himself, following the order of his predecessor John, writes only to seven churches. . . . But to the Corinthians and Thessalonians, though for rebuke he wrote twice, notwithstanding it is known that there is only one Church scattered over the whole earth.”

Tertullian who died about the year 220, gives⁹ a list of the Bishops of Rome from the times of the Apostles to his own day. His voluminous writings speak, among other things, of baptism and confirmation, of prayer, of penitence and of flight in persecution.

Clement of Alexandria, a master mind of about the same time, writes as follows :¹⁰ “According to my opinion, the grades here in the church, of bishops, presbyters, deacons, are imitations of the angelic glory, and of that economy which, the Scriptures say, awaits those who, following the footsteps of the apostles, have lived in perfection of righteousness according to the gospel. For these taken up in the clouds, the apostle writes, will first minister [as deacons] then be

classed in the presbyterate, by promotion in glory (for glory differs from glory) till they grow into a perfect man."

Of the other writers of the sub-apostolic age, time will not permit me to quote. Origen, Cyprian, Firmilian, and Cornelius are among the principal Christian writers of that time, beside those who have been mentioned. It was indeed a troublesome age. The words of the Master were amply fulfilled, and many times it must have seemed as though the end were at hand. Emperor after emperor persecuted the little flock; but still the little flock grew larger and stronger. Torn by deepest distress without, they were also perplexed by the rise of heresies within. Of that we shall speak in the next sermon when we come to examine the Church's way of treating heresy in the age of the Six General Councils, or, as it is commonly called, the Conciliar age, dating from 325 to 680 A. D.

But the age of persecution had now spent itself, "the blood of the martyrs had been the seed of the Church," and in the Emperor Constantine the world first saw a Christian on the Imperial throne. His reign was from 312 to 337, A. D., although he was proclaimed Emperor in the year 306.

Before closing however, I beg to call your attention to one more writer, the great historian of the period we have been studying to-day, Eusebius, who wrote about the year 300. I am happy to furnish from his writings, a record, which will perhaps be of some value in connecting together the intermittent glimpses which these other writers have given us. People very often ask, What evidence have you to show that the continuity of the apostolic Church was maintained? And how do you know that it was continued in the Bishops? The answer as it is given in the pages of Eusebius is such as to

satisfy any unprejudiced mind. I ask your patience for a few moments longer while I show you what Eusebius has done for us in this regard. Pray bear in mind the persecutions we have described and the struggle through which the Church of Christ lived. If ever "the gates of hell" were to prevail it was then when the numbers were few and the churches scattered far and wide with fearful foes to contend against. If ever the ministry was to be destroyed and the succession broken then was the time. But how was it? Hear the testimony of Eusebius. He says, "There were many others, also, noted in these times, who held the first rank in the apostolic succession. These, as the holy disciples of such men, also built up the churches where foundations had been previously laid in every place by the apostles." . . . "As it is impossible for us to give the numbers of the individuals that became pastors or evangelists, during the first immediate succession from the Apostles in the churches throughout the world, we have only recorded those by name in our history, of whom we have received the traditional account as it is delivered in the various comments in the apostolic doctrine still extant." He gives the names of the Bishops who succeeded the Apostles, in the churches at Jerusalem, at Antioch, at Rome, and at Alexandria. In the case of the church of Jerusalem he names them in their order, in the other three he gives them, not in a connected list, but in various parts of his history, from which they have been collected; and we have on his testimony these four successions without a break from the Apostles to the time in which Eusebius lived, about the year 300. I have tabulated them here in their order: ¹²—

Church in Jerusalem.	Church in Antioch.	Church in Rome.	Church in Alexandria.
1 James.	Euodius.	Linus.	Amnianus.
2 Symeon.	Ignatius.	Anacletus.	Avilius.
3 Justus.	Heron.	Clement.	Cerdon.
4 Zacchæus.	Cornelius.	Evarestus.	Primus.
5 Tobias.	Eros.	Alexander.	Justus.
6 Benjamin.	Theophilus.	Xvstus.	Eumenes.
7 John.	Maximinus.	Telesphorus.	Marcus.
8 Matthias.	Serapion.	Hyginus.	Celadion.
9 Philip.	Asclepiades.	Pius.	Agrippinus.
10 Seneca.	Philetus.	Anicetus.	Julianus.
11 Justus.	Zebinus.	Soter.	Demetrius.
12 Levi.	Babylas.	Eleutherus.	Heraclas.
13 Ephres.	Fabius.	Victor.	Dionysius.
14 Joseph.	Demetrianus.	Zephyrinus.	Maximinus.
15 Judas.	Paul of Samosata.	Callistus.	Theonas.
16 Marcus.	Domnus.	Urbanus.	Peter.
17 Cassianus.	Timæus.	Pontianus.	
18 Publius.	Cyrrillus.	Anteros.	[The note under
19 Maximus.		Fabianus.	Antioch applies also
20 Julianus.	[Although there	Cornelius.	in this case.]
21 Caius.	were not so many in	Lucius.	
22 Symmachus.	this succession as in	Stephanus.	
23 Caius, 2nd.	those at Jerusalem	Xvstus.	
24 Julianus.	and Rome yet they	Dionysius.	
25 Capito.	embraced the same	Felix.	
26 Maximus.	length of time.]	Eutychianus.	
27 Antoninus.		Caius.	
28 Valens.		Marcellinus.	
29 Dolichianus.			
30 Narcissus.			

Irenæus, who was a martyr in the year 202, gives ¹³ the same list of the succession in Rome as far as his own time, ending with Eleutherus, who, he says, "does now, in the twelfth place from the Apostles hold the inheritance of the episcopate." He further says,¹⁴ "It is within the power of all, in every church, who may wish to see the truth, to contemplate clearly the tradition of the Apostles manifested throughout the whole world; and we are in a position to reckon up those who were by the Apostles instituted bishops in the churches, and [to demonstrate] the successions of these men to our own times."

It is time however, now to close this sermon lest your patience be overtaxed. The words of St. Paul to Timothy come to our remembrance as we look at the history of these early

days. "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." We have no "theory of apostolical succession," it is simply a historical fact. After the Apostles, Bishops took their place every where, by apostolic consent and appointment; no other way of administration was dreamed of for the period of 1500 years, as we shall see. The Church of Christ in the age next to the apostles was everywhere Episcopal. The continuity of the Church in the subapostolic age, in its threefold ministry of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons is as clearly demonstrated as the continuity of the Gospel itself. Priest is the shortened form of the word Presbyter, when used in this connection. Let him who has a "theory" on the subject, point out when that ministry was obliterated. The burden of proof rests not on us who accept the history of the Church as we find it. Says the Prayer Book, and we agree in the saying, "*It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church,—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by public Prayer with Imposition of Hands were approved and admitted thereto by lawful authority.*"¹⁵ There is no theory here; it is simply the statement of a fact. I can not understand how any one should refuse to believe it.

III.

THE CONCILIAR AGE.

“The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom : But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness ; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—I CORINTHIANS i : 22, 23, 24.

The topics and the events which are to come before us to-day, in our study of the history of the Christian Church, are of surpassing importance. We are to follow the thread of history from the year 312, to the year 680. During that period the Six General Councils were held, and from them the period is called the Conciliar Age. Why those councils were held, what they did, who composed them, and what shape they gave to Christian history:—these shall be our questions.

Last Sunday we saw the Church of the first three centuries under the gloomy clouds of the ten great persecutions. Now we are to see her prospering under the smile and sunshine of Imperial favour. The clouds break away in the days of the Emperor Constantine, the persecutors lay aside their instruments of torture, the refugees come out of their hiding places in caves and catacombs, Christian temples abound and the worship grows stately. Not only are “they of Cæsar’s household” favourable to the new religion, but Cæsar him-

self declares by an imperial edict that the sword is no more to drink the blood of Christians. It would seem as though the world were already conquered and following at the wheels of the triumphal chariot of Christ; it would seem as though all dangers now were past and that the Church has nothing more to fear. But the appearance is deceitful. A harder trial than mocking and scourging awaits the Church. Swift on the trial of adversity, follows the trial of prosperity, harder to bear, harder to overcome, because the foe now hides his frown behind a smiling mask, and seeks by the offer of glory and pomp, that ruin he has failed to accomplish by cruelty.

Constantine was proclaimed Emperor in the year 306, but not until the year 312, when he conquered Maxentius the tyrant, at the Milvian Bridge, did he reach the throne in the Imperial city; and not until ten or twelve years from that date (according to different historians) did he obtain sole possession of the Roman Empire by the defeat of his colleague Licinius. In 312, Constantine issued an edict in favour of the Christians, and followed it by a second in the next year establishing "for them in common with all other subjects of the empire, complete religious freedom."

From the very beginning the Gospel had a conflict with the philosophies of those early ages. Certain of the Epicureans and Stoics reasoned against the Christians, and we read of St. Paul that he daily "disputed in the school of one Tyrannus." It is not possible now, and it is not desirable in this connection, to enter into any discussion of the teachings of the heathen philosophers. The Greeks were seeking after wisdom; many of them found it in Christ; and, coming into the Church with the methods of reasoning in which they had been trained they instituted differing schools or types of

Christian theology. Very naturally the varying opinions of men centered around the nature and person of Jesus Christ. The relation of Deity to humanity, the question of the origin of evil, and the way of overcoming evil: these had long been discussed in the schools of the philosophers. And now came a body of men saying with St. Paul, "We preach Christ crucified, the power of God and the wisdom of God." In the gospel of Christ Jesus a new impulse was given to those old studies and questions that had troubled the minds of the wise men; for in Him, Deity and Humanity met; good and evil were seen arrayed by Him. He claimed to have overcome the evil, and to have vanquished the last enemy, death, the most malignant manifestation of evil. No wonder then that the gospel became a new cause of strife among the philosophers, no wonder that it opened up again all the old questions which they had spent their lives in debating. And according as they accepted one part or another of that gospel, so on one side or the other did heresies arise to plague the Church.

