

protest, in and out and all around, against any and all who differ from their own *private judgment* of what the Scriptures and the Fathers teach. "Our counsel to all honest and sincere" Roman Catholics "is to give up all this" Roman talk and "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein," and so be *real* Catholics and no longer Roman.—*Church Critic*.

CONTEMPORARY CHURCH OPINION.

Church Life of Cleveland, Ohio, says:—Our Bishop has sent out word that all licenses of lay readers must be considered to have expired at Advent. Many of our lay readers have been working under licenses obtained years ago, and some have never had any license, but read services by the tacit consent of the ecclesiastical authority. In order to obtain a license, the applicant must sign a set of questions somewhat similar to those a candidate for the diaconate signs before he receives holy orders. There is a further requirement that when officiating he shall wear a cassock and cotta, or, if he prefer, a cassock only. The first would make his attire similar to that of a chorister, and will doubtless be generally worn, especially where vested choirs are found. The canon forbids the lay reader from wearing the dress of a priest, but does not specify what he shall wear. The Bishop's solution of the question seems every way wise and commendable, and the laymen, whom God honors by permitting them to assist in the service of His house, will feel happy to wear so churchly a habit."

The same paper says:—"We desire to call attention to a most interesting and important episode in the history of the Church in Connecticut, and, indeed, in the history of the Church at large, to which Dr. Bolles refers in his article quoted elsewhere. It is a fact, unknown to many people, that the president and some of the professors of Yale college in 1722 left the Congregational body and came into the Church, and this not as the result of any effort on the part of the Church, but it came about as the result of their study and prayer for guidance, and the way was not so easy then as now; for to secure ordination, they had to go to England, and one out of every five who went lost his life either by shipwreck or sickness. The fact of the invalidity of ordination outside the Church ought to be made more prominent in our teaching, for it is a vital point, and should be a strong barrier against schism."

REASONS FOR BEING A CHURCHMAN.

By Rev. J. R. West, M.A., Vicar of Wrawby.

I am a Churchman, not from mere feelings, which are easily changed, nor from any motives of worldly interest or convenience; but on firm principles, being clearly and strongly convinced, by reasons founded on the Holy Scriptures, that I ought to be a Churchman; believing, indeed, that it is not too much to say that it is even necessary to my salvation that I should be a Churchman.

I am a Churchman, in the first and chief place, on account of the Divine origin and institution of the Church. For I read in the New Testament that our Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ, instituted and established the Church as a visible society upon earth, in which all His disciples should live together in one body. * * * The Church is surely just as much a Divine institution now as it was under the Jewish dispensation. The Church is just as much a Divine gift as the Bible itself is.

I am a Churchman, because I love and pray for unity. For I read in the Bible many plain precepts and earnest exhortations concerning the duty of Christian unity, and many strong condemnations of division and separation.

I am a Churchman, because I dare not sanction and countenance the modern principle, that any number of men who please may join themselves in a new religious society, and originate a new brotherhood, quite independently of the Church, and then call that new, self-made society, a new branch of the Church of Christ. This appears to me to be quite destructive of all order, rule and discipline. * * * Where is there to be found in the New Testament the slightest authority for this principle? To forsake the Church already established by Christ Himself, and to originate a new society instead, this surely is to put a human invention into the place of Divine institution, a human sect into the place of the Church founded by Christ. * * * Where do we ever read in any part of the New Testament of more than one Church in one place?

I am a Churchman, because I find in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, the Apostolic institution of the three Orders in the ministry of the Church, and because this form of ecclesiastical government has been preserved in the Church alone. * * * There is no trace or hint of any other method for preserving a continual succession of ministers to be found in the New Testament. This continual succession of ministers having been kept up in the Church, by this Divinely appointed method from the days of the Apostles to the present day, I feel myself strongly bound to regard the sacred authority of the Episcopal form of Church government. For fifteen hundred years after the Apostles, there was no pretence of the existence of any Church without Bishops, who thus derived their spiritual authority from the Apostles. The other forms of Church government have all been invented by this or that man in only modern times, and are entirely without any warrant from Holy Scriptures.

