

Lord, and its completeness; the consequent perpetuity of His priesthood; and the incalculable benefits and blessings secured to mankind through His mediation—these are the leading points in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Of the other matters, so commonly associated with it, whatever may be their truth or falsehood, there is absolutely no trace.

A DOUBLE EVIL.

There is a double evil connected with these erroneous statements. In the first place they prejudice the mind, and prevent a fair examination of the texts which refer to the Christian ministry; and in the second place, they put the universal priesthood on a wrong footing, and tend to make us forget how solemn and weighty are the responsibilities which it involves. To the second of these points we shall hereafter more particularly refer. At present, we have particularly to do with the first.

The Christian Church at large is a Kingdom and Priesthood to God; and we who are its living members are individually kings and priests to Him. On these points there is no doubt whatever, and can be none. We have now further to consider what these words mean, upon what principles they are justified, and what is involved in them.

(To be Continued.)

"CATHOLIC."

(COMMUNICATED.)

The word Catholic is one which of late years has grown into favour with two very opposite classes of persons. It is a word about which there appears to be a great deal of misconception, and we desire if possible to give a little light on what we believe the proper use of the word, as well as to offer some observations on the way it is often abused.

The word "Catholic," as we all know, means "universal." It is a word that is applied both to the Christian Church, and to the Christian creeds.

As applied to the church it means "the universal church," but what are we to understand by "the universal church?" It cannot mean a church which actually embraces all mankind; for no church on earth fulfils that condition. The universality of the church must therefore be a not an actual, but a potential universality. The Catholic Church therefore is not the church which actually embraces all mankind, but the church which ought to embrace all mankind. In other words it is a church not intended for nor confined to this or that particular race, or nation, or kingdom, or people; but one that is intended to comprise the entire human family. It is the church to which every being which shares our common human nature is eligible to belong—on complying with the conditions imposed for admission into its fold.

Now it is quite obvious that this Catholic Church is not confined to one particular class of Christians. We cannot admit for a moment that those Christians which compose the Roman Church or the Anglican Church, or any other particular church, again institute the church to which all mankind should belong. The Catholic Church is altogether wider and more expansive than any one particular church, because it embraces all the baptized by whatever names they may call themselves, whether it be Anglicans, Romanists, Orthodox, Greek, or Russian, or even Presbyterians, Methodists, or any of the numerous Protestant religious bodies. And yet a great many Protestants are to be found who surrender to Romanists the title of "Catholic," as though it were their exclusive property.

We do not contend for a moment that the Roman Church, in spite of its errors, is not still a part of the Catholic Church, but to affirm or admit for one single instant that it is "the Catholic Church" is an act of disloyalty and dishonour to our own purer branch of the Catholic Church, which no well instructed member of the Church of England should be guilty of.

"The Catholic Church," as we have said, embraces all baptized Christians, and its historical "backbone," as the late Bishop Lightfoot expressed it, is the Apostolic succession of ministers.

It is because of our common baptism, and because of our being thereby made members of the same one Catholic Church, that we can properly approach Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, and all baptized Protestant Christians, and ask them to join with us in union. This is the link which binds them to us in spite of their separation. Schism is regarded by many, no doubt, as having the effect of cutting off those guilty of it from the Catholic Church. But is this a correct view of the effect of schism? Is this not a mere Romish view of the matter? We do not wish for a moment to minimise the evils of schism, nor the sin of schism, but we think it important in the interest both of truth and charity that an effect should not be ascribed to the act of schism, which it does not necessarily possess. Can anything less than a total apostasy from the faith have the effect of cutting off the baptized Christian from the Catholic Church? Even formal excommunication, though it may cut the offender off from visible communion with the church, is nevertheless not a total exclusion of him from the church, for the offender on his repentance may be restored, and on his restoration he needs not to be re-baptized, which would be necessary if by his excommunication he were put completely outside the pale of the church. The evils of schism are manifold, but the evil is not lessened, but perhaps rather increased, by attributing to schism an effect which it does not necessarily entail. Do not schismatics rather stand in a somewhat similar position to that of deserters from the Queen's army. By enlistment into the army they become the Queen's soldiers, and bound by the regulations for the government of the army. And by deserting they cannot shake off that character; they cannot free themselves from their obligation, at their own pleasure. So it is with Christians. By their baptism they are enlisted as members of the Christian army, they are bound by its regulations, they cannot by deserting from it and setting up little guerilla bands of their own, escape from their baptismal obligations. They continue soldiers in spite of their schisms, though disobedient soldiers. A deserter from the Queen's army cannot say he is no longer the Queen's soldier, neither can a deserter from the Catholic Church say he is no longer a member of it. In spite of his schism he is still a member, and it is because he is a member that he is still bound by its laws, and if he set them at naught he does so at his peril. The dangers of separating from the Apostolic ministry of the Catholic Church are many.