There was the Gnostic heresy which grafted a few Christian tenets upon a philosophy whose chief characteristic was its utter repudiation of faith. There were the Ebionites who denied the Godhead of Christ and declared that He was merely a man. There were the followers of Basilides who held that there were 365 orders of spirits emanating from the Supreme God, each order consisting of seven spirits and having for each order a separate heaven. The Marcionites rejected the Old Testament and most of the New, and held that there were three principles, God, the devil, and the Demiurge, the latter occupying a place between the former two. A dispute arose very early concerning the date of

Easter day, called the Quarto-deciman controversy, from the Asiatic custom of celebrating the paschal supper on the 14th day of the first Jewish month. There was the heresy of the Montanists characterized by the great severity and rigor of its system, its multiplied fasts, and precepts as to penance. There was Sabellianism which speculated upon the mystery of the Godhead. There were the Patripassians who confounded the Father with the Son and declared that the Father suffered on the cross. The Neoplatonic school tried to unite the wisdom of all ages in one system. Chiliasm or Millenarianism taught a literal view of the Millenium. The Novatian heresy held that a person who sinned after repentance must be forever excluded from the communion of the Church. Then there was Manichæism which taught that there were two eternally contending forces or principles presiding respectively over the realms of good and evil. God was one and Demon or Matter the other and God was supposed to have the advantage. Docetism held that the body of Jesus was merely a phantom.

These were among the principal heresies which arose in the first three centuries; and were in existence when the edict of toleration was published by Constantine in 312 A. D.

But there were three others which must be mentioned, because they were not only heresies but were sects in the Church; viz: the Circumcellions, the Donatists and the Arians. These three emerge into the clearer light of history at the time when Constantine reached the fulness of his Imperial power. The Circumcellions were the lower and more fanatical members of the Donatist schism, committing all sorts of crimes and extravagances in the name of religion. The Donatists proper, though they were fanatics also, yet

they disapproved the excesses of the Circumcellions. Arianism which took its name from Arius a native of Libya or Cyrenaica, held that Christ was created, that there was a time when He was not. It was this heresy which led to the First General Council.

The Emperor Constantine had become a Christian. The familiar story of his conversion need not detain us long. It was said that he and his soldiers saw inscribed in the clouds, the sign of a cross or a monogram of the name of Christ, combining the first two Greek letters X and P (*Chi* and *Rho*) of the word; together with the words *touto nike*, or as it is usually written in Latin, *In hoc signo vinces*: "Under this standard thou shalt conquer." This was said to have taken place in the year 312, and to have very shortly preceded his victory at the Milvian Bridge. Whatever may have been the truth concerning the vision, Constantine, previously disposed to favour the Christians, became from that time their open champion and defender. Then was the first alliance between Church and State; an alliance which I do not think has ever been a good one. From that time, so far as Roman history is concerned, the Church shared the fortunes of the Empire. As the Empire grew corrupt the Church in Rome partook of her corruption, and when Rome fell, Saracens, Goths and Vandals trod the Church's holy things beneath their feet, and the heathen entered into God's inheritance. Eight centuries of gloom followed the sunset of Imperial splendour, and the Church felt that darkness also. On the ruined throne of the Roman Cæsars, sat a monarch in the person of a pope whose tyranny often rivalled the tyranny of his pagan predecessors. But not to anticipate, let us return to the story of the days of Constantine.

In view of the spreading heresy of the Arians, Constantine called a council to meet in Nicæa in June, 325. Romish historians will tell you that it was called, not by the Emperor but by the pope, and that the pope presided. Neither of these statements is true. It was called by Constantine and presided over by Hosius, Bishop of Cordova. It is known by the name of an Œcumenical or General Council, because, while there had been many councils before that time, this was the first to which delegates were summoned from every part of the universal Church. It is believed that the number of Bishops present was correctly stated by Athanasius, as 318, although some place the number as low as 200. There were four persons however most conspicuous in the deliberations, and those were Constantine, Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, Arius the heretic, and Athanasius.

The earlier sessions of the council "seem to have been held in a church. Arius was repeatedly heard in defence of his opinion," but so open was the avowal that it caused those present to stop their ears. "About a fortnight after the opening of the council, Constantine arrived, and the sittings were transferred to the palace, where the Emperor appeared at them, and acted as moderator." The deliberations of the Council were up to this time marred by confusion and contention, but now it seems to have become more orderly. The Quartodeciman controversy concerning the date of Easter Day was one subject of discussion, the Arian heresy the other. The former question was decided adversely; the Arian opinions were condemned. Arius was banished, and the Nicene creed was issued, bearing the signatures of all but two of the Bishops present: these two being probably personal friends of Arius. This creed which was designed

to furnish a barrier against the Arian heresy, was the assertion by the Nicene Council, not of a new gospel, but of what had been, from the first, less explicitly stated in the Apostles' Creed, of whose origin we have no record. It did not come from Nicæa in the form in which we now have it. It ended with the words "I believe in the Holy Ghost." All the rest was added later. How did the remaining words find place there? The answer to this question is the story of the Second General Council, called the first of Constantinople, which was held in the year 381, under the reign of Theodosius the Great.

Heresy was not destroyed by the action of the Nicene Council though the true Catholic faith was declared touching the Divinity of Christ. A new heresy appeared called Macedonianism, from the name of Macedonius who was patriarch of Constantinople and who had added to the Arian heresy a denial of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. At this Council 150 Bishops were present and the Nicene Creed was reaffirmed with the addition of all those words which follow "I believe in the Holy Ghost," excepting only the famous words, "*filioque*" stating that He "proceedeth from the Father, *and the Son.*" The words "and the Son," were added still later, and have never been accepted by the Eastern Church. The great division between the Eastern and the Western Churches, you will find commonly ascribed to the controversies which arose in the eleventh century over this phrase; but it is by no means to be inferred that that was the only cause of the breach, as we shall see in the next sermon.

A moment ago I used the word "patriarch." Let me stop for a few words of explanation. In the early part of the second century the only office known to have existed, in the

ministry of the Church, beside those of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, was that of Deaconesses, who were employed in such work as men, from the customs of the East were not able to perform. But we find that in the latter part of the same century several new offices were introduced, lower than that of Deacon, doubtless appointed for special emergency, as they were not universally adopted. They were sub-deacons, acolyths, exorcists, readers and door-keepers. And while the lower orders were being thus supplemented, we find a growing system of defining and distinguishing among the higher officers, the Bishops. The chief city being regarded as a metropolis the synods naturally met there and the Bishop of the place presided. Thus arose the name and rank of a "metropolitan;" not a new order in the ministry, any more than an arch-bishop in after times, but simply a Bishop held in higher regard because of the greater importance attaching to his diocese, or jurisdiction, for that is what the Greek word diocese means. A country Bishop was called a *chorepiscopus*. Then, a still higher authority was attached to those Bishops who were placed over the seats of government, especially those in which the apostles themselves had planted the Church, as for example, Jerusalem, Rome, Alexandria and Antioch. The bishops in these places were called "Patriarchs,"¹⁶ and sometimes "Popes."

The sunshine of Imperial favour wrought many changes in the Church's ritual which we shall have time to consider by and bye, in a later discourse, but a word may be said as to the arrangements of the Christian Temples. When they came out of their dark hiding places in caverns and dens of the earth, the Christians found awaiting them certain buildings at Rome, called the Basilicas. But even before that, Tertul-

lian speaks of church buildings, as early as 200 A. D. Eusebius, A. D. 300, describes the church building at Tyre as having a court, surrounded with cloisters, with a fountain in the middle for purification. Our word "font" is short for fountain. Beyond this was a chancel having "the holy altar," as he calls it, "in the middle," stalls for the bishops, and lower seats. The chancel was divided from the rest of the church by a screen of elaborate workmanship and made of wood.¹⁷ But in the western countries it was the Roman Basilica which determined the form of the subsequent Christian Church building. What purpose the Basilica served among the Romans is not clearly known; probably it was a kind of court room, or perhaps a place of exchange. Here the favoured Christians held their public worship. The buildings were oblong and were divided lengthwise by two rows of columns into a middle part, or nave and two aisles of inferior height. At one end was a raised platform or "bema" terminating in a semicircular portion or "absis" from which our word apse is derived. At Constantinople the foundation was made in the form of a cross when churches were built, and the buildings usually fronted the east.¹⁸ Afterward, however, the practice became universal in the west, of having the chancel toward the east, as a reminder to the people, of Christ the risen Sun of righteousness, who was ever to be kept before their eyes.

I would be glad to spend more time than I can now afford in pointing out the work of a few faithful men among the many who in that age of intellectual activity kept the Catholic faith. But I must pass over with the merest mention the names of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, the great friend of missions and builder of hospitals, and Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, who

introduced choral music into the western Church. We must hasten to the Third General Council, composed of some 200 Bishops, summoned by the Emperor Theodosius the younger, A.D. 431, and held at Ephesus. This Council condemned the heresy of Nestorius, who taught that the Virgin Mary was the mother of our Lord's human nature only, implying that Christ had not always been God. The Council of Ephesus, while it affirmed the Catholic faith and condemned also the heresy of Pelagius concerning free will, yet was in many respects a disgraceful affair. The streets were filled with a rabble of ignorant partisans, the bishops themselves indulged in angry contentions and violent recriminations, and Nestorius declared that his life was in danger. There is no quarrel more bitter than a religious quarrel; and the story of the Ephesine Council illustrated this fact. We must turn with unfeigned disgust from many scenes in the history of the Christian Church. Often the stream is swollen and impure: but the treasure, to change the figure, is the thing of value after all, and must be considered apart from the earthly vessels which contain and transmit it from age to age. We may gladly draw the veil over the riotous proceedings of this Third General Council, and turn to the next conspicuous figure in the story. It is that of Eutyches. He taught that Christ was God only, and not man. It is wonderful to see how in those early days men played fast and loose with the Gospel of Christ crucified, how they tossed the subject from side to side, as in a game of battledore and shuttlecock, how they insisted now on one opinion and again on the very opposite. Whether the Church dealt wisely or not in holding these General Councils, is not the question we have to decide at present. We are only looking to see what happened, wise

or otherwise. Eutyches was condemned and Eutychianism with him, by the Fourth General Council, held at Chalcedon in the year 451, under the reign of the Emperor Marcian. The number of Bishops attending is variously reported from 520 to 630. Dioscorus, Bishop of Alexandria, who had shown himself a tyrant and scandalously immoral was deposed and banished to Paphlagonia. This Council also was the scene of noisy and tumultuous disorder. "Mutual anathemas were shouted forth against the asserters and the deniers of the two Natures" of Christ; and "the description of the scene might recall to our minds the tempests of modern" political "assemblies rather than the ideal which we might have naturally formed of the Church's greatest general council."¹⁹ The Fifth General Council was held at Constantinople in the year 553 and was attended by 165 Bishops. It reaffirmed the decisions of the first four councils, especially those against the Nestorians. The Sixth was held in the same city in the year 680. Both these were called by the reigning Emperor. The last condemned a new development of Eutychianism. These Six General Councils have been accepted by the entire Christian Church in all lands, and in all times since they were held, as uttering the testimony of the Catholic Church with a united voice, concerning the matters in debate. No other councils have been so recognized. True there have been other councils, great numbers of them, called by the Bishops of Rome and entitled Œcumenical; but they were not Œcumenical and were never received as such by the Church Catholic. It does not seem probable that there will ever be another General Council, gathered from all parts of the Christian Church. Some hold that it would not be desirable, even if it were possible; but it seems to me that if the Western

and the Oriental Branches of the Church could meet by delegates and establish a basis of union and communion and affirm once more in the hearing of all the world, the one faith in our Crucified Redeemer, it might do very much toward convincing the unbelief and the ignorance of men that He is indeed, to Jew and to Greek, "the power of God and the wisdom of God."

