

monly known as Protestant and Evangelical. By way of preferring a simpler problem, however, this paper will deal with the question only within these limits.

It is not intended herein either to advocate or to oppose church federation, but only to consider certain preliminary problems. It would be easy so to define federation as to make it objectionable; can it be so defined that it will be a good thing? Whether one should advocate it or oppose it will depend on the particular form of federation proposed. Antecedent to advocacy or opposition, and antecedent even to definition, there are certain principles and ideas that need to be examined.

I. Unity in the Church is not necessarily identical with either consolidation or federation. Unity may exist without federation. Federation might supposably hinder unity, instead of promoting it.

There can be no just thought in this matter which does not recognize the truth that, as a matter of fact, the visible Church already is one, and always has been one. It is not merely true that the spiritual Church is one, but that the visible Church is one—is visibly one. We often assume the contrary, and thus, from the outset, introduce mischievous fallacies into our reasoning. The address of the Bishops, above cited, assumes the unity of the visible Church, but also assumes that its "organic unity" is lost, and needs to be restored. Whether this is correct depends on our definition of the term organic. The Church has no organic unity, if the idea be that of an organized body