

*VULGAR ERROR NO. II.*

"ONE CHURCH IS AS GOOD AS ANOTHER."

Do you think so? Then it follows that one religious "persuasion" is as much or as little to be trusted, and as much or as little to be maintained as another. Therefore schism is no sin, and there is no such thing as distinctive truth to be maintained, or destructive error to be avoided. There is no definite faith, no visible Church, no spiritual guide.

If this be true now, it was true always. Was it true in the days of God's ancient Jewish Church? Jeroboam the son of Nebat leaned somewhat towards that opinion, and leading all who would follow him in that direction, he "caused Israel to sin."

Is this popular saying true under the Christian dispensation? Jesus Christ came—not to destroy the one Church of the Old Testament, but to fulfil or perfect it. So far from teaching that dogma is bigotry, and truth a mere matter of opinion, He described the false teachings of sectarians as evil weeds in God's field. "Every plant that My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." So far from encouraging divisions, He prayed that all might be one. This was also the teaching of His disciples. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "Let there be no divisions among you." St. Peter, at one time,

for the sake of gaining the popular ear, was a Jew when amongst the Jews, and a Gentile when in company with the Gentiles. But St. Paul corrected him by wholesome reproof in the presence of the faithful, "for he was to be blamed." And so far from encouraging schism or holding that "one church is as good as another," the injunction of this Apostle was,—“Let there be no divisions amongst you.” “Take heed to sound doctrine,” “Keep that which is committed to thee.”

But some will say: "Our Lord on a certain occasion rebuked certain of His disciples when they wished Him to forbid a man whom they found casting out devils in the name of Jesus, because he followed not Jesus in the company of His disciples." True, but although so far working with God's help, that man by not seeking the company of Jesus and the fellowship of his disciples, lost the teaching by which the Master privately instructed his immediate flock. Those in the "little ships" were greatly benefited by the stilling of the tempest on the sea of Galilee, but lost the comfort of being with the Master in the ship.

The Samaritans were schismatics, dissenters from God's ancient Church, yet Jesus sought—not to encourage their schism—but to lead them into His fold. God was manifest in the flesh for the purpose of establishing—not many churches or sects—but One Visible, Holy Cath-