As that distracted age fades out of sight, and its clamors die away, two things command our devout and thankful recognition. One is that the faith was kept, pure from the heresies of heathen philosophers, and the other, that the Church's order was not broken. The superstitions of modern Rome and the departures from the ancient ministry came later. Two names come into prominence in the latter part of the Conciliar age and must be mentioned: Mahomet and Gregory the Great. It would be aside from our course were we to give very much attention to Mahomet; yet his influence was not a slight one upon the Christians of the time. Mahometanism was prepared for in the East, by the Arian heresy. It fastened upon the weakened churches of the East, a mongrel religion of perverted Christianity, pagan superstition and corrupt Judaism.

Gregory the Great, will come before us more at length in the next sermon. Suffice it for now to say that the title which has been given to him is a just one. Would that the other Bishops of Rome had never departed from his wisdom, or changed his ways. He marks the transition from the Early, to the Middle period of Christian History, and from him the rise of the Papacy and the decline of learning are rapid. The twilight steals on apace, and the night that slowly wears away for the next eight hundred years, is a time of thrilling

interest in some respects, a time of discouraging darkness in others. The age we have now been considering, from 312 to 680, was beyond doubt the most trying, yet the most rapid in the spread of Christianity; the most distracted, yet the most exact in its dogmatic statements, the Church has ever seen. He who studies the history of the Church in those days, must remember that they marked the growing corruption of Roman life and the decadence of the Empire; and yet, beneath the turbulent surface of the history were many true and noble lives. The power of the Cross was mighty in that troubled age, and through all the distractions and debates, animating all discussions and inspiring all actions, even when zeal took a misdirected form of expression, it is not hard to trace the influence of Christ crucified, "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The philosophy of the Cross survived, where human philosophies perished. It will always be so.

IV.

THE MIDDLE AGE, AND THE RISE OF THE PAPACY.

"Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you."—ST. MATT. XX: 25, 26.

To day we are to see how these words of the Master were disobeyed, in what is called the Middle Age of Christian history, When our blessed Lord said, "I say unto thee,

Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church," what are we to understand by the word "rock"? Rome under her later papal development understands that the Church is built upon St. Peter. Catholics who are not Romanists understand that the Church is "built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner stone," and that the "Rock" is that Christ whom Peter had confessed just before. When our Saviour said to St. Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," modern Rome holds that He created St. Peter the infallible chief Bishop over the whole Church, and that his successors, the Bishops of Rome, inherit that pre-eminence. Catholics who are not Romanists maintain that our Lord explained His own words, when, later, He gave to all the Twelve that which St. Peter received representatively, saying as He breathed on them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." And as to the infallibility of the successors of the fallible St. Peter, two things need to be remembered; in the first place the name of St. Peter is joined, by ancient historians, with that of St. Paul, as founders of the Church at Rome. St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans. St. Peter was the apostle to the Jews; so much we know from Holy Scripture; and in the second place, the New Testament knows nothing about infallibility in any apostle, least of all in St. Peter who thrice denied his Lord, before the coming of the Holy Ghost, and was "withstood to the face" by St. Paul, "because he was to be blamed," after the Holy Ghost had come. ²⁰

There are some intimations of a superiority claimed for the

Roman Church before the Middle Age. For instance Irenæus writes, about 185 A. D., in his great work "Against Heresies,"²¹ "It is matter of necessity that every church should agree with this church" that is, the Church at Rome, "on account of its pre-eminent authority," (*propter potioorem principalityatem*; latin version.) Yet Irenæus himself says on the same page that this Church was "founded and organized at Rome by two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul." So it is evident that Irenæus knew nothing of the theory that St. Peter alone founded the Roman Church and possessed infallibility and supremacy over the whole Church.²² The "pre-eminent authority" of which he speaks may be understood as a natural reference to the superior position which the Church would enjoy at the seat of the Empire, even in those days of persecution. But the original Greek is lost and "we have only the old Latin version of it."²³ Again, Leo the Great, 440 to 461, A. D. "raised the claims of the Roman Bishop as the representative of St. Peter to a height before unknown."²⁴ But all intimations of Roman supremacy before the days of Gregory the Great are sufficiently demolished by the letters which that Bishop wrote with his own hand. Gregory was born at Rome, about the year 540, and was consecrated Bishop of Rome in September 590. He was one of the wisest rulers, one of the noblest characters, and one of the greatest Bishops the Church has ever had. His benefactions to the needy, his improvements in the educational standards of his clergy, his reforms and elevation of the character of worship, his attention to music as shown in the Gregorian Chants, which are called so from him, are matters of history. It is related of him that "when a poor man had been found dead in the street, Gregory abstained for

some time from the celebration of the Eucharist, as considering himself to be the cause of his death. He was in the habit of sending dishes from his own table to persons whom he knew to be in want, but too proud or too bashful to ask relief." The possessions of the Roman Church by this time had become enormous. They were called by the name of "the patrimony of St. Peter," and embraced many "estates in Italy and the adjacent islands," also in Gaul, Illyria, Dalmatia, Africa and Asia. Under his Episcopate these possessions grew still greater, and he administered their affairs through the agency of commissioners chosen from the lower orders in the ministry. Thus many churches became tributary to Rome and subordinate to Gregory. In his hands however, the power was wisely wielded; and yet Gregory contributed in these ways innocently enough, to the erection of a system which became in after times the blight of Christendom. The name "pope" which meant simply father, was not at first confined to the Bishop of Rome, nor was it so in Gregory's day. It was a common appellation given not only to Bishops, but, in many instances, to other ministers. "Gregory always treated the eastern patriarchs as independent." He spoke of the Bishops of Alexandria and Antioch as his equals. And this brings us to some very interesting and important correspondence, which will serve to shew that, however Gregory might have upheld the dignity of his own position, the papacy with which we are acquainted was of a later growth.

The story is this. In the year 585, John, who was called "the Faster," on account of his ascetic life, was raised to the dignity of Patriarch of Constantinople. In 587 he assumed, like some of his predecessors, the title of "Œcumenical

Bishop." Gregory remonstrated, not because of any encroachment upon his own right, but because it derogated from the dignity of the Emperor.²⁵ He declared that John had been drawn by his flatterers into the use of that "proud and foolish" word; that the assumption "was an imitation of the devil, who exalted himself above his brother angels; that it was unlike the conduct of St. Peter, who, although the first of the apostles, *was but a member of the same class with the rest.* The council of Chalcedon, he said, had indeed given the title to the Bishops of Rome," (which was a mistake, the Council did nothing of the sort,) "but that they had never adopted it, *lest they should seem to deny the pontificate to others.*" He further declared that the term "Œcumenical Bishop" was an invention of the first apostate. He wrote to Eulogius, Bishop of Alexandria, and to Anastasius, Bishop of Antioch, endeavouring to enlist their interest against the adoption of such a title by John. Eulogius, in his reply stated that he had ceased to use it in writing to John, as Gregory had commanded, and in his letter he addressed Gregory as "universal pope;" to which the Bishop of Rome replied, "I beg that you would not speak of commanding, since I know who I am, and who you are. In dignity you are my brother; in character my father. I pray your most sweet holiness to address me no more with the proud appellation of 'universal pope,' since that which is given to another beyond what reason requires is subtracted from yourself. If you style me 'universal pope,' you deny that you are at all that which you own me to be universally. Away with words which puff up vanity and wound charity."²⁶

Romish historians have vainly tried to evade the plain sense of these damaging letters. Catholics who are not

Romanists assent to every word that I have quoted. In praising the wisdom and generosity of Gregory, I do not mean to imply that he made no mistakes. Under him the Romish doctrine and ritual of the Mass was brought into substantially its present form, and that service is contrary to the teaching of the Bible. Gregory was in many ways justly entitled to be called the Great. He was pre-eminently a statesman. He sought to build up a spiritual kingdom whose outward magnificence and universal extent should command the allegiance of all hearts. He sent Augustine as a missionary to Britain in the year 596. What Augustine discovered in England we shall have to tell next Sunday. But we may dismiss the name of Gregory with a single remark. He was one of the most protestant of Bishops, so far as the Papal Supremacy and Infallibility are concerned.

The successors of Gregory departed from his wisdom and catholicity however and their representatives at the 6th General Council in 680, gave to Agatho the title which Gregory had rejected and denounced, and thereafter the Bishops of Rome have kept it. From that time onward the reverence for images and relics and pictures, which had begun before, grew to great proportions. It was sought by Leo the "Isaurian" to check and suppress this superstition, but the superstition only grew worse. What it is to-day may be seen from the conduct of the Romanists in Montreal during the recent epidemic, when processions and relics having taken the place of reasonable and certain means of checking the disease, the people perished miserably in great numbers.

