

the Council of Florence, in 1439, from which, however, the Greeks withdrew. And the Uniate Churches were admitted into the communion of Rome, preserving their own form of creed, with the *filioque* clause omitted, retaining their ancient rites and the use of the cup at the Lord's Supper. Distinguished divines, moreover, like Spinola and Bossuet, with the private sanction of the reigning Pontiff, entered into negotiations with Protestants to secure a re-union of Western Christendom.

2. The bearing of the Protestant idea of the Church on union. We have seen that according to the Protestant view, the Church which Christ founded on a rock, and whose unity and perpetuity He revealed, is a society of the faithful, and is composed of saints. It includes in its widest range, the whole sacramental host of God's elect, all who have been, all who are, and all who shall be, gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof. It is the mystical body of Christ. Its members in whatsoever nationality, or ecclesiastical organization they may be found, are so united that they necessarily constitute one body in all ages. Christ dwells in each of them by his Holy Spirit, and each of them, as a result of the Spirit's grace, abides in Christ by faith. This union is indissoluble and eternal. For the members of Christ's mystical body "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Peter, i. 5). He who founded the Church on a rock has declared in reference to all his believing people, "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." "John x. 28.) The members of Christ's mystical body are not only made one with Christ by the bonds of this blessed union, but they are made one with each other in Him. They are the habitation of the same Spirit, and partakers of the same faith, and are animated by a common life. In its most fundamental aspect, this union is not a thing to be sought after, or aspired unto. It is a present reality, an existing fact, which should be recognized and acted upon, but not sought after.