

yoke which neither their fathers nor they were able to bear." And in this same epistle, Paul represents the Levitical law, as a Schoolmaster educating and chastening them until the coming of Christ, but now, he adds, "as for that faith is come,"—now that the covenant of works has passed away, and salvation through faith alone is more clearly revealed,—“we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” Ye, brethren, have been called into liberty; ye are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free!

Very similar is the language of our Lord,—“if the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed;” and the language of Paul, “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” (John viii. 36: 2 Cor. iii. 17.) Christianity is the very synonyme of liberty: “he that is called in the Lord, though a slave, is the Lord’s *freeman* or “(*freed-man*), and must no longer be the servant of men.”

This liberty we understand to be the divinely bestowed, and inalienable right of every believer in Christ. The text exhibits a principle capable of a much wider application than that given to it by the Apostle in this instance. We are “called unto liberty” in regard to everything that does not involve disobedience to Christ, or an occasion of stumbling to those for whom Christ died. But “our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus,” precious and ennobling as it is, is often despised and recklessly cast away. The Christian Church has often sold her birthright. The affianced bride of Christ has been too easily enslaved to the commandments of men. Even to this day in many places she wears a chain instead of a coronet. To say the least, her present condition is strikingly in contrast with her condition in apostolic times, as will be seen by the following comparison of the *original draft* of her constitution, with the *blotted and amended copy*, often forced upon her in modern times!

1. Primitive Churches were independent of the patronage and control of the State. They neither received, nor wished for any such aid as is now claimed, and frequently obtained by adherents to the principle of ecclesiastical establishments. Cæsar neither built their houses of worship, nor sustained their ministers. They were, many of them at least, but poor in respect of worldly wealth and influence, for not many mighty, not many noble were called, but they were rich in faith and charity. If there were poor saints among them needing assistance, the richer brethren sold their houses and lands, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles’ feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Or, if, in times of unusual distress, these resources failed to meet their necessities, the churches in one Province helped the churches in another Province,—“every man according to his own ability” sent them relief. And if they thus cared for the welfare of those who were “least esteemed in the church,” we may be sure that their ministers, whom the Apostle declared to be “worthy of double honor,” were not unprovided for. Thus in every sense they were independent of the State, and thus they continued, enjoying a prosperity never equalled since, for well-nigh three centuries. They had “no king but Jesus,” and no “defender of the faith” but Him who sits upon his holy hill of Zion.” The only establishment they sought was an establishment in faith, and not by act of Parliament, or edict of Cæsar.

And, on the other hand, the civil Government not being called upon to support the Churches from its revenues, had no pretext by which to claim a voice in the management of their *spiritual* affairs, as it always will do, and must be expected