

Essential Features of the History of our Church.

CHAPTER III.

CATHOLIC BUT NOT ROMAN.

The Church of England in the three Creeds expresses her belief in the "Holy Catholic Church," in "one Catholic and Apostolic Church," and in the "Catholic Religion" and the "Catholic Faith."

She receives the newly baptized not merely into the Church of England, but into "the congregation of Christ's flock."

In the Te Deum she sings "the Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee."

In the prayer "for all sorts and conditions of men" she prays for "the good estate of the Catholic Church," and for "all who profess and call themselves Christians."

In the "Bidding Prayer" used on certain occasions before the sermon the Church of England is prayed for as part of the Catholic Church.

In the first Statute enacted against the payments of Annates to Rome, 23 Henry VIII., chap. 20, it was declared that the King and his subjects, though objecting to the extortionate Payments to the Pope of Annates and First-fruits, were "as obedient devout Catholics and humble children of God and Holy Church as any people be within any realm Christened."

In the Statute forbidding the payment of Peter's Pence to Rome, 25 Henry VIII., chap. 21, it is declared that the King and people of England do not intend to decline or vary from the congregation of Christ's Church in any things concerning the very Articles of "the Catholic Faith of Christendom."

With the fewest exceptions—if any—the Church in England in all her public Services and Offices prays only for the Catholic Church, and never in so many words for the "Church of England."

And in her Homilies, which are really Sermons put forth by authority, to be read by the Clergy, instead of preaching, there is over and over again reference made to the Primitive Church—the Church of the first days as our Standard; thus:—

"The Primitive Church which was most uncorrupt and pure."—*Homilies*, 2 B. ii. 2.

"This was believed and taught of the old Holy Fathers and most ancient learned doctors, and received in the old Primitive Church which was most uncorrupt and pure."—*Homilies*, 2 B. ii. 2.

And in the Articles of the Church of England, although it is not necessary that Tradition and Ceremonies should be exactly the same or alike in all places, yet it is distinctly set forth, thus:—

"Whosoever through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly."—*Article XXXIV.*

All this and much more, that might be cited, goes to shew the true spirit and position of our beloved Church.

Easter Vestries.

ELECTION OF CHURCH WARDENS.

In the course of the next few weeks, all our Congregations will be called upon to choose their Wardens for another year. How important a matter this is, is, we fear, sometimes hardly realized. For the office is no sinecure; and it demands men of business, who will collect assessments or other contributions punctually and regularly—and also men who will be glad to shew in a pleasant and acceptable manner that the assessment, although it may be all that his neighbour can pay, is after all very little compared with the blessing it brings, with the help of the Church Society, in the regular ministrations of religion. Church Wardens should also