

undergone a marvellous alteration. We Churchmen know how much it has been altered, and why it has been altered. We know full well what the Church of our forefathers was in its early, and mediæval, and pre reformation days. For the Church of England in the course of its evolution has passed through three great phases.

The first, was the period of formation; the second, the period of *de*formation; the third, the period of *re*-formation. The Church of England to-day is the same *in name* as it was centuries before the Reformation. It is the *same body corporate* that it was in the days of Cardinal Wolsey, of Cardinal Bourchier, and of Archbishops Langton and Theodore. But the Church of England in worship and ritual and doctrine and order and ecclesiastical communion now occupies a totally different position, thank God.

It once was in corporate communion with the Church of Rome. In oneness and visibility it was in the union and communion of the Holy Roman Church. (Fox v. 329.) Its rulers were mostly Cardinals of the *Church of Rome*. Its clergy were priests in orders of the holy Church of Rome. Its doctrine was the doctrine of the Church of Rome. Before the Reformation there was no such thing as a *doctrine of the Church of England*; that is, of a doctrine of the Church of England as distinct from a doctrine of the Church of Rome. The pre-reformation martyrs were burnt, not because they differed from the teaching of the Church of England, or taught contrary to the Church of England, but because they were against the sound faith of the Holy Church of Rome. (Fox v. 252, 254, 235.)

Its ritual and worship was the ritual of the Roman mass, and the worship of the Church of Rome, with slightly local and utterly trifling and non-essential differences in certain English dioceses.

We know the deep and fundamental difference *now*.

Now, the Church of England is *out of communion* with the Church of Rome. As the great Church authority, Bishop Jewel, said, *we have departed* from that Church, and have returned to the primitive

Church. (Jewel's Works, 1, 46.)

Its clergy are not now made sacrificing priests by the Roman ordinal. They are ordained as priests (presbyters) to minister the Sacraments and preach the Word according to the ordination service of the Church of England, which in intention and effect is absolutely different from that of the Church of Rome.

Its chief act of worship is not now the offering of the mass sacrifice nor its ritual the ritual of the Church of Rome.

Its doctrine, too, is different.

It teaches now as truth what it once branded as heresy, and brands as error what it once taught as truth.

Of the Church of England it can be asserted as truly as it was asserted of the great apostle: "he which persecuteth us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed."

The Church which once persecuted and imprisoned men for refusing the Romish doctrine of purgatory and pardon, and the adoration of images, and the worship of saints, now sets forth as its doctrine, that these very doctrines are foolish superstitions, grounded up, no warranty of Scripture, but repugnant to the Word of God. The Church which burned one of its clergy for not believing in transubstantiation, now teaches as its faith that transubstantiation is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. In one word, the Church which once preached the mass, transubstantiation, purgatory, image worship, saint worship, communion in one kind, and clerical celibacy, has now destroyed them; and the Church which once destroyed the doctrine of the sufficiency and supremacy of the Scriptures, justification by faith, the two sacraments, the reception of the body of Christ in the Lord's supper only after a heavenly and spiritual manner by means of faith only, (Articles XXVIII., XXIX.), the one oblation of Christ once offered on the Cross, and the worship of the people in their own tongue, now preaches them as the teaching of

the Church. (Galatians i, 23.) And so, though the nominal, the corporal, the external, remain in a measure unchanged, the very principles and character of the Church by God's grace working in the hearts of the Reformers, and God's truth enlightening their eyes, have been absolutely changed.

That is the reason why we love the Church of England. She stands a monument of God's converting grace, a glorious witness to His mighty power.

We lament her decadence in the early ages. We trace with sadness the weary history of her decline and fall. We mourn over her acceptance for so many centuries of Rome's false teachings, and her subjection to Rome's false head for so many generations. But when we see the wonderful series of events by which she was reformed, and see how the principles of the reformation which were bought by the blood of her martyred bishops have since been maintained in the Church; when we understand how all that was truly ancient and primitive has been retained in happy combination with all that is edifying and true, and how at the time of the Reformation the Church in revolting against the falsities of mediæval Romanism, reverted to the doctrine and worship and order of Scripture and the Apostolic Church, and took its stand as a reformed and Protestant church, on the principles of the Reformation.

We acknowledge with adorning gratitude the greatness of the hand that effected the transformation, and resolve that we will love with a more earnest and practical love our beloved Church of England, and endeavor to prove ourselves more worthy of the magnificent traditions and priceless privileges of which we are the happy heirs.

A PALM EMBLEM.

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree."—Psalm xcii, xii.

I. Look at the palm tree's position in the desert, amid barren sands, weary travellers panting for water. What a contrast and a signal! So the Christian is a sign of God's presence and power in a barren moral wilderness; he