

## OUR NEED OF A CATHOLIC CHURCH

and who is yet the eternal Word through which all things were made, the indwelling principle of all existence. Transcendence and immanence are here perfectly combined. But because the former is the distinctively religious element, without which the latter would have been in danger of relapsing into naturalism, the deliberate emphasis was all laid on transcendence. We can see, as we look back, that when once the Incarnation has actually taken place upon the plane of history, it makes no jot of difference in logic, provided only that the Life of the Incarnate is taken as the starting-point and centre of thought, whether terms of transcendence or of immanence are used. The life of Christ is at once the irruption of the Divine into the world—for the previous history of the world certainly does not explain it—and is also the manifestation of the indwelling power which had all along sustained the world. In other words, the God who redeems is the same as the God who creates and sustains. But it is still true that the note of transcendence, of something given to man by God as distinct from something emerging out of man in his search of God, is the specifically religious note.

And the Church, as the divine creation and instrument, shares and must express this character. It must be so constituted as to keep alive this faith. That is the meaning of hierarchies and sacraments. Whether any given order is the most adequate that can be designed, is of course a perfectly legitimate question. But every order that aspires to be catholic aims, at least, at expressing the truth that religion is a gift of God, and not a discovery of man. And certainly it is only the gift of God that can be truly catholic or universal. Man's discoveries are indefinitely various: the European finds one thing, the Arab another, the Hindu yet another, and none finds satisfaction in the other's discovery, though in all of them God is operative. Only in His own gift of Himself is it reasonable to expect that all men will find what they need; only in a Church which is the vehicle of this gift, and is known to be this, and not a mutual benefit society