

now transformed into sky-scrapers. The modern parson must inhabit a mansion, and take his holiday in Norway, Alaska, or Timbuctoo, and modern congregations must have style in their churches and services, and hang a millstone around their necks in the shape of a heavy debt. Meanwhile the widow and the orphan may face the winter as they can.

IVY.

THE FAITH AND THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH.

Sir,—It seems to me that Mr. Symonds has failed to mark the distinction the Church of England makes between "the faith" and the ordinances of the Church. Of "the faith" the sixth article says: "Nothing is to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation, but what is contained in Holy Scripture or may be proved thereby." But in reference to the ordinances of the Church the language is very different. The twentieth article says: "It is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's word written." This is a very different thing, and it is this latter article that refers to the subject in hand, and not the former. Episcopal government is not an article of the faith, but an ordinance of the Church. And while in the Church of England a belief in episcopacy is required of its ministers, who profess their assent to all the Prayer Book contains, it is not required of its lay members as a condition of baptism, which places them in a state of salvation. It will be seen that to observe this distinction, takes the whole point out of Mr. Symonds' arguments. But why does he lay so much stress upon this one quotation from the articles, and ignore altogether the plain statement of the preface to the ordinal about Bishops, priests, and deacons? But Mr. Symonds asks: "Is there any evidence in the New Testament that our Lord defined the orders of the ministry?" I think there is. But let me first remark that if there were not, it would be no proof against episcopacy, for the Church was founded and had spread through the whole civilized world before the New Testament was written; and its customs were so well known and firmly established that even St. Paul appealed to them in confirmation of his authority, saying, "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom within the Churches of God." I. Cor., xi. 16. Thus the established customs of the Church were the final appeal in ordinances and ritual, even in St. Paul's day, showing that the New Testament was not written for any such purpose as some would now use it. But we know from incidental references in the New Testament that, as in the Jewish Church, there were the three orders, high priest, priest, and Levite; so before the ascension there were our Lord Himself, the eleven Apostles, and the seventy disciples. Then, again, our Saviour prefaced the commission He gave His Apostles by the statement that all authority was given unto Him in heaven and in earth, and that, as His Father sent Him, so he sent them; but commanded them to wait till power should be given them by the Holy Ghost. Thus, while the power to perform their work came from the Holy Spirit, their authority came from Christ. And, therefore, as the defining of the orders of the ministry is a question of authority, rather than of power, it is reasonable to suppose that Christ did so define it. And the reasonableness of this conclusion is confirmed by the facts that Christ gave certain commands to His Apostles, which they were to teach their followers to observe, and that during the forty days preceding the ascension He spoke to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, which commands and conversations are nowhere recorded, except in the order and discipline of the Church they founded. The incidents of the very first day's work at Pentecost clearly imply that the Apostles must have had help in their work, such as we know the presbyters and deacons afterward rendered. And from an early period in the Church's life we find these three orders existing, Apostles, Presbyters and Deacons. And we naturally infer that the Apostles in these things were carrying out their Divine Master's instructions and commands, which have been referred to. Then

some years further on, we find at Ephesus, where there were a number of presbyters who had been called to their work by the Holy Ghost, it became necessary to ordain other presbyters and deacons. And St. Paul, not being able to go himself, does not write to these presbyters to ordain others, but sends one of the Apostolic band to do so, and gives him particular instructions how to guide and govern the church. In the Island of Crete, too, the Apostle adopted the same course. And many years afterward, when messages were sent by Christ to the seven Churches of Asia, they were addressed to an individual man, whose responsibilities and duties were precisely the same as we should infer the responsibilities and duties of Timothy and Titus would be as referred to in St. Paul's epistles. St. Paul, too, enumerates three distinct offices, as if of special or permanent authority, that may well correspond to those of Bishop, priest, and deacon, as now known in the Church, before passing on to other functions performed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit's miraculous gifts. Thus he writes to the Corinthians: "And God hath set some in the Church; first Apostles; secondarily, Prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles; then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Who can fail to see the importance he gives to the first three, as compared with the others, and to notice how they describe the relative duties of the Bishop, priest, and deacon of the present.

