

The 12th article—"And the life everlasting." Remember our Lord's definition of eternal life—"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent." St. John xvii. 3. The Athanasian Creed is simply an expansion of that truth, that salvation is the knowledge (not of course mere intellectual knowledge) of God. A person being in Heaven for ever, and yet not knowing the truth about God and the Incarnation, is inconceivable, is in fact, a contradiction in terms; and so the Athanasian Creed says. Eternal life is not something to be looked for in the future only. It begins here, is developed in Paradise, is perfected in Heaven. Opposite to eternal life is death, not to know God, to be away from Him; a state of the soul that can begin here, be developed after death, receive its dread perfection in hell.

Thank God the Father with all your heart that He has given to His Son power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him. St. John xvii. 2. Thank God for having called you to a state of salvation; pray that your name may not be blotted out of the book of life.

In the faith of the Apostles you have been baptized; to it you will at your confirmation publicly assent; only in it can you in safety and in peace depart. Use the Collect for Trinity Sunday as a prayer for steadfastness in the faith.

THE BAPTISTS are improving. At the closing exercises of Acadia College we read, "the proceedings opened on the entrance of the Alumni by the choir from St. John singing a *Processional Hymn*." "The choir sang the *Te Deum* and chanted the 65th Psalm." Shades of venerable Baptists! is not this the entering wedge of Prelacy, Liturgies, and every other abomination, in a Baptist sense of the term?

SOMETHING OF THE LITERARY HISTORY OF THE BIBLE.

Compiled by the Curate of Yarmouth.

No. II.

(Continued.)

But there is one Book which deserves very particular mention. It is the *Durham Book of the 4 Gospels*, still preserved in the British Museum. The Latin text was copied by Eadfrith, a monk of Lindisfarne, in the 7th century (670?) "It is a most beautiful specimen of ancient penmanship as though the letters were engraved. The illuminations are very fine, with ornaments and pictures on the several pages, together with curious portraits of the four Evangelists, and the initial letter of each Gospel is particularly fine." In the disturbed state of the country, in consequence of the depredations of the Danes, the monks of Lindisfarne were obliged to remove from their monastery; but unhappily their vessel was upset, and the Durham Book, their most precious treasure, fell into the sea. But through the merits of St. Cuthbert, once prior of the monastery, but who had been long dead, the volume was preserved, for the tide ebbed so much farther than usual that it was found high and dry upon the sands full three miles from the shore. The monks said it was "much more beautiful than before both within and without, being no way injured by the salt water, but rather polished by some heavenly hand." The sober historian of to-day adds: "its present appearance confirms the fact of its temporary submersion, but disproves the assertion that it was uninjured by the waves."

The earliest formal attempt made to translate a portion of the New Testament (excepting the Rushworth or Anglo-Saxon Gloss, still existing in MS. in the Bodleian Library, but which, like the Durham Book, followed the Latin word for word) was made by the Venerable Bede, the monk of Jarrow. The temptation is pressing to linger for a little over some of the interesting stories of this good man's life, but we have to do here only with him as a translator. His had been a long, busy and devoted life, when now once more brought to his couch, old and weak and ill, he is dictating the translation of the Gospel according to St. John, while the scribe writes it rapidly upon the parchment. The last verse of the 20th chapter is done, but the old man's voice is very feeble. "There is but one more chapter," said the scribe, "but you can hardly speak." "Write as fast as you can," exclaimed Bede with trembling eagerness. "Now, master, only one sentence is wanting." Bede repeated it. "It is finished," cried the young man. "It is finished" answered the dying saint. "Lift me up, let me sit where I have been accustomed to pray, and now 'Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost,'" and as he ceased he was dead. How much Bede translated is a debated question; all, perhaps, that we can speak of positively is the Gospel according to St. John (A. D. 735).

