

of the Christian faith, participate in the same sacraments and are subject to certain pastors and especially the Pope of Rome, Those who hold this view regard the Church as a purely external and visible Society, made up of all sorts of men, and even of "reprobates," as Bellarmine expressly affirms. The Church may promote or develop spiritual life and holy character, but it is itself made up of all sorts of men. It is admitted that many of that mixed Society over which the Pope presides, perish, but as saving grace flows only in the channel of the sacraments, those who are not united to this Church, necessarily come short of salvation. To this mixed community of saints and reprobates, according to Papal divines, belong the promises made to the Church in the Word of God. It possesses all the prerogatives of the Church. To it pertains all those attributes which from antiquity have been ascribed to the Church. It is one, holy catholic, and apostolic.

2. The Protestant conception of the Church is derived from a careful examination and induction of the teaching of Scripture direct and indirect, bearing upon it. Time will not permit our even sketching the wealth of evidence bearing on the true idea of the Church. We can only note the result at which Protestants have arrived. What they have gathered from the Word of God is that the Church consists of the whole number of those "that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof." In reply to the question, What is the Church? the Geneva Catechism answers, "The Society of believers whom God hath predestinated unto eternal life." This is substantially the common doctrine of Protestants. The Church in its true idea is the body of Christ; or the *coetus fidelium*, the company of believers. As the Augsburg Confession expresses it, "The Church of Christ is a congregation of the members of Christ; that is, of the saints which do truly believe, and rightly obey Christ."

Whether we regard God's purpose, the divine fore-knowledge or the actual outcome of history, there rises before the mind the conception of a body or society which includes the entire number of those ultimately saved through faith in Christ. According to the first view, it is the Society of the predestinated, according to the next, the Society of the saved as foreknown of God, and