

"The first Bishops in the Church of Christ were His blessed Apostles." "In process of time the Apostles gave Episcopal authority, and that to continue always with them that had it." "The Apostles were the first which had such authority, and all others who have it after them, in ORDERLY SORT, are their lawful successors." "All Bishops are the Apostles successors." "The Apostles have now their successors upon earth, their true successors, if not in the largeness, surely in the kind of that Episcopal function, whereby they had power to sit as spiritual ordinary judges, both over laity and over clergy, where Churches Christian were established." And Hooker quotes with approbation Tertullian's challenge to those who arrogated to themselves an authority in the Church of God, unsustained by tactual succession, which runs thus "Let them, therefore, shew the beginnings of their churches—let them recite their Bishops one by one, each in such sort, succeeding other, that the first bishop of them have had for his author and predecessor some Apostle, or at least some apostolical person, who persevered with the Apostles. For so Apostolic Churches are wont to bring forth the evidence of their estates." Hooker then proceeds to say: Catalogues of Bishops in a number of other Churches (beside the Church of Smyrna); Bishops succeeding one another from the very Apostles' times, are by Eusebius and Socrates collected, whereby it appeareth so clear, as nothing in the world more, that under their, and by their appointment this order began, which maketh many presbyters subject unto the regime of some one bishop."

Finally to the eternal discomfiture of the traducers of Hooker and of the Church, which he defended against fanatic Romanist or Protestant, he writes, "Wherefore let us not fear to be herein bold and peremptory, that if any thing in the Church's government, surely the first institution of Bishops, was from heaven, was even of God: the Holy Ghost was the author of it." Thus much for the testimony of Hooker upon questions such as *Unity, Episcopacy, and Apostolic succession*, which with all but the most ignorant and factious have been settled centuries ago, and for all ages. We might in like manner adduce abounding testimony to the harmony subsisting between the Apostolical Fathers, and the giants of the Anglican Reformation, but one more must suffice,—Bishop Pearson, the peerless expounder of the Apostles Creed. Space permits but one quotation which in its unmutated completeness, will be found the arrow of truth to confound the wilful and false gain-sayer. Bishop Pearson writes: "There is a necessity of believing the Catholic Church, because except a man be of that, he can be of none. For being the Church, which is truly Catholic, containeth within it all which are truly Churches. Whosoever is not of the Catholic Church, cannot be of the true Church. That Church alone, which first began at Jerusalem on earth, will bring us to the Jerusalem in heaven, and that alone began there, which always embraceth 'the faith once delivered to the saints,' (Jude 3) *Whatsoever Church pretendeth to a new beginning, pretendeth at the same time to a new Churchdom, and whatsoever is so new is none.* So necessary is it to believe in the Holy Catholic Church. Having thus far explicated the first part of this article, I conceive every person sufficiently furnished with means of instruction, what they ought to intend when they profess to believe the *Holy Catholic Church*. For thereby every one is understood to declare thus much. I am fully persuaded and make a free confession of this, as of a necessary and infallible truth, that Christ by the preaching of His Apostles did gather unto Himself a Church, consisting of thousands of believing persons and numerous congregations, to which he daily added such as should be saved, and will successively and daily add to the same unto the end of the world, so that by the virtue of his all-sufficient promise, I am assured that there was, hath been hitherto, and now is, and hereafter shall be, so long as the Sun and Moon en-

sure, a Church of Christ *one and the same*. This Church, I believe, in general holy, in respect of the author, and, institutions and administration of it, particularly in the members, here I acknowledge it really, and in the same hereafter, perfectly holy. I look upon this Church not like that of the Jews, limited to one people and confined to one nation, but by the appointment and command of Christ, and by the efficacy of his assisting power, to be disseminated through all nations, to be extended to all places, to be propagated to all ages, to contain in it all truths necessary to be known, to exact absolute obedience from all men to the commands of Christ, and to furnish us with all graces necessary to make our persons acceptable, and our actions well-pleasing in the sight of God. And thus I believe the Holy Catholic Church."

thus asserts beyond cavil the uni Pearson the unity of the Church of Christ, and so far from reflecting in the most remote degree upon Apostolical succession, or Episcopacy everywhere considers them as Ecclesiastical and Scriptural axioms. He tells us "that Church alone which began at Jerusalem on earth, will bring us to Jerusalem above," and that "whatsoever Church pretendeth to a new beginning, pretendeth at the same to a new Churchdom is none." In these times of unscrupulous, wicked falsification, it is to be hoped that those who preach another Gospel, and would deceive the unwary, may be met by a new interest on the part of every intelligent layman of the Church in the perusal of the exhaustive works of Hooker, Pearson, Hall and others, in defence against Romanist and Puritan alike of "the faith once delivered to the saints."