To recall the virtuous deeds of the great and good of former days, is the simple duty as well as privilege of posterity, and we cannot, therefore, pass by without respectful mention of the name of one of the grandest kings, whether of ancient or of modern days—ALFRED of Saxon England—great in war against the Danish ravagers of his country, but greater still in peace; a noble Christian man, whose labours for reformation in the administration of justice, for the advancement of education, and the spread of religion should be held in everlasting

memory. He translated the Book of the Psalms, and, at least, the greater portion of the Gospels, but died (A. D. 900) before his full task was complete. And here our story must take a stride of near 500 years, and we are set down in the pleasant town of Lutterworth, on the banks of the Swift. The ruins of the old Church of St. Mary are still standing, and are doubtless beautiful in themselves; but connected with them are associations which invest them with a charm which the skill of the architect could never impart. Here John Wycliffe preached and laboured, and here, too, he worked hard and well in translating the Scriptures into England's language. "The carved oak pulpit in which he taught, the table on which he wrote, the chair in which he died, and even the robe—now tattered and torn—which he used to wear," are still to be seen.

Dr. Horne says: "The earliest English translation known to be extant was made by an unknown individual, and is placed by Archbishop Ussher to the year 1290. Of this there are two MS. copies preserved in the Bodleian Library, and in the Library of Christ Church, Oxford."

A statement was also current that near the close of the following century John de Trevisa, Vicar of Berkeley, translated the Bible into English, but research would appear to limit his work really to a few texts, which were painted on the walls of his patron's chapel at Berkeley Castle.

Notwithstanding Dr. Horne's statement, the balance of authority seems to concede to Wycliffe the high honour of having been the first to give to his countrymen the whole Bible in their own tongue. He "published" his translation (as far as we can properly use such a word before the discovery of printing); he sent it abroad through the land; he encouraged others to copy it entire, or in portions, and did all that lay in his power to bring it within the reach of all. Since Wycliffe's day and work, our language has, of course, greatly changed; but some of his expressions are yet to be found in our so-called Authorized Versions, as, for instance, "trait gate," and "narrow way," and "beam," and "mote" in our Lord's teaching concerning a fault-finding spirit. His great work was not hastily, but gradually accomplished. Beginning with a translation of the apocalypse, the rest of the New Testament followed, being finished about 1380. The Old Testament was done within the next 4 years, for in 1384 he died peacefully in his own Rectory, though subjected during his lifetime to constant persecutions. In the next century, however, his remains were not allowed to continue in the grave, for the Council of Constance ordered them to be disinterred and burnt, and his ashes thrown into the river Swift. Upon this, Fuller remarks:

"Thus this brook hath conveyed his ashes into the Avon, Avon into the Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblems of his doctrine, which is now dispensed all the world over." The story of this good man's life of persecution would be beside our purpose here; but do not let us forget that he lived at a time when the influence of Rome in England was all powerful, and admire his boldness accordingly. It is said that less than ten years after he had completed his translation an attempt was made to suppress it by Act of Parliament, but John of Ghent, who so often stood his friend, resisted the Bill with the words: "We will not be the dregs of all, seeing other nations have the Law of God, which is the law of our faith, written in their own language."

Correspondence.

The columns of THE CHURCH GUARDIAN will be freely open to all who may wish to use them, no matter what the writer's views or opinions may be; but objectionable personal language, or doctrines contrary to the well understood teaching of the Church, will not be admitted.

APPOINTMENT TO PARISHES

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS,—Allow me, in all courtesy, to ask "J. W. H. R.":—

1. Whether he gravely wishes us to understand that the same methods which are used for electing "Representatives of the people," are fitting, in all respects, to be used for selecting one from among those who are already appointed "Ambassadors for Christ?"

2. Whether he really supposes that the 120 disciples who took part in the choosing of St. Matthias were "Parishioners" in our sense of the word?

3. Whether St. Matthias was chosen from those already ordained to be a *Parochial Minister*?

4. Whether he desires entirely to ignore the Apostle's query—"How shall they preach, except they be sent?"

5. How much more influence can the laity have in all our Church organizations in the Maritime Provinces?

They have two to one of the clergy in Synod. They can veto the Episcopal and Clerical orders on all points.

They can compel the Bishop to institute the clergyman of their choice. They choose both their Church Wardens, both their lay delegates, and hold the power of the purse. What more can they have?