For though it be true that there is not a perfect immunity from error, even by continuing in visible communion with the Apostolic ministry of the Catholic Church, still the dangers within are comparatively trivial compared with those without, for it is well known that in too many cases, alas! and notably on this continent, large bodies of Protestant sectarians have lapsed into unbelief as regards the very keystone of the Catholic faith, namely the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; a lapse which in spite of all its defects has not befallen any body of Christians who have adhered to the Apostolic ministry.

The Church of England, with that loyalty to "the Catholic Church," of which she is a part, which is her distinguishing feature, naturally enough gives to the term "the Catholic Church" its true meaning, she does not, as does the Roman Church, seek to monopolize it for herself, but she acknowledges that it is one which embraces the whole Christian family.

Turning now to the Catholic creeds. These are the creeds, not which all Christians as a matter of fact do hold, but which all Christians ought to hold, because they have received the sanction of the whole Church, and in its duly constituted representative assemblies, which no other creeds have done. While, therefore, the acceptance of these creeds may lawfully be imposed as conditions of communion, as they are in the Anglican Church; the addition or substitution of other creeds as a condition of communion is a violation of Christian liberty of thought, and an attempt to lay burthens on the conscience and faith which have never been sanctioned by the Catholic Church. When, therefore, in addition to the Catholic creeds the Romanists adds the creed of Pius V. and the latest dogmas of Pius IX. as conditions of com-

munion in that part of the Catholic Church, and in the same way the various Protestant bodies impose creeds which they have devised, in addition, or perhaps in substitution, for the Catholic creeds, as though the promulgation of articles of faith had by some unknown process been committed exclusively to them; they violate the fundamental law of the Catholic Church. In so doing the Romanist and the Protestant are each trying to make his own peculiar opinions the test of orthodoxy for his neighbour, whereas the Anglican Church takes her stand on the creeds of the Catholic Church, and makes no other condition of communion.

But as we have said the word Catholic is very much abused of late. By your *ultra* Protestant it is used to signify a man who doesn't believe anything very much, who looks upon all forms of Christianity as about equally right, or equally wrong, he is called "Catholic minded," because he is willing to accept anybody's principles and has no particular principles of his own. But surely no one who has any definite convictions on the subject of the Christian faith can accept such a use of the word "Catholic" as anything but a gross abuse of the term.

On the other hand your *ultra* Ritualist seems equally fond of the term, and his favourite doctrines and practices are styled by him "Catholic," notwithstanding they may be doctrines and practices concerning the adoption of which the Catholic Church may allow the widest latitude of opinion, or concerning which the Catholic Church may never have given any pronouncement whatever.

We venture to submit that no doctrine and no practice can properly be termed "Catholic" which is not expressly prescribed by the Catholic creeds, or by the constant practice of the Catholic Church, "always, everywhere and by all" who have adhered to the Apostolic ministry.

To dub a particular doctrine, practice, ceremony, or rite, as "Catholic," is virtually to say that it is one which ought to be of necessity adopted by all Christians, and applying this test to many so-called "Catholic" doctrines, practices, ceremonies, and rites, it will be seen that they are really of no such universal obligation; they may be probably true, or they may be seemly, or they may be calculated to promote reverence, and they may be permissible; but, for all that, they may not, and in many cases are not essential, and therefore not "Catholic" in the proper sense of the term.

We would only say in conclusion to our readers: Do not be ashamed to claim for yourselves the title of Catholics. Never permit, without a firm but gentle remonstrance, the Romish Church to be called in your presence "the Catholic Church" or its members "the Catholics."

Remember that "Protestant," though a very good word in its place, nevertheless, is after all only a name for the negative side of your religion, viz., the denial of errors, but that it is the positive side, and that is, the Catholic side, which is the affirmation of truth, by which you hope for salvation. Therefore while it is good to protest against error, it is still more essential to profess the truth, and therefore to be Catholics not only in word but in deed.

THE HYPOTHESIS OF EQUAL LIFE CHANCES COMPARED WITH THE HYPOTHESIS OF NATURAL SELECTION.

BY THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF MONTREAL.

No. 3.—Continued.

BIRDS.

Out of the wide variety of animal and vegetable life furnishing food to different species and varieties of birds, there are a vast number of cases where no one is yet certain whether the captors make any selection, and many other cases where it is perfectly plain they do not, and where as a consequence the chances of life for the prey are largely equalized.

Diving birds that follow the flash of a passing fish live as it were in a lottery of food, the prizes being great or small as chance determines. The great northern loon, the black scoter, the merganser which dives to the bottom for its prey, the darter