Of course I am not wholly unacquainted with the works of some modern authors on this subject, but I purposely write as a plain Churchman, with nothing in his hands but his Bible and Prayer Book, and I do not hesitate to say that a candid, thoughtful man, with the Church before him, and no modern pre-conceived notions to excuse or defend, can not fail to see in the Bible a full justification of the words of our Prayer Book: "It is evident to all men now diligently reading the Holy Scriptures, that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, priests, and deacons." For though the names have changed, the offices are clearly there, with duties corresponding to the duties now, and limitations of authority, just as at present. Thus, we learn from the case of Philip in Samaria that the deacons had no authority to confirm, and from the case of the elders at Ephesus, that the presbyters could not ordain, and when we remember our Lord's commission to the Apostles was that they should teach their followers to observe whatsoever He had commanded them, we cannot but infer that He had commanded this that they had done. But if this is not considered sufficient Scriptural evidence to assure the Divine authority of the three-fold ministry, where is the Scriptural authority for any other ministry? There is positively none whatever. There is no single instance in the New Testament of an ordination, except by Apostles, or Apostolic men other than the local presbyters themselves. What folly then, to object to episcopacy on the ground of insufficient Scriptural proof, when there is no Scriptural proof whatever for anything else. There is no logical standing ground between Episcopacy and Plymouthism pure and simple, and there is no Scriptural authority for that. But Christ promised that the Church His Apostles should found in accordance with His commands should stand forever. For fifteen centuries there was no other Church in the world but the Episcopal Church; and even now some nine-tenths of those who profess Christianity have a three-fold ministry of Bishops, priests, and deacons, and we know the very year when each of the other bodies first began. Can we have any stronger proof than this that Christ and His Apostles founded the Church with a three-fold ministry, as we now possess it in all its essential features?

AN OLD-TIME READER.

"THE CHRISTIAN ECCLESIA."

Sir,—Of the three Divine institutions, viz., Home, Worship, Holyday—perhaps it may be admitted, without debate, that Church is chief. As our Lord has said, that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," so may we not therefore say, the Church was made for man, and not

man for the Church? It goes without saying that "from the Apostles' time there have been these three orders of ministers in Christ's Church: Bishops, priests, and deacons," just as the three military ranks, viz., generals, field officers and subalterns, have always existed, since the days of Julius Caesar, because in each case these three ranks and orders were, still are, and always will be, necessary for the work to be done. When the question is brought to the point, however, as to whether such a ministry constitutes the "esse" or rather the "Bere esse" of the Church? It may be noted even of the Lord's day, that its observance is by no means stereotyped—neither are the sacraments administered in identically the same manner, nor is the exact frequency of receiving the Holy Communion a point unanimously agreed upon; indeed, the very term "Church," we are taught, may be "applied to a single family," or as in nature, each bud possesses independent life, so each individual is an independent church, "the temple of God." The vital question, in deciding what constitutes the Church must largely hinge on Fidelity! Fidelity! Fidelity!—for there can be no Church-life without fidelity, any more than there can exist the holy estate of matrimony, where this essential element is lacking. Noah was saved by faith. By faith Abraham became the pattern for believers, with whom God made an everlasting covenant, whereby "all the families of the earth are blessed." From Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob sprang the promised seed, the high priest, priest, Levite, the prophet, priest, and king, until, in the fulness of time, Christ came—the bridegroom to woo his bride! The Church was made for man, and so human wisdom finds scope even in Divine institutions. Thus Jethro persuades Moses to appoint "rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens." And when the Son of God took our nature upon Him, and became also the son of man—Old Testament rites and ordinances, by His touch, rise into Gospel means of grace, e.g., Jewish baptism, thereby becomes transfigured into a sacramental memorial of His death, burial, and resurrection life; or to quote St. Paul: Christian Baptism is designated as "circumcision made without hands," and again "Christ our Pass-over, is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast," etc. Passing on to the subject of the sacred ministry, we are taught that the large-hearted mother Church to which we belong "has been content to give her decision as to the right mode of ordaining, ministering sacraments, and exercising discipline, without expressing an opinion on the degree of defectiveness in such matters, which would cause other communions to cease from being churches of Christ." (Bishop H. Browne, Art. 19.) Let us therefore hope and trust, even among those Christian communions whose ministry we may deem defective, as to the matter of order, though not defective in faithfulness and zeal, that the Sovereign Lord and Head of the Church, the Great Shepherd and Bishop of all faithful souls, is with them always, and shall send the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth. Meanwhile, amongst all those who call themselves Christians, is there not more or less to mend in the manner of home, worship, and Holyday life, and does not St. Paul probe the sore, which is a tender spot in many a heart, when he says to husbands and wives, live loving lives "even as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it?" "Who shall present the Church to Himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Thanking you, sir, for having favoured your readers with the ample correspondence on Rev. Herbert Symonds' Synod sermon, which is not the result of every discourse, on such a supreme occasion, and doubting not that the learned rector of Ashburnham feels with St. Peter, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance."

Michaelmas, 1897.

L.S.T.

—If common-sense were sold by the yard, like ribbon, there would be found many who did not possess enough sense to buy it with judgment.