D. C. M.

BASIS OF UNITY.

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS,—I presume your correspondent of the 2nd instant "X. Y." will not want for answers to queries, which he is by no means alone in putting. Permit me to say, briefly, that the solution of "X. Y.'s" questions as to what he calls "Sects" within the Church is simply to keep in mind the broad distinction between what is matter of *Faith*, and what is matter of *Opinion*, only. It seems to me the bitterness which makes all our differences, springs from disregard of this distinction, and from the tendency which exists, more or less, in all of us to exaggerate the importance of matters of opinion, especially of our own opinion, and to exalt them to the region of matters of Faith. In the region of Faith we cannot, and in fact, we do not differ materially. Take the creeds, and even the first nine of the "Articles of Religion," and accept the five schools of thought in the Church, as stated by "X. Y.," and what appreciable difference of holding is there among the five? On the other hand, in matters of opinion only, we not only must differ, but we must be allowed to differ, very considerably indeed. Here it is that all the wrangling comes in, because of the intolerance of opinion. The intolerance of Faith is not any thing like so great. A Churchman may be almost a Unitarian or a Universalist in belief, or a sceptic as to parts of the Holy Scriptures, and he shall not be the cause of a hundredth part of the animadversion and strife which he becomes by recommending; say, extempore prayers or evening celebrations on the one hand, or by a weakness for a procession, a choral service or a Eucharistic vestment on the other. We shall never see eye to eye in these points, and we shall never have peace until we agree to tolerate such differences *all round*. And if the result of such toleration be congregationalism as "X. Y." says it is, plus *life*, why congregationalism with life is better, far better, than parochialism with uniformity and everlasting compromise and the placid stillness of death.

As for "sects outside the Church," what have we to do with them? They went out from us because they were not of us. When they want to return they are most cheerfully received back; when they find greater and greater need for sub-division they are free as air to sub-divide; there is, indeed, only one thing for which they crave that they cannot get, and it is that the Catholic Church should obliterate the marks by which it is so easily distinguished from the sects, and come down to their level and be just what they delight in calling it, "One of the sects." But so long as the Church preserves the marks of Catholicity and the "basis of unity" she has in her creeds, she can afford both to tolerate considerable want of mere uniformity in her members and to wait until the sects shall either return to her bosom or waste away in sub-divisions infinitesimal.

CATHOLIC [LAY.]

FREE SEATS.

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS,—By way of helping the right in the matter of free as opposed to purchased or rented seats in the House of God, I send you the following short but comprehensive statement:—

"By the law and of common right, all the pews in the Parish Church are the common property of the Parish. They are for the use in common of the Parishioners, who are all entitled to be seated, orderly and conveniently, so as best to provide for the accommodation of all."—*Sir John Nichols in Fuller vs. Lane.*

Yours, truly,
LAY READER.

Bridgewater, June, 1881.

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS,—I see in your paper of this week, that our unassuming brother of Cambridge, (not himself a member of the Deanery Shediac), has undertaken to settle, in a *very remarkable* P.S., the question of the place where the Library belonging to the said Deanery will *not* be kept. If the assumption of infallible knowledge of what is to be indicates *power* over results, one cannot help thinking that it would have been more in accordance with the temporary fitness of things, if the good brother, instead of using the simple signature "B. Shaw," had been able to write himself down "B. A. S. H. A. W.," or at the least, Bishop Shaw.

Faithfully yours,

AN INCUMBENT OF THE DEANERY OF SHEDIAC.
June 3rd, 1881.

IS CHRIST DIVIDED?

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS,—When unity, that real and visible unity which our Saviour so earnestly prayed for previous to His betrayal, is being so eagerly contended for, and when people are being exhorted to return to the true fold from which they have wandered in days gone by, either by treading in the footsteps of their predecessors or by listening to the entreaties of some upholders of separation from the Church (not *division* or *sub-division* in the Church), how strange it seems to find a member of the Church coming to the front as their apologist and defender. Such, however, seems to be the position assumed by your correspondent "Rothsay" in your issue of May 26th, who states that "the contradictions and

dimness of history are too well-known," etc., and that "inspiration only commands the submission of all." We have something superior to inspiration on which the doctrine of real and visible unity is founded. We have the words of God Himself, and need not appeal to history, except to establish the peculiar claims of the Church with reference to it. Our Saviour prayed "that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." No sham unity is implied in these words. Can the desire of our Saviour so fervently expressed in the foregoing prayer be disregarded?

