

entered at another College who have gone there because they have found out in what a miserable state of ignorance they were left after taking their Toronto University degree! It is universally admitted, by those capable of judging, that the Professors of Trinity are the equals of any set of College tutors either on this continent or Europe, and have no peers in their own line in Canada. At Victoria is Dr. Haanel, who is head and shoulders above any Professor of Physics in this country. The boasts of University College men are the mere brag of non-knowledge.

CHURCH THOUGHTS BY A LAYMAN.

No. 57.

GOD'S IDEA OF HIS CHURCH.

IN considering the question of Christian unity it is necessary to a right understanding of the problem, therefore essential to its solution, that we obtain a clear idea of the position which has ever been taken by the universal Church from primitive times up to this day. This position is not merely most agreeable to reason, but is the only one capable of being harmonized with the revealed will of God in the history of His Church in the past ages, with His policy as declared in the utterances of our Lord, with the teachings of the apostles and the history of the Church while under their government. Now the position taken by the Catholic Church is this, that the visible unity of the Church is the outward and visible sign of the will of God, for His Church of old when under direct Divine control was a visible unit. God's idea of a Church is seen in His maintaining the Israelitish Church in visible unity, until that Church was transformed into the Church of Christ. The idea of a visibly united body had no earthly likeness, it was of Divine Revelation. Visible unity is therefore God's idea of His Church's normal state. That is not disputable, it is the greatest fact of the Old Testament. All other religions were broken up into sections. The very idea of visible unity in religious organization was wholly foreign to the mind of man outside God's Church. The theory now held by the sects to-day was the theory and practice of the heathen world as opposed to God's own order. Christ spoke of a Kingdom of God being set up. "Thy Kingdom come," clearly declares the nature of the Church of God. It was to be a Kingdom, which is by necessity a visible unity. Its visibility of unity or oneness was to be the sign of its being Divine. Jesus prayed that the world might be witnesses of this oneness, which they could not do if it were the invisible condition of an invisible Church. The very object of the Church was to bring men into a Kingdom, into oneness, out of their heathen state of anarchy, disunion, and diversity of religious systems. "God hath made of one blood all the nations," strikes at the root of all heathen ideas of religion, for religion was the agent and symbol of race and class disunion. The churches to-day have to decide whether they prefer God's idea of a Church as a "Kingdom," of His people being a "Family," of their oneness being visible to the world—or whether they prefer the heathen idea of disunion and division into sects, varied to accord with man's private fancies. "Gods many, Lords many," rituals many, and ecclesia or churches many, is the note characteristic of mankind walking by the light of nature. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one body, one family or a church, is the sacred characteristic, the peculiar glory, the divinely impressed image and form of the Kingdom of God on earth. That Kingdom is one in Heaven, there sects exist not. The visibility of union which exists in heaven is there the

direct expression of the Will of God. We pray that God's "Will may be done on earth as it is in Heaven." Therefore in using the Lord's Prayer, we beseech our Father in Heaven to bring His Church into the same visibility of oneness which, by His will, exists in Heaven. Hence the passionate love ever shown by the Catholic Church for the Lord's Prayer. It is the family prayer. In the Lord's Prayer we have the utterance by the Body of Christ of the very same yearning after the visible unity of His people which the Head of the Family uttered when on earth. Our dear Lord and Head, foreseeing how the wilfulness of men would divide His Church into sects, taught and commanded His people ever to pray that the will of God should be done on earth as it is in heaven. The Will of our Father is manifested in the visible union of His children as One Body, Jesus Christ ever present, ever seen as the Head of His Church. The sublimity of God's idea of a Church compared with the sects' idea, is the measure of the difference between the thoughts of an Almighty Creator, All Wise, and His frail creature, all foolish man. But there is something in man's love of his own notions which tells of the divineness of his origin. "Let us be as God's," is still the latent desire of man. So men take up God's idea of His Church, His Kingdom, His Family, and finding that the unity involved implies obedience, submission to rulers, to order, repression of self-will, and all that is essential for harmonious life in a kingdom or family, they put God's will aside and set up their own wills to fashion little Churches, little republics, little families, over which they can exercise visible rule and leadership. It is very odd, it is one of the most singular of the vagaries of mankind that having thus quietly dismissed the Almighty from His Throne, the Throne of His Kingdom, by setting up a large variety of man-made republics, they satisfy their rebellious consciences with a theory framed to justify this open rebellion. This theory is what is called the "Invisible Church" theory, one of the absurdest conceptions by which wilful defiance of lawful authority ever attempted to justify rebellion by a pretence of loyalty.