We must pass rapidly over this period of growing idolatry which is one of the plague spots in modern Romanism; we must pass with the merest mention the conversion of Ger-

many by Boniface, 715 to 755, A. D. and come to the name of Charlemagne who was crowned as Emperor of Rome, by Pope Leo III on Christmas Day, A. D. 800. Charlemagne who had acquired possession of the Frankish throne, after the death of Pipin, conquered the Lombards in 773 or 774, and became the master of the rest of Italy in 786. The coronation of the Emperor by the Pope took place at the Mass, in St. Peter's Cathedral at Rome, and Charlemagne professed both surprise and indignation. But whether Charlemagne was sincere or no, the pope's action led to the subsequent claim that the Bishop of Rome was able by his own authority, to bestow the gift of Empire. More than this, the coronation of Charlemagne separated Rome from the Greek Empire, and led to the division between the eastern and western Churches which took place in the eleventh century and has never since been healed. Charlemagne reigned from the time of his coronation 14 years, making a term of nearly 50 years from the death of his father. By his gifts the possessions of the Roman Church were enormously increased. He sought to spread Christianity by violent measures, and made great efforts for the revival of learning. The growth of monasteries and the monastic system had begun long before, and it was under the guidance of Alcuin, a learned monk, that Charlemagne tried to overcome the decline in letters, which had been great in the latter part of the Merovingian dynasty. The growing reverence for the Virgin Mary took the form of multiplied festival days in her honour. Other saints were added to the calendar and in some instances it was doubtful whether the honoured saint were a real or a fictitious personage. Wafers were substituted for common bread in the Eucharist about the year 700. But the

cup was not withdrawn from the laity in the Holy Communion until the twelfth century; and to-day, the Roman Catholic laity never receive the wine; only the wafer! They who receive the Communion least often, are therefore most closely copying the Romanist. After the time of Gregory the Great the doctrine of purgatory and masses for the dead were developed, and that with rapidity.

Between the years 829 and 857, appeared what are known as the famous forged Decretals. These bore the honoured name of Isidore, Bishop of Seville. They consisted of nearly 100 letters, written in the names of very early Bishops of Rome, placing the privileges of the clergy, especially of the Bishops very high, while the power of the pope is extended beyond anything as yet known. He appears as the "head, lawgiver and judge of the whole Church." The forgery of these decretals was not exposed until the popes had derived great benefit from them; and yet their falsity must have been easy to detect had there been any desire to do so. Quotations from St. Jerome's version of the Bible are contained in them, alleged to have been made by Bishops who died before St. Jerome was born. Other like discrepancies appear, and they are now universally allowed to have been gross forgeries. But the discovery was one of the fruits of the Reformation. Let us hope with Archbishop Trench,²⁷ that the popes who appealed to them in support of the Papal Supremacy did so in the sincere belief that they were genuine. And it is neither fair nor just to suppose that the Papal subjugation of western Christendom was due entirely to fraud and aggression. We must remember again with Trench, "the succession of statesmen, and these of the very first order, who, often at the most critical moments, and just

when they were needed the most, occupied the Papal throne." I have no interest in excusing, and no desire to justify the growth of the Papacy. It lives upon the superstition of that ignorance which it fosters. Yet I cannot find it in my heart to deal unfairly even with so insidious and so monstrous a corruption of the pure and sweet and simple faith of Christ's Church and Gospel. I agree again with Trench, when he says, "who can doubt that in ages of such savagery and violence, times in which all laws of God and man were so recklessly trampled under foot, it was much, and it was felt to be much, that there should be one man in the world, who could, and who sometimes did, rebuke without fear or favour the strongest and proudest of the wrong doers, the men of the earth, who were fain to persuade themselves that everything was permitted to them?" "There never was," he continues, "and there never will be a golden age for the church till Christ her Lord shall come; but every age will be full of scandals and shames: none were more crowded with such than those of which we are treating now." ²⁸

There were in the days which followed the production of the False Decretals, many who held the Pontifical chair, who were monsters of vice and cruelty. They were not all such, and the names of Adrian II, John XII, Innocent III (in later times), and Boniface VIII, must be balanced in the account of good and evil against such names as Nicholas I, Gregory VII, Alexander III, Innocent II, and many others both wise and well meaning. And then we must remember the frequent protests like those of the saintly Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, against the Papal usurpations.

There was a struggle going on in the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, between Rome and Constantinople, for

the political supremacy. Besides, there was the quarrel over the words "and the Son," in the Nicene Creed, which was mentioned last Sunday. These jealousies and quarrels took shape in the eleventh century in an open rupture between the Eastern and Western Churches. That breach has never been healed. The year 1053 is memorable for this, that in that year Leo IX. issued a sentence of excommunication "against the Patriarch of Constantinople and all who adhered to him." The next year Michael Cerularius the Patriarch of Constantinople, returned the compliment by retorting the excommunication upon the Latins.

I must pass by the growth of the custom of the celibacy of the clergy, saying only by way of dismissing it, that Adrian II, the Pope who perhaps most stoutly insisted upon it about the year 867, for the rest of the clergy, had been married himself, and was the son of a Bishop.

The next conspicuous figure in the history of the Papacy is that of Hildebrand (afterwards called Pope Gregory the VII). He did what he could in his own way to reform the Church. In carrying out his plans he came in conflict with the weak and wicked Emperor, Henry IV of Germany. Hildebrand was cruel. He made the king, who was penitent for resisting him, stand, in a coarse woolen dress, barefooted, without food from morning till night three whole days, exposed to the piercing cold of winter, outside the walls of the Castle of Canossa, an Apennine fortress, whither the Pope had gone to meet him. At last the king was admitted and after the most abject submission and prostration before the Pope he received terms of absolution. The terms were such that he could not accept them and he went away; but the end was to come. In 1081 Henry led an army against Rome

and three years afterward Hildebrand was overcome, deposed, banished, and a new Pope, or anti-pope, was consecrated. Hildebrand's was a character to inspire awe and "perhaps admiration, but in no human bosom can it awaken a feeling of love." The advance of Papal Supremacy was his ruling passion, and no means were spared to secure that end.

Briefly to speak of the Crusades, which began with the First in the twelfth century, would be so unsatisfactory, that I must reluctantly pass them by without description as not essential to the history of the Papacy, and come to speak of some of the religious orders and sects of the Middle Age. The Waldenses and Albigenses were probably the most important. "They fought for a scriptural religion." "Stretching through central Europe to Thrace and Bulgaria, they joined hands with the Paulicians of the East, and shared their errors." They appeared first in the eleventh century but were so rapidly multiplied that they outnumbered, in the twelfth century the adherents of Rome. They were overcome, however, by the Roman organized methods of suppression, and began to disappear toward the close of the thirteenth century. Afterward came the Beghards and Beguines which were, at the first, free guilds and associations banded together for works of piety. Then came the Franciscans, an order distinguished for the rigor of its discipline. These orders became hostile to Rome and were the source of great danger to the Supremacy. Pope Innocent III sent a crusading army against them under the notorious Simon de Montfort. The horrors of the Albigensian war extended over a period of twenty years, (from 1209 to 1229.) The sword, fire and fagot were not swift enough for the extermination of these hated foes, and in 1232, Pope Gregory the

Ninth organized, for more effective work, a system of trial which afterward became a permanent organization and is to be forever known as the blackest disgrace on the page of Papal history: "The Holy Office of the Inquisition." By the middle of the fourteenth century there were but a few Albigenses left, and all their organizations had been broken up. In the latter half of the fifteenth century the Inquisition was busy mainly in burning Jews; Torquemada in Spain, sending alone, it is said, some eight or nine thousand to the stake. The Waldenses survived, and, as Trench says, they alone were worthy to survive. The others, he says, could not have reformed the Church, for they carried in themselves the seeds of their own destruction. "It is only truth which can make men free, and they had not the truth."

Among the doctrinal errors of Rome which grew up in the Middle Age, were transubstantiation, the doctrine of *opus operatum*, purgatory, indulgences, invocation of the saints and the denial of the cup to the laity in the Holy Communion. To discuss these topics fully would require a volume for each. Each was defended by what are known as the Schoolmen or defenders of Mediæval Theology. This kind of scholasticism, which was never willing to learn any thing new and defended always the existing and established order, though it lingered on into the fifteenth century, came at last to be occupied with idle and unprofitable questions, and passed away.

But a brighter day was breaking. The Renaissance or Revival of Learning could not long tolerate the gross darkness of ignorance and superstition which shrouded the land. Rome had, by the decree of the Council of Toulouse in 1229, forbidden the laity to read or even to have copies of

the Bible, and by her simoniacal practices, she had impoverished and wearied her children past endurance. True and earnest hearts on all sides were longing for reformation, "in the Church, in its head and in its members." Who should lead it? Who first lift up the rallying cry and gather together those who were willing to shake off the yoke of this tyranny? The Papacy was an excrescence. Who should cut it away? These questions we shall answer next Sunday.

But for the present, in closing this outline of Mediæval History, let me say, I have purposely omitted to trace the history of the Eastern Church after the division, for it could not be done with any thoroughness in the limits of this discourse. Nor have I told as yet the history of the Church of England. That will come before us next Sunday. We must bear in mind that the monstrous assumptions of the Papacy met with many a resistance and many a protest. It was a cruel age, a cruel system. It had far departed from obedience to the words of our Saviour, in the text we have left so far behind us to-day. Yet dark though that age was, there were always true men in every century, there were saints in the earth even then, and out of the darkness four things emerge into the clear light of the Reformation age, pure as gold that is tried in the furnace. Those four are the Bible, the unbroken continuity of the Church's Order, the Holy Communion and the Ancient Liturgy. That is to say, "The apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the breaking of the bread, and the prayers." Praised be God, that though the men who kept these things were, as we have seen, oftentimes most unworthy of the trust, yet the four great inheritances of the Catholic Church, the four things by which, in every age, the Church of Christ can be known, were not lost.

The Bible which was read in the Apostolic churches is ours to-day; the ministry, sacraments and worship which belonged to the Apostolic Church are not lost. The power which kept the Bible, kept these also: that is to say the power of Him who said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

V.

THE REFORMATION AGE.

"Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place."—JER. vii: 2, 3.