Again, if divisions and sub-divisions are right, and if they are to be looked upon with a certain degree of allowance, what becomes of the force of the following words from the Book of Inspiration: "For ye are carnal; for whereas there is among you envyings, and strife, and divisions; are ye not carnal and walk as men?" In the Inspired volume we find schism and heresy condemned, and are we in these days of boasted Christian advancement to ignore their very existence? Are we to extend the hand of fellowship indiscriminately to the followers of every *ism* in the world, labouring under the manifest delusion that the Church is *invisible*, including the whole company of believers? Who are the believers? I think it would be very difficult, far more difficult than it is to discover "the Church," to find them out, for we should have neither history nor inspiration to assist us in our search; but I suppose, to be charitable, we should have to take them *en masse*, including those who believe a little, or nearly nothing, those who believe a little more, and those that believe all, according to a certain standard; but, of course, not those who believe *too much*.

Your correspondent "Rothsay" would have us to accept all who profess to believe in Christ, no matter how far they have departed from the "Faith once delivered to the Saints;" no matter how much they have debased the Sacraments; in short, no matter how widely they have departed from primitive doctrines and usages. Evidently, there is something wrong about such ideas as these. The terms of salvation are decided by God, not by us; therefore we cannot believe what we like; the efficacy of the Sacraments which have been divinely instituted is imparted by God, and therefore cannot be debased with impunity; and "the Church" was established by Christ a *visible Church*, and cannot have been mystified or hidden, unless we admit that the man of sin has triumphed over the work of Christ. If the man of sin has triumphed, what has become of Christ's promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world?"

Your correspondent gives prominence to one quotation from the Inspired Volume, namely, "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." This, he says, is "as definite, as emphatic and as positive as any in the Bible." Granted that it is all that he says about it, I take it to mean nothing more nor less than this, that wherever two or three of the members of His visible Church are gathered together, and I claim the promise for the sheep of the *one fold*. I have as much and more right to this interpretation of it than the opponents of "the Church" have to the following one, which is practically theirs, namely, "Where two or three of whatever denomination are gathered together in My Name," etc.

It is evident that more is implied than was actually uttered, and Christ having established a real and visible Church, I have good ground for believing what I have asserted. In the Gospel according to St. Matthew, chap. xvi., verses 8 and 9, we find that people could draw nigh unto God in vain, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Have times altered? Has God changed? And can men to-day approach the Throne of Grace, and find favor, believing and rejecting as much of Divine Truth as they please, and all be alike members of that mysterious Church? I say mysterious, because your correspondent asks—"how shall we decide which is that Church?" I have been led to believe, both from what I deduce from the Inspired Volume, and by my spiritual advisers, that "we live in a world where God has blended and combined the visible with the invisible—the body with the soul—the letter with the spirit—the Sacrament with the Grace—the Church with the Faith. If this be so, sectarianism and the Faith can never exist together long."

In conclusion, if there is no true Apostolic Succession, there is no Church; there are no persons to-day duly authorized to minister in holy things. If bishops, heads of colleges, heads of presbyters, and even individual pastors, have power to confer valid, (or rather legal orders) alike, then all is chaos; and did I not believe otherwise, I should pay no more respect to my clergyman than I would to the humblest peasant. As to his advice, I should regard it no more than that of my neighbour and friend. If palatable, I should follow it; if not, reject it. Until your correspondent clears up his subject more fully, I shall continue to believe as I do, that it is the safest to belong to "the Church," and to receive the Sacraments through her divinely appointed ministers; but I cannot believe that "the Church"—our Lord Jesus Christ's Body on Earth—is an invisible Church, the whole company of believers, and I cannot help re-iterating the question put forth by "Quero"—"Is Christ divided?"

LAYMAN.