I am a Churchman, because I learn from the Bible that obedience to properly constituted authority, is a most fundamental principle of the Christian religion. * * * Obedience to my spiritual governor is enjoined upon me by the same Divine authority, as obedience to my temporal governor. Obedience to the spiritual Ruler, therefore, is one of the elementary principles of Christian religion. * * * Surely, if there be any spiritual Ruler in the world, rightfully appointed, it is the Bishop. If he is not my lawful spiritual Ruler under Christ, there is certainly none other who can have the least claim to my obedience. All others who pretend to be spiritual Rulers in their several societies are only self-made, and a self-made authority can have no just claim upon any one's obedience; we may obey it as long as we please, and no longer. A Bishop is made a Bishop according to the very method appointed by Christ Himself.

I am a Churchman, because I wish to be guided by the Bible, and the Bible tells me very distinctly that the Church is "the pillar and ground of truth." (1 Tim. 3: 15). If I leave the Church, to which of the sects shall I go for the Truth? One teaches one doctrine, and another another. In every different sect I should hear a different doctrine. Each sect interprets the Bible according to the private judgment of its own particular founder. What truth of the Bible is there, which is not contradicted by some one or other of the hundred sects by which we are surrounded? What grievous and dangerous misunderstanding of the Bible is there among the sects! What partial views of the truth, and what a fearful ignorance of the doctrine of the Sacraments! To which of them shall I go for the truth? Must I not rather follow the express direction of the Bible, and believe that the Church is "the pillar and ground of truth?" Has not God given us the Church just as much as He has given us the Bible? Surely I have no more right to reject the Church than I have to reject the Bible.

I am a Churchman, because if I were to leave

the Church I should leave all sure and certain Sacraments; and this I dare not think of doing, because the Bible teaches me that the Holy Sacraments of Christ are means of grace necessary for my salvation. The persons who intend to administer the Holy Sacraments amongst the Dissenters have never received the least real or lawful authority to do so. They take upon themselves to do so, or by a pretended Ordination they think they give the power of doing so to one another. * * * * *

Lastly, I am a Churchman, because whatever faults or abuses there may be in the Church, I am not thereby justified in forsaking the Church. Many imperfections and abuses, of some kind or other, will be always found in everything that is administered by such weak and imperfect agents as men are. In which one indeed of all the various sects themselves are there not many serious imperfections and manifest evils arisen from this very cause? * * * * *

I am not presuming to sit in judgment on those who may be hindered from being convinced by these reasons, through inveterate prejudices or through want of proper instruction. The question is, not what loss others may suffer, that is not for me to judge; but for myself I am firmly convinced that I should endanger my salvation if I were to forsake the Church and join myself instead to one of the human sects around. Nor do I think it any want of charity to endeavor to show my neighbors the truth on this point, however bigoted they may fancy me to be, or however much I may displease them at first by telling them that their mistakes on this matter are very serious, for this I do in most sincere love toward them. I do not overlook or undervalue the good which there is among the Dissenters; I greatly admire, love and reverence many of them for many good qualities, in which they far excel many Church people; but all this does not prove to me that they are right in the matter of Church membership. The many good points of goodness which they possess only make me more desirous to serve their best interests by showing them how entirely unscriptural their present position is in regard to the Church founded by Christ and His Apostles.—*From "Tracts on Church Principles."*

THE HOLY APOSTLE ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

St. John, 'the disciple whom Jesus loved,' was born under circumstances considerably superior to those of most of the other apostles. To pronounce him, and his elder brother, St. James Major, 'poor fishermen' is to misrepresent their actual position.

Their father Zebedee was a man of some capital; and Nicephorus observes that the fact of the many servants their father kept, acting under him in the fishing trade, denotes him a man of some consideration. For it must be remembered that in that country every one was required to have some trade; even the literary St. Paul, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, was a tentmaker, and wrought at that vocation with his own hands.

The ships, also, were the property of Zebedee, as well as the tackle; and, moreover, Nicephorus proceeds to relate that he had land besides, which on his decease St. John sold, at least his own portion of it, in Galilee, to Annas the high priest, to whom, as the inspired history tells us, he was related, and with whom he was acquainted—a privilege of which he took advantage during our Lord's trial. With the produce of the sale of this little patrimony St. John procured himself 'a fair house' in Jerusalem, doubtless divinely so impelled; and to this, 'his own home,' he took the Blessed Virgin Mary by appointment after the Crucifixion, there protecting her till her death, which