There were two Reformations. The one which is called the Continental Reformation found a leader, at first, in Martin Luther, and had its place in the countries of continental Europe; principally Germany and Switzerland. The other took place in England and is known as the English Reformation. A wide divergence marks the lines on which these two great Reformations proceeded. The former was a movement, or series of movements "under the conduct of individual leaders."²⁹ It took the names of Lutheran and Calvinistic from the men who headed it. The latter, the English Refor-

mation, took the name of no individual, but "was based upon a recognition of the rights of autonomous national churches; on 'the principle of nationality as opposed to papal universalism;' and took its form accordingly." ³⁰ The starting points of these two, being thus distinct, the lines they followed were divergent. In the Continental the historic continuity of the Church was lost; in the Anglican it was kept. A new form of church government appeared in the former, called the Presbyterian which owes its origin to Calvin. In this respect, Presbyterianism departed from Lutheranism, which paid little attention to the subject of ministerial succession. But Calvinism which arose later, saw that the subject of Episcopacy could not be ignored. Calvin himself is reported to have said that "The office of a Bishop was instituted by the authority and defined by the ordinance of God." ³¹ On the doctrine of the Holy Communion, Presbyterian standards are very like the teachings of the Church of England, while Lutherans held what is called "consubstantiation," in place of the Romish theory of "transubstantiation." Calvin and Melancthon, another great Presbyterian leader, both, made efforts to secure Episcopacy from England but failed. The ground thereafter taken by Presbyterians was that the apostolical succession was complete in the order of Presbyters. Hence the name Presbyterian. Luther died in February, 1546. Calvin died in May, 1564. The origin of the Continental Reformation is too well known to demand more than a passing word. The hammer in Martin Luther's hand when he nailed his 95 theses on the papal doctrine of indulgences, upon the door of the Cathedral of Wittenberg sounded an alarm which spread with marvellous rapidity. It would be interesting had we the time, to tell the

whole history of this movement and to examine more closely the practice of the wholesale barter of Indulgences in the hands of John Tetzel ; to review the history of such men as Melancthon and Erasmus, Zwingli and Arminius ; to tell the story of the Diet of Worms, and the Synod of Dort, and the Diet of Augsburg with its celebrated Confession of Faith, and to tell of the Westminster Assembly. But we are to concern ourselves to-day, more with the English Reformation and must therefore pass by the many inviting topics and the men some of them good and true, who were identified with the Reformation on the Continent under its Lutheran or its Presbyterian phases. It ill becomes us to cast words of reproach upon the Continental Reformers or upon their descendants. Better far, while maintaining that the Church of England was right in keeping the ancient threefold ministry, to remember that the purpose of Reformation was alike, with all who took it in hand, to purify the Church of God, from the abuses and corruptions it had received. We cannot justify the departure from the ancient Church and her order. We deplore the loss of apostolic ministry and practice wherever they have been lost. Yet there was not a sect which arose at the Reformation but had an element of truth in it. . If there were evil minded men and false ideas connected with them, as unquestionably there were, it becomes us to remember the sins and errors of the age in which they lived, sins and errors from which our own forefathers were not free ;—and seek for the good that was in all. A wonderful reaching out toward one another for the restoration of the lost fraternity spirit, is seen on the part of all Christian people to-day. God forbid that we should say or do aught to hinder its perfect consummation in the

blessed Spirit of the Christian Unity of the One Body, to be thenceforth maintained in the bond of peace.

In studying the Reformation of the Church in England, we must remember that England did not owe her Church or her Gospel to the Papacy of Rome. We saw last Sunday that the Papacy was a usurpation of Mediæval growth. But Britain had her national Church long before the days when Gregory the Great sent Augustine, with forty other monks, there in 596, A. D. Some have thought that St. Paul brought the Gospel into Britain, referring among other sources to Clement's words who wrote, about the year 95, that St. Paul "won the noblest renown which was the reward of his faith, having taught righteousness unto the whole world, and having reached the farthest bounds of the west."³² But as Robertson says, "the early introduction of Christianity into Britain appears more certain than the agency by which it was effected." In the year 314, at the Council of Arles in France, we find the names of three British Bishops: Eborius of York, Restitutus of London, and Adelfius of Lincoln. The year 314 therefore saw the Church in Britain under Episcopal government sending its representatives to take part in a council, and the year 314 is long enough before the rise of the Papacy to prove that the Church of Christ was not established in England by Papal missionaries.

The Saxons drove the Christians away to the western mountainous districts of Wales about the year 450. The venerable Bede, about 730, A. D., says that "Public and private buildings were alike destroyed, priests were everywhere murdered at the altar; bishops and their people were indiscriminately slaughtered with fire and sword, and there was

no one to bury the victims of such cruelty." In A. D. 597, Augustine set foot upon British soil. That he found the Christian Church there at all, was largely due to the work of Columba and the monks of Iona who did too much to be told here, for the cause of Christian education and nurture in England and Scotland. Ethelbert was King, reigning over the kingdom of Kent when Augustine came, and he had married Bertha, a Christian princess. Ethelbert received the missionaries kindly and gave them "leave to take up their abode in Durovernum" now called Canterbury. There they found a church building of the ancient "Roman-British" period and in it Augustine and his followers worshipped. The spot is occupied to this day by a church, said to exhibit a large proportion of the ancient Roman materials. Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, by permission of Gregory adapted the ritual of the Roman use to the customs which he found in vogue in Britain, and which customs are supposed to have been derived from the Liturgy of the Gallican use. Gregory furthermore wrote to Augustine, "we commit the care of all the British Bishops, to your brotherhood, that the ignorant may be instructed, the weak may be strengthened by your counsel, the perverse may be corrected by your authority." But the Bishops of the ancient British Church refused to submit, and Augustine is said to have told them in anger, that "if they would not have peace with their brethren they would have war with their enemies, and die by the hands of those to whom they refused to preach the gospel." Soon after this, Augustine died, having consecrated a Bishop, respectively, for the three cities of Rochester, London and Canterbury; the latter as his own successor.

Of the growing usurpations of the Roman Bishops after that

time, enough has been said to show how England's Church, in common with the other western Churches, came under Papal jurisdiction. Yet in hastening on to the time when that yoke was cast off I must not omit to mention that there were frequent protests on the part of the English, against the growing papal aggressions. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury in 961, refused to comply with the Pope's order to restore a certain English earl who had been excommunicated, but who had by the use of money and influence obtained the Pope's mandate for his restoration. So in the following century the Archbishop of York "openly impugned the doctrine of transubstantiation;" and in the next century the Bishop of Hereford defied the papal authority, and "paid no regard to the thunders of the Vatican" though he was twice excommunicated; and in the next, "the Bishop of Lincoln visited Rome, and protested against its corruptions before the Pope and Cardinals."

On the 14th of October 1066, William the Norman won the battle of Hastings and became the King of England. Under the Norman reign the rivets of the Papal subjugation were more firmly fastened. But we may not linger over the details. A blow was struck for freedom in the days of King John. That blow was the prelude to the Reformation. The story of Runnymede and the Magna Charta is too familiar to need repetition here. Suffice it to say that the declaration was made in the very first article of that instrument, in 1213, that "the Church of England shall be free, and shall have her rights entire and her liberties uninjured."

When the sixteenth century opened, there was a widespread expectation that "Europe would ere long be shaken by some purifying tempest." "New importance was attached

to individual freedom, and a higher value set on individual souls." "Every order of society was disturbed. . . . The feelings of many were exasperated by the scandalous lives of the ecclesiastics, . . . and a party of doctrinal reformers was emerging, almost simultaneously." In 1522 Pope Adrian VI. himself admitted that "many abominations had for a long time existed even in the holy see, yea, that all things had been grievously altered and perverted."³³ Papal usurpation, and the corruption of doctrines and life, were the two things to be cast off. Numerous converging lines indicated the way. The translation of the Bible into the vernacular, the revival of learning, and the spirit of freedom were most prominent among them. As early as 1375, John Wyclif had denounced the Pope as "anti-Christ, the proud worldly priest of Rome, and the most cursed of clippers and purse-carvers;" and in 1380 he entered upon the work of translating the Bible. For these things Wyclif is sometimes called "the grandsire" of the English Reformation; and for teaching his doctrines Huss and Jerome of Prague were put to death by the Pope.

The alarm which Rome felt at the turn matters had taken in the early part of the sixteenth century is plainly seen by the course pursued at the Council of Trent in 1545. Yet Rome re-asserted in the later sessions of that council in 1551, some of her worst errors in most aggravated form, and insisted upon their being received under pain of anathema; but by that time England was free!

What was the English Reformation? Our reply is twofold. It was, *first*, "the abolition of papal jurisdiction" over the realm and Church of England; it was *secondly*, for this could come only after the other, the restoration of the primitive

purity of doctrine, discipline, and worship. It was not the making of a new Church, for that is impossible. It was not a departure from the ancient Church, which would have been folly. Not a departure but a return. It occurred in the reign of Henry VIII. It has well been said that "the Church of England is in no way responsible for Henry VIII." It may well be added, that Henry VIII is in no way responsible for that Church.

He became King in 1509, at the age of 18. He died in 1547, "unwept, unhonoured and unsung," after a reign of 38 years. His character and conduct are condemned by an almost universal verdict. I say almost, for I am aware that he has been defended by Froude. But the profligate life he led and all its unsavory details need not enter into the present discourse. "The Reformers based their work," says Hardwicke, "upon the principle that Christian nations, and consequently national churches, do not owe allegiance, as a matter of Divine right, to any foreign potentate whatever;" "in the second place they secured the oneness of the Modern with the Mediæval Church of England, by preserving the continuity of its organization, by unbroken ties of holy orders, by innumerable traditions of thought and sentiment, of faith, of feeling and of ritual, such especially as the Prayer Book has retained." "In the third place, the Reformers openly directed their appeal to the intelligence and reasoning powers no less than to the conscience of the individual churchman, affirming the necessity of personal faith in God and personal fellowship with Christ;" "thus connecting a revival of religion with the growth of intellectual freedom and the onward march of man and of society."

But how did all this come about? Free your minds from

the notion that it happened by a single act, or in a short time. It was the growth of many years, the result of long, persistent, dogged determination. We have seen something of the long train of events which led to it, and of the long process of ripening thought which sought for an opportunity to speak. That opportunity came in the disjointed relations, the widening breach between Henry VIII, King of England and the Roman Pontiff. Too great prominence has been given to the King's quarrel with the Pope on the subject of the divorce from Catharine of Aragon. That quarrel led to the culmination of the King's rupture with the Papacy, but it was far from being all. Catharine was the widow of Henry's brother when he married her. It was not until 1533 that Archbishop Crammer, declared in face of the Pope's refusal to grant a divorce that the marriage had been invalid from the very first. Crammer's character is not above reproach by any means, as will be seen if you will take the trouble to read Strype's Memorials. And in this instance it may be doubted whether he acted judiciously or from a time-serving spirit of expediency. In many respects Crammer was one of the most influential men in giving shape to the earlier proceedings of the Reformation. The Pope, Clement VII, had angered the King by evasions and delays, and in 1529 postponed the case again. Cardinals Wolsey and Campeggio were the Pope's agents in this matter and from that time the downfall of Wolsey, the King's favourite and prime minister was of headlong rapidity.