#### GUILD INSTRUCTIONS, NO. VI.

(From Church Bells.)

Having seen what were the distinctive marks or notes of the Church in its earliest stage, as described by St. Luke in the Acts and by St. Paul in his Epistles, we have next to notice that whenever any change has been made in any of these essential features of the Church, either by additions or subtractions, or by material alterations, that change has either not stood the test of time or it has proved itself to be wrong by leading to manifest and grievous mischief. Men cannot improve on God's arrangements, they only mar what they meddle with. Take, for an example, a deviation from the Apostolic plan in the matter of the external constitution of the Church. The Apostolic fellowship and government was one of the essential features of the Church's life and organization. Now what we see in the New Testament growing up as the proper form of the Church's development is a confederation of Churches, such as Corinth, or Alexandria, or Antioch, or Ephesus, all on one model, and on basis of equal and friendly communion. As we come down through the second and third centuries, that picture which we see growing in the New Testament is found in full life in the actual working of the Church. It is a picture of unity and of essential identity in constitution and government. Now what has done more to damage the essential unity of the Church, as a whole, than the assumption on the part of one single Church—the Church of Rome—of a right of supremacy over all the rest, instead of taking a position of equality and amity? Those who read history know that the first rupture between East and West arose not so much from differences of doctrine as from mutual jealousy in connection with Rome's assumption of supremacy. The same assumption of superiority has led Rome to think it impossible for her to learn anything from any other Church, or to modify her practices in deference to the feelings and interests of other Churches, so that both she and the Church at large have lost the

benefit of the services which Churches in friendly communion may render to one another by supplementing each other's defects and correcting each other's errors in doctrine or in practice. All this was a plain departure from the Apostolic pattern, and it has brought its own punishment with it, as we see.

And yet, at first, persons might have thought, and some did think, that the compactness of such an arrangement as that of one Church being supreme might be of signal advantage to the cause of truth. And doubtless the strength of Rome's claim really lay in the fact that many good and religious men honestly thought such a supremacy an advantage. But now that we can look back upon it some hundreds of years after, we can see that it was an unwarranted departure from the Apostolic model, and how badly it has worked in consequence. We see how, again and again, it has prevented error within the Church of Rome from being corrected by sister Churches. We see also how, outside her borders, it has led to mutual antipathies instead of mutual service. We see also how it has led to giving a bad name to many sound doctrines merely because they were held, in common with ourselves, by the Church of Rome. In judging thus we are not bringing railing accusations. It is easy to understand how good men, generation after generation, were tempted to regard Roman supremacy as a thing to be stood by for the sake of the good it seemed to be doing in those troubled times. Even a child can understand what force of attractiveness and reason there would seem to be in the idea of a great visible community, with all its powers for good wielded by one head under one centralised system. But an unprejudiced survey of history, and a thorough acquaintance with facts, tell us that this idea has not answered. And why not? Because, taking it at its best, it was a want of faith, it was a trying to gain by a hard-and-fast centralisation—that is, by a humanly devised material unity—that which God had intended to be obtained by means less human and more Divine, of which the pattern had been given in the Apostolic age. Short-cuts generally turn out to be delusions, though they look tempting at first. So Roman unity is not Church unity. It is not a growth upon the old lines. It is not even a development of the original germ. It was not in the germ. For the notion of the supremacy of St. Peter and of his see of Rome is an afterthought, strangely brought in to justify what at first had never been dreamed of. Roman unity, instead of being a growth from *within*, is something stuck on from the *outside*—an abnormal addition; and the mischief it has worked is incalculable.

In the other direction also no less evil has been worked by Dissent. Just as the idol of Roman supremacy was set up in place of Church unity, so the *license of individualism* has been the idol to which Dissenters have sacrificed the duty of conformity to Christ's own institutions and loyalty to the corporate idea of the Church. Individual minds possessed of no extraordinary powers (excepting of self-conceit), but of narrow culture and experience, and often biased by abnormal idiosyncracies of circumstances, have taken their stand on their own *self-sufficiency*, and, casting aside or ignorant of the Church's interpretations and testimony, have constructed their own private theories of Christian doctrine and Church government, and, virtually assuming a Papal infallibility have pronounced the whole Church in all previous ages to have gone wrong, and have claimed for themselves the power of understanding the mind and teaching of Christ better than the inspired Apostles themselves did. More puritan than Christ Himself, who did not separate Himself from the Jewish Church notwithstanding the errors of its teachers and leaders, the originators of the Dissenting sects and their followers have made it a matter of duty and righteousness to commit schism.

Thus, at the root, the error of Romanism and