We have seen what God's idea of unity ever was, how Jesus prayed for it to be visible to the world, what it is where God's will reigns alone. Now look at what men say and what men do. They say that the unity of God's Kingdom is invisible, and they divide up that Kingdom by a variety of constitutions and forms of government under which they range themselves. Each set, or church, refuses to recognise the constitution or forms of government of all other sects, or churches. These bodies have different treasuries, different codes of laws, different parliaments, different franchises, different rulers, different sets of officials, different police regulations, different languages, different territories, different modes of worship, different tests of citizenship. They enter into treaties offensive and defensive. They fight for predominance, they are as full of, and as constantly at war as tribes of savages. In a word they have even more outward signs of disunion than the states of Europe. But this is the odd feature in these divided bodies, so-called Churches, that they claim to be invisibly united! Whatever the unity may be, there can be no question whatever about the invisibility. Anomalous as it may sound, the "invisibility" of this union is very visible! We may gaze forever and the "unity" will never be seen. It is very safe, but very absurd to predicate the condition of a certain state when that condition involves impossibility of any test. The union of invisibly united Churches

is not within the range of human testability. Faith sees the invisible we know, but even faith cannot see the non-existent! When the sects ask us to pay regard to their invisible union, we must beg to decline the task. At present we are in the flesh. Our eyes are not arranged to take impressions from things which have no other form of existence than ideas, and notions, and fancies. The invisible bond which is said to make one body out of a large variety of visibly separated and diversely organized and mutually repellent bodies, is such a mere conceit of the fancy that, if it were not in the sphere of religion and protected from criticism by an air of piety, would be pronounced universally the product of a disordered mind. The Church in heaven, that is to say, those members of the One Church who are in heaven, are not visible. But the Church on earth, that is those members of the One Church who are in the flesh, are visible. To use terms about men, and women, and children in the flesh which imply that they have some spirit life and organization outside of their bodies is a very tiresome form of nonsense. The Church of God has work to do, for it has a life to lead in, it has a glory to manifest to the men and women and children who are visible, and to it unreachable except by material, visible means. An invisible Church can neither work for man, nor live before men, nor show forth its glory to men. An invisible Church, therefore, has no place on earth, no sphere, no conceivable form of existence, it is not a thing thinkable by our minds, except as a mere abstract conception. To pray "Thy invisible Kingdom come," would be mockery. To suppose an invisible Church could be seen by the world, as Jesus prayed for, is blasphemy. To send forth Missionaries to gather men into an invisible Church, would be as wise as trying to build an abstract house out of solid bricks and mortar.

Do let us clear our minds of all this metaphysical flummery about the invisible Church. Let us take God's idea as revealed in olden times, Christ's idea as seen in His own prayers, the idea shining out in every apostolic epistle, the idea embodied in the life of the Primitive Church, and in that idea we have the great fact of the visible Catholic and Apostolic Church. That Church is God's Kingdom on earth, One and Indivisible as Himself, because He dwells in that sacred Body, which is a manifestation of His unity and His love to mankind.

THE CHURCH AND SCHOOL TEACHERS

(COMMUNICATED.)

IN one of your contemporaries the immense amount of good that can be accomplished by a State-paid secular teacher, if a good Churchman, is clearly shewn. The editor goes on to say: "The clergy in many places find the teacher or teachers of the public schools the main-stay of the Baptists, Methodists or Presbyterians, and perhaps the great influence against which they have to contend; while they find it impossible, even where the Church population overpowers all others, and where no opposition exists, to secure a Church teacher, simply because they are so few in number in the profession."

What is true of Nova Scotia, and probably New Brunswick is abundantly true of Ontario. Leaving out the case of primary education for the reason given below, and considering that most important branch, secondary or High school educa-