As early as 1516 the King had asserted his own Royal Supremacy in the strongest language. But now he was furiously bent on making good his words. In 1530 he issued a proclamation forbidding the admission into the Kingdom of

bulls from Rome. In 1531 Convocation petitioned the King to declare that, if the Pope refused to release the Bishops from the duty of paying "annats" or first fruits, then "the obedience of him and the people be withdrawn from the see of Rome." Parliament accordingly "passed an Act ordaining that 'all payments of first fruits to the Court of Rome should be put down and forever restrained.'" ³⁴ In 1532-3, an act was passed abolishing all appeals to Rome and providing that "appeals shall lie from the archdeacon's court to the bishop's, and from the bishop's to the archbishop's, where final judgment shall be given." Of this enactment, Bishop Williams says: it "cut the tap-root of papal jurisdiction in England, nor, with the exception of the brief reign of Mary, has that jurisdiction ever been revived." The abolition of Peter's Pence and of Dispensations shortly followed.

Thus the papal supremacy over England's Church was abolished. In its rejection we see the clergy in convocation taking the initiative steps; King and Parliament passing the needful enactments, as the constituted legislative power. Was England made a new Empire by thus casting off her galling subjection to the yoke of a foreign tyrant? I trow not! No more was the Church of England, made a new Church when the work of reform was completed! The one theory stands or falls with the other. Rome in England like Rome in America is always an alien! Always an intruder! England's Church is Catholic!

The Church of England is sometimes said to have been "created by act of Parliament." It ought to be considered a sufficient answer to the charge to call attention to the facts which have just been recited; but if that is not enough it may be added that "she existed" as Bishop Williams says,

“as the established Church of the Country hundreds of years before Parliament came into being.” “The State never gave the Church its organization nor ordered its government. It would be far more correct to say that the Church in England shaped the State.” “The National Church grew up with the national life, side by side with the civil polity of the nation.” In view of the present state of feeling toward the subject of disestablishment and the monstrous proposition of disendowment, I may perhaps be justified in quoting further from the Bishop of Connecticut. He says, and his words are susceptible of proof to the very letter, “The State never endowed the Church of England as a body. Cathedral churches and bishops’ sees were endowed by individual gifts.” “Parish churches, chapels, chantries and even monasteries were endowed in the same way.” You can see then what a difference there is between disestablishment and disendowment. The former may be regarded as a justifiable separation between things of civil and things of Ecclesiastical relation. Some people think it would be a wise thing to disconnect the two if it could be done peaceably and with due regard to vested rights, so that the Church might stand or fall upon its own merits, as in the United States. But for the State to disendow the Church, to take away the property which the Church never received from the State, would strike the unprejudiced mind as an act forbidden by that ancient law which says, “Thou shalt not steal.”

In the year 1531, Henry VIII, under cover of a pretended desire to protect the clergy from Romish exactions assumed the title of “sole protector and supreme head of the Church.” Much has been said and written about this, in seeming for-

getfulness of the fact that the Convocation passed a resolution at once to the effect that the title could only be accepted with the limiting condition of the words "so far as may be consistent with the law of Christ." This opposition brought the King to an explanation which should dismiss the subject forever. He said that he "meant no intrusion into the sacerdotal functions. Only so far as spiritual things included property and justice, whatever power was necessary to preserve the peace of society was comprehended in the commission borne by the supreme ruler." Do the courts of Massachusetts claim very much less than that? Do we not live and enjoy the protection of our rights to "property and justice" as parishes, and as dioceses, by the very same principle? We may now dismiss the subject of the Reformation so far as it relates to the Papal supremacy, having seen that the tyranny of Rome was cast aside, without breaking the historic continuity of the Church of England with the Church in all the ages that had elapsed.

Two things yet remain to make the story of the Reformation complete. One is the reform of doctrine by a return to the one true, pure and primitive faith of the gospel, as summed up in the Catholic Creed. The other is the reform of worship by a purification of the liturgical standards of the Church of England, especially the Book of Common Prayer. Next Sunday morning we shall treat of this last topic, in the concluding sermon of this series, on the History of the Prayer Book. A few words must be said to-day on the reform of doctrine.

Here again the work was gradual, not sudden. As early as 1536, the southern convocation issued a manifesto entitled "Articles to stablyshe christen quietnes and unitie amonge

us, and to avoyd contentious opinions." The spirit of Mediævalism pervaded these ten articles, although they mentioned but three sacraments, instead of the seven which Rome still holds. Latimer preached a sermon at this time which shows that the intent of the articles was in the interest of doctrinal reform; and in the course of that sermon he alluded to those "that begot and brought forth our old ancient purgatory pick-purse." In the next year a committee of prelates and divines put forth a work called the "Bishop's Book" or "Institution of a Christen Man." This was followed in 1543, by another book called "The Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man." Both these works marked a great advance in the line of reform in doctrine, and they relate to the Apostles' Creed, the Seven Sacraments, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ave Maria, the doctrines of Justification and Purgatory. These three formularies marked the progress made in Henry's reign.

In 1547, Edward VI was acknowledged King of England; at the age of nine years. On his accession the first book of Homilies was authorized to be read in churches every Sunday, and the work was undertaken of expurgating the various service books of Sarum, Lincoln, York and Bangor, "so as to compile one 'Use' that should be in future the vehicle of worship to all members of the English Church." Archbishop Cranmer was the principal leader and director of these enterprises. They resulted in 1549 in what is known as the "First Prayer Book of Edward VI," which came into use in almost every parish of the realm. We shall spend more time on this important work next Sunday.

About this time arose a multitude of zealous spirits, revolutionary in their views and eager in maintaining them.

Some among them were Anabaptists; some were followers of the extreme views of the Lollards of 1494, and others adopted the opinions of the Swiss reformers, especially those of Zwingli. They were the forerunners of the Puritans of later days, but they bore the general name of "Sacramentaries." Soon the Prayer Book of Edward became the subject of revision. John Knox and Calvin "represented in the strongest colours that the Service-Book, as it then stood was deeply penetrated by the taint of Popery." It was revised in 1552, and again revised in the reign of Elizabeth in 1559. A few changes were made in the reign of James I; but substantially, the Prayer Book we have used to-day is that of the Elizabethan age. I must mention very briefly the six articles better known as "The Six Stringed Whip" which appeared in 1539 a fierce and bloody enactment, making little or no advance from papal doctrine. But in 1552 appeared the Forty-two Articles, which after ten years were modified and reduced to the present thirty-nine of the Prayer Book. These have sometimes been called Calvinistic; often they have been derided. But no one who knows their history or understands their theology will be guilty of casting aspersions upon a body of doctrinal statements which, considering the times in which they were framed, are so well worthy of the place they occupy. I would gladly spend a little time in tracing the thread of this history down to the present day. I wish I had time to tell the rise of Congregationalism, Methodism, Socinianism or Unitarianism, the Baptists, and Quakers, and to give some account of the distinctive tenets of each. Puritanism had the mighty conception of purity behind it; but it revived the ancient heresy of the Novatians, and drew a line of demarcation between the visible and the invisible Church;

whereas the Bible has nothing to say of an invisible Church from beginning to end. The height of fanaticism was reached in the days of Elizabeth, and in those of Cromwell,³⁵ when puritans mocked the Holy Communion, (I will omit the revolting particulars, all which can be found in the histories,) and stabled their horses in the Cathedrals. It was a time when it could be said with grim humor, that, "religion was so thoroughly reformed that even the horses went to church." But those days of witch burning and window breaking are gone. There was wrong on all sides. The multiplication of sects by the law of sub-division has been enormous. To tell their history minutely would be of interest and of service. But the time is not long enough for that. All of these denominations hold certain doctrines in common with the Church. All their adherents who are baptized, are thereby members of the one Church of all the ages. Like the Lutheran and Presbyterian movements, they enter the stage of Christian history during, or after the Reformation. I do not deny that there was apathy and indifference and cruelty in the English Church, which were efficient causes in promoting their growth. Each sect has had its saints and its sinners. They all reject the threefold ministry which we have received, and deny the historic continuity of the Church, in that three-fold order. In doctrine and in worship also there is every shade and degree of different opinions. That is how the matter stands to-day. God grant the time may speedily come when all Christians shall be visibly united, as at the first they were! We cannot repudiate the principles for which our forefathers, the leaders in the English Reformation, went to the stake. We do repudiate the heresies and abominable corruptions of the Papacy, whose later

growth, under Jesuit control has been a growth in error. We owe nothing to Romanism but to love her deluded children and to pray for her return to the Catholic Faith and Order. But the only ground on which the claims of Rome can be successfully answered is that of the historic Church.

A voice went forth in Reformation days, heard in the consciences and obeyed in the actions of Bishops and other Clergy. That voice did not say, "Make a new Israel," or "Organize a new Judah," but even the same as the God of Israel spake in the days of old, "Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place." The voice was obeyed, and the promise was fulfilled!

VI.

THE HISTORY, STRUCTURE AND USE OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

"Let all things be done decently and in order."—

I COR. xiv: 40.

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."—II TIM. i: 13.

