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## SPIRITUAL vs. VISIBLE UNITY.

The visible unity of the Christian Church has been the dream and longing of many excellent men in all ages. Gathering inspiration from the declarations of our Lord concerning the day when the estrangements between Jews and Samaritans, and Gentiles shall cease, and when "there shall be but one fold, and one Shepherd" for all the flock of God, preachers have discoursed, and poets have sung of the good time coming when denominational lines shall be obliterated, and partition walls thrown down, and there shall be one *visible* catholic and Apostolic Church. Numberless councils, œcumenical and local, have been held, and almost as many creeds and "platforms" promulgated to promote this result; and so desirable has it appeared in the eyes of the great ones of both Church and State, that when ecclesiastical authority has failed, the aid of kings and Parliaments has been invoked to compel all men to think alike. But the human soul, born to the inheritance of freedom, and of a divine revelation, has laughed to scorn the decrees of sinful and fallible men, whether in the chair of St. Peter's or on the throne of England, and has refused the spiritual serfdom that has been proposed to it. As yet, at least, this *visible* unity is only a dream!

Rome indeed, boasts that she has attained it. Her logic is short and easy, although it may be very far from convincing; for, says the Douay Catechism, "He who is not in due connexion and subordination to the Pope and general councils must needs be dead, and cannot be accounted a member of the church, since from the Pope and general councils under Christ, we have our spiritual life and motion as Christians,"—in a word, the Church of Rome is the only true Church, and out of her there is no salvation! How she has continued to maintain this outward unity is receiving new illustration just now from the proceedings of her great