Fully nine-tenths of the Prayer Book came bodily from the Bible, and the other tenth is a flower of devotion, whose seed is in the Bible. All the Psalter, in that pure and musical translation of Miles Coverdale (1539,) seventy years older than the King James version; all the Epistles and Gos-

pels for Sundays, Festivals and Fasts ; all the Canticles of Morning and Evening Prayer ; all the Lessons, which, in orderly manner bring to your hearts the due analogy and proportion of Old and New Testaments ; the Lord's Prayer, which enters into every stated and occasional Office ; the Ten Commandments, which are rehearsed every Sunday ; the "Comfortable Words," in the Communion Office ; the Offertory Sentences : the Sentences with which the public worship begins, and the Benediction of Peace with which it ends—all these are from the Bible. Twelve chapters of Holy Scripture make up the average quota for every appointed day of public worship. The Offices for Baptism, Catechism, Confirmation, Holy Matrimony, Visitation of the Sick, Burial of the Dead, Churching of Women, Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea, Visitation of Prisoners, Thanksgiving, Family Prayer, Thirty-nine Articles, and Ordination, are all saturated with the very language and spirit of Holy Scripture,—and yet there are not wanting some people, who still being blind to the Scriptural glory of our Book of Common Prayer, seek for a more Scriptural service. There is no service of man, that ever was devised for the worship of God, so packed full with the treasures of the Inspired Word ! Precomposed forms of prayer find their sufficient warrant in the words of the Master : " If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven." In contrasting the services of the Prayer Book with extemporaneous worship, lest I may seem to speak from prejudice, I beg to quote from one who, being a Presbyterian minister, may justly be supposed to speak from experience. At the " Congress of Churches" held last May, in the city of Hart-

ford, Conn., the Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D. D., a Professor in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, at Auburn, N. Y., spoke as follows: "It is the glory and beauty of secret devotion, that the worshipper enters into his closet, and there communes in the simple language of a child—the simpler the better,—with his Father who sees in secret; telling though it were in broken sobs, the whole story of his weaknesses and his wants. But public prayer is '*common prayer*,' and ought to express, in grave, dignified phrase, the common wants of the entire congregation. Trivial phrases and broken utterances are here out of place. The result is that the people are left to be practiced on by beginners who halt and stammer in the alphabet of prayer, and only after some years' experience rise to anything like the ease and dignity proper to such a service. For this inconvenience, the use of judicious forms presents a remedy. The congregation ministered to by the poorest young deacon with a Prayer Book in his hand, fares as well as the flock gathered in any 'St. Thomas's' or in any 'Trinity.'"

Pardon me for yielding to the temptation to hear a little more from Dr. Hopkins. Speaking of the objections to extemporaneous public worship, he continues: the minister "has been trained in the seminary to think that the sermon is the great essential element in public worship, and to lay out his whole strength upon it. As for prayer, he has been practiced in that exercise, (!) during years of prayer-meeting experience, and always has the common place topics and phrases at his tongue's end. He must take many hours of hard work to prepare what he has to say to his fellow sinners. What he has to say to *God* he can leave to memory, habit, and the inspiration of the moment. He can get through

with it in some way or other. Generally it is a trial to him—at least to the beginner. To him, at least, it is not a devotional exercise. It is a rhetorical exercise. He has to invent as he goes along; to tax his memory; to select his phraseology; to think whether he has included all the proper topics; or if he has forgotten anything, to go back and pick up; . . . and all the time, to keep his mind's eye on the clock; so as neither much to exceed, nor much to fall short of, the conventional twelve or fifteen minutes. The effect of this sort of intellectual praying, on the mind of the minister himself, cannot but be unhappy. He is really starving his own soul for the sake of his people. The long prayer exhausts him more than the sermon. He is as glad to be done with it, as the people are to have him.

“The influence of this method upon the people is no less unhappy. They are expected to take no oral part in the service whatever; not even to utter the Apostolic “*Amen*” at the end of the prayer. They are to take the prayer as the preacher deals it out to them, sentence by sentence, and absorb it if they can, and turn it into subjective devotion. Whether they do so or not, nobody knows.” (Extemporaneous worship is extremely “Romish,” in thus taking the people's part away.)

“The congregation sit mute as fishes through the whole, scarce joining at all even in the singing. They are not desired to sing. They are not invited to repeat the Lord's Prayer. They take part in no responsive reading of the Scriptures. They have no *litany*, to whose passionate exclaims they can offer their response. The minister at one end, and the quartette at the other, do all the vocal part of

the service. To supply the want of *worship* by musical effects, the organ thunders in long drawn voluntaries. A high-priced soprano warbles unintelligible strains of something. A violin solo carries the minds of the younger sisters irresistibly away to the ball room or the concert-hall; or a brass band stirs the enthusiasm of the boys to a pitch not much below that occasioned by the entrance of a circus.

I ask, sadly, is there not something better than this?"

Without offering any comment whatever upon these words, so full of the sad confession of the weariness and weakness of a worship to which I am thankful to be a stranger, I ask your attention to a brief outline of the history and structure of the Book of Common Prayer. As was said in a former sermon of this series, the Prayer Book services grew out of the Synagogue worship to which our Saviour lent the sanction of His own constant daily attendance. Strictly speaking this applies to the order of Morning and Evening Prayer only. The Communion Office technically called the Liturgy, and other Christian Offices, as Baptism, of necessity came in with the Gospel, the words of the institution and the formula of Baptism, supplying the framework.

“From the Synagogue came the first use of fixed forms of prayer.³⁶ To that the first disciples had been accustomed from their youth. They had asked their Master to give them a distinctive one, and He had complied with their request, as the Baptist had done before for his disciples, as every Rabbi did for his. . . . To their minds there would seem nothing inconsistent with true heart worship in the recurrence of a fixed order, of the same prayers, hymns, doxologies, such as all liturgical study leads us to think of as existing in the Apostolic Age. . . . ‘Moses’ was ‘read in the Synagogues

every Sabbath-day,³⁷ the whole law being read consecutively, so as to be completed, according to one cycle, in three years, according to that which ultimately prevailed and determined the existing divisions of the Hebrew text in the 52 weeks of a single year. The writings of the Prophets were read as second lessons in a corresponding order. They were followed by the *Derash*, 'the word of exhortation'³⁸ the exposition, the sermon of the Synagogue." These are the elements which make up the Order of our Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, with the addition, of course, of the New Testament Scriptures.

The disciples came together to break bread on the first day of the week. The weekly celebration of the Holy Communion is a custom of apostolic origin, testifying to that spiritual perception of "the eternal fitness of things," which linked together the Lord's Supper and the Lord's Day, in a constant witness of the Resurrection of Christ and the risen life of His disciples.

Four among all the great number of ancient Liturgies, appeared in the apostolic age, as follows: The liturgy of St. James, used at Jerusalem; the liturgy of St. Mark used at Alexandria; the liturgy of St. Peter, used at Rome; and the liturgy of St. John, used at Ephesus. In I Cor. ii: 9, St. Paul says, "It is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." There are a great many other places in the New Testament where the words occur "it is written." Now you will look in vain for any place in the Old Testament where the duplicates of some of these passages are found, but the words I have quoted to you are the exact words of the Liturgy of St. James. Very early, too early for the light of history to disclose the origin of

it, appeared the Apostles' Creed, doubtless a protest against the Gnostic heresy, as the Nicene Creed against the Arians.

The charge is sometimes ignorantly made that the Prayer Book was derived from Romish sources. It gives me great satisfaction to demolish that charge at a single blow. The Prayer Book of the Church of England, of which our own is substantially a copy, was derived from the Mozarabic or Gallican Liturgy which came, not from the Roman but from the Ephesian Liturgy of St. John. Our Morning and Evening Prayer were modelled upon the Ancient "Use" of Sarum. The Sarum Use was "based on the Anglo Saxon and Norman customs, particularly that of Rouen, and put forth by S. Osmund, A. D. 1087 as a means of reducing the different customs of his diocese, to something like order. It gradually was adopted by other dioceses, and Hereford and York based their missals upon it."³⁹

True there are in the Roman Breviary many prayers like those we have. They came down from the pure and saintly men whose devotional thought with constant enrichment, crystallized around the original nucleus. In the four Apostolic Liturgies, there is a similarity of construction which indicates a common source. To the framers of the Prayer Book in Reformation days, the vast store-house of the ancient liturgies were open. It is cause of devout thankfulness that they were enabled to make such use of their materials as to produce a service book which to-day stands peerless in the estimation of all high Christian scholarship. That scholarship is voiced by the Rev. Prof. Shields, of Princeton University, a Presbyterian minister, who said in "The Century Magazine" of last November. "The English Liturgy next to the English Bible, is the most wonderful product of the

Reformation. The very fortunes of the book are the romance of history. As we trace its development, its rubrics seem dyed in the blood of martyrs; its offices echo with polemic phrases; its canticles mingle with the battle-cries of armed sects and factions; and its successive revisions mark the career of dynasties, states and churches. . . . It is not too much to say that were the problem given, to frame out of the imperfectly organized and sectarian Christianity of our times a liturgical model for the communion of saints in the one universal Church, the result might be expressed in some such compilation as the "English Book of Common Prayer." These words are as wholesome and refreshing as they are welcome.

The First Book of Edward was mentioned last Sunday, as the attempt to unite all the various "Uses" into one. That work, though it marked a great advance, was tentative. It was framed in a time of transition. It retained the Roman name of the Mass for the Holy Communion, Auricular Confession, Prayers for the dead, and was in general use for only a short time. Its laws and its customs are not the present obligation of the Church of England. The revisions which followed, and brought it to its present shape have also been mentioned. How far removed the Prayer Book of Queen Elizabeth is from Romanism, in the character of its worship, as well as in the sources whence it came may be seen by a brief quotation from a book called the "Raccolta," a collection of prayers "specially indulged by the Popes, and therefore of indisputable authority in the Roman Church."⁴⁰ I crave your pardon for reading words so profane, but it is my aim that no room shall be left for the ignorant prejudice which still fears to take and use this herit-

age of the faithful. The words to which I ask your attention are these: "I acknowledge thee, and I venerate thee most Holy Virgin, Queen of Heaven, Lady and Mistress of the Universe, as Daughter of the Eternal Father, Mother of his well-beloved Son, and most loving Spouse of the Holy Spirit. Kneeling at the feet of thy great Majesty, with all humility I pray thee through that Divine charity wherewith thou wast so bounteously enriched on thine assumption into heaven, to vouchsafe me favour and pity." Roman books of devotion are filled with such "prayers" as that. But where, from beginning to end of the Book of Common Prayer can the faintest approach to such blasphemy be found? The chains of Babylonish bondage to Rome were forever broken by the work of the Reformation. In the days of King James I, the puritan ministers presented what is known as the Millenary Petition. It was a petition for certain changes of small consequence in the Prayer Book. King James was a monarch whose self-conceit was large in the inverse ratio of his Kingly qualities.⁴¹ At the Hampton Court Conference in 1604, this petition was discussed in the presence of James, who acted as moderator. The petitions were many of them granted, but in so contemptuous a fashion as to make the story not a pleasant one for Churchmen to read. The Savoy Conference, in 1661, considered the petition of the Presbyterians for many important changes in the Prayer Book. But very few of these alterations were made, and those which were made did not affect the distinctive features of the Book.

In regard to the structure and use of the Prayer Book, I must say but a few words. The aim of the Book is to present a vehicle of public worship, as nearly as possible, after the principles of the Holy Scripture; a book of devotions

which shall secure the rights of the clergy and laity alike as members of "the royal priesthood," . . . "to offer up spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving." With what minute and scrupulous fidelity this principle has been observed in the framing of the Book, I may best illustrate by quoting the quaint words of Wheatley. Speaking of the place where the Creed comes, in Morning and Evening Prayer, he says : "That which goes before it are the Lessons taken out of the word of God ; for *faith comes by hearing* ; and therefore when we have heard God's word, it is fit we should profess our belief in it, thereby *setting our seals* (as it were) *to the truth of God*. . . . What follows the creed are the prayers which are grounded upon it ; for we cannot *call on him in whom we have not believed*."

As to the postures, which some people seem to find so troublesome, they all accord with the act in which we engage. Three elements enter into our public worship : prayer, praise and instruction. Three postures are observed, and all are founded upon the teaching of the Bible—kneeling, standing and sitting. We kneel (or ought to) when we pray, because Jesus knelt. We stand before our Sovereign when we offer praise, because that is the attitude of those who stand about the great white throne in heaven ; and we sit during the Lessons and sermon, because it is the position most favourable for listening. We stand also during the Creed, "to signify" as Wheatley says, "our resolution to stand up stoutly in its defence." We bow at the name of Jesus Christ, for at His name all knees shall bow. We are directed to stand when the Gospel for the day is announced, and when it is read ; to indicate that while the Epistle is the writing of an inspired man, the Gospel is the record of words or deeds of

our Saviour. But is not all this very formal? I think I hear some one ask. I answer, Yes; but what says the apostle? "Let all things be done decently and in order." And as for sincerity in the use of these forms, I beg to submit the words of the Rev. Prof. Phelps, a Congregational minister in the Andover Seminary. He says: "Will not the use of forms degenerate into nothing but form? Always possibly; never necessarily. I seriously question whether such repetition induces any more formality than the silent attempt of listeners to follow the impromptu thought of a leader of extemporaneous prayer. Prayer impromptu may be the superior to the leader; but, to the hearer, the following is a difficult and complicated act. Such prayer to the hearer is a series of surprises." (It should be remarked that Prof. Phelps in speaking of the "hearer" of prayer is not referring to God but to the audience assembled to listen in meeting.) "It requires a quick mind to follow it with no loss of devotional sincerity. To children it is commonly a dead loss of time. They do not participate in it, and are not reverently interested in it. During the first fifteen years of a child's life, the public devotions of our churches are generally a blank."⁴²

Such a frank confession of the inadequacy and insincerity of extemporaneous worship, coming from one who speaks from experience, is melancholy. But is it not taught in many quarters that children are not members of the Church? Why should they be interested in what does not belong to them? Such was not the teaching of our blessed Saviour, who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And as for "listening" to ministers pray, it seems a curious thing to us; but what that listening means in many cases may be inferred

from the frequent remark, "Mr. So-and-So is eloquent or gifted in prayer." What does that mean? It means that the people who say it have been criticizing instead of praying! It never can be said where the Prayer Book is used. And as to the reverence which the Prayer Book inculcates, let me again quote from Prof. Phelps. He says: "No other branch of the Church universal has so lofty an ideal as the Church of England and its off-shoot in this country. In all the liturgic literature of our language, nothing equals the Anglican Liturgy. Its variety of thought, its spiritual pathos, its choice selection of the most vital themes of prayer, its reverent importunity, its theological orthodoxy and its exquisite propriety of style, will commend it to the hearts of devout worshippers of many generations to come, as they have done to generations past." . . . "Grant that Episcopal usage sometimes crowds its churchly reverence to an extreme; but is not that a safer extreme than ours? . . . The educating influence of this sentiment on children of the church is of untold value." "We have something yet to learn of the rudiments of biblical worship. Our Episcopal brethren are farther advanced than we in this line of Christian culture." I could not have written those last words myself, but since the Bible says, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth," I may be pardoned for quoting them.

I must now draw this course of sermons to a close. I know I do so at the peril of leaving many things unsaid. I have not touched upon the Christian Year, and the Saints' Days, and that weekly Fast on Friday which Christians have kept from a date almost as early as that of Sunday, in sorrowful commemoration of the day of crucifixion. There are a multitude of topics which must be passed by in discourses so

limited as these, but the problem has been all along how to condense the material at hand, and tell the story in the spirit of love to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. I have but a few words to add to what has been said.

You have been baptized. Into what? A sect? No! Into the body of Christ, the Church of the living God. You are asked to be confirmed and many of you have been confirmed. Why? Because that is the way we have of "professing religion"? We never "profess religion," nor does that phrase come from the Bible. We confess the *need* of religion and the *desire* to live a godly life. Confirmation was one of the Bible ways of confessing Christ before men at the very beginning, and in it is asked and received a gift of the seven-fold spirit of God; a gift which every Christian ought to seek, a confession which every disciple ought to make. You are invited to the Holy Communion. Why? Because of those words of the Master in which He commanded, "Do this, in remembrance of me." Your Christian Baptism entitles you to come.

From the days of our weakest infancy the Church leads us by the hand, a loving Mother, on to the days of our weak and infirm old age, when she lays us tenderly at rest. She calls the little children to baptism and instruction, and blesses the young men and maidens in confirmation. She speaks the solemn and beautiful words that bind the lives of husband and wife together until death. She ministers, through her visitation office, at the bedside of suffering; and fills the weak and weary heart with patience. She speaks above the grave where finally our hands and feet find repose, the words of Resurrection and of life. She leads us ever beside the still waters, and notes no distinction between high and

low, rich and poor,—all her children are alike to her. A thousand leagues of land and sea may stretch between us and our kin ; wherever the wanderer's foot may tarry, there the Church with sweet and holy office knits anew the parted bonds, and families are one again, in the dear familiar words of common prayer and praise.

“Though sundered far, by faith they meet
Around one common mercy seat.”

And if from out their resting places beneath the stones that stand like mute sentinels around this hallowed spot, could come the forms of those who once were worshippers here, the loved “not lost but gone before,” could they tell us of that celestial country where white-robed choirs in heavenly strains uplift the eternal song, would they not rejoice with us in “holding fast the form of sound words,” words which were their own and still are our blessed comfort, and the song of our pilgrimage?

“We are travelling home to God,
In the way the fathers trod.”

The love we bear for the Church of the living God, deep, unflinching, unalterable love, has its example in the love of Jesus Christ, who not only “loved the Church,” but “gave himself for it.” Oh, shall we not also give ourselves to it, and for it, in a new consecration to its glorious work, and a more reverent heed to all those invitations which the Church so constantly utters? Shall we not do all that in us lies to extend its privileges to them that are as yet unfamiliar with that magnificent thought which bursts from heart and lips when we say, “I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church!” Her foundations are in the holy mountains of a remote and primitive antiquity. Her witness is for the everlasting truth.

I shall conjure with a potent spell, when, in closing, I quote the words of your former well-beloved Rector, the Rev. Dr. Washburn. His was a grand conception of the Church; no human words it seems to me, can more fitly tell her mission and her character. And while "he being dead, yet speaketh," we may well listen in reverent silence. He says: "Be this undivided Christ ours, brethren and friends! May He grant that we prize our creed, our worship, as not fetters to bind, or jewels to hoard, but gifts to share. May we each feel that we belong to no denomination, but to the Church which is for all the children of one Father and followers of one Master, which repeats one truth of redemption, seals on all one calling, opens to all one communion. May we in this time of waiting hearts labour for that unity; and as the scaffolding falls from the outside of the building when the work nears its end, see in the decay of human systems the grandeur of the temple itself, the walls and crowning towers of Thine eternal city, O my God and my Lord."⁴³

NOTES.

NOTE.—I have made no references in these sermons to the Apostolical Constitutions, because of the doubts existing as to their genuineness. The argument seems sufficiently strong without them.

1. See Revised Version.
2. Acts viii: 5.
3. Acts xvi: 4, 5.
4. Acts xiv: 23.
5. Chapter i: 5.
6. Blunt, Key to Church History, (ancient) p. 61.
7. Epistle 96.
8. All these quotations are taken from "The Apostolic Fathers," translated by Jackson, and edited by Prof. Fisher.

9. Vol III. p. 357. T & T. Clark.
10. Stromata, p. 366.
11. Bk. III: Chap. 37.
12. I am indebted for the names given here from Eusebius, to the researches of the Rev. J. J. Blunt, B. D., "History of Christian Church, first three Centuries," though I have, in part, verified the lists.
13. Book III. Chapter 3. "Against Heresies."
14. Ibidem.
15. Preface to the Ordinal.
16. Robertson.
17. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist., Bk. x. chap. 4.
18. Robertson: Church History, Vol. II, p. 48, ff.
19. Robertson, Vol. II: p. 221.
20. Gal. ii: 11.
21. Page 261, T. & T. Clark's edition.
22. See Bishop Wordsworth's St. Hyppolytus and the Church of Rome Chapter xii.
23. Wordsworth.
24. Robertson Vol. II. page 238.
25. Epistle v. 20.
26. Epistle viii. 30.
27. Mediæval Church History, page 157.
28. Page 160.
29. Bp. Williams's Eng. Ref. p. 35.
30. Ibid.
31. Bp. Randall's, *Why I am a Churchman*, p. 95.
32. Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians. § 5.
33. Hardwicke's *Reformation*.
34. Bishop Williams.
35. See Curteis' Dissent in its Rel. to Ch. of Eng.
36. Smith's Dict. Bible.
37. Acts xv: 21.
38. Acts xiii: 15.
39. Shipley's Glossary of Eccl. Terms.
40. Littledale's Plain Reasons, 30.
41. It is he, I think, of whom it was said, or might have been, that "He never spoke of himself without lifting his hat."
42. My Study, page 280.
43. Sermon, Christ and Sect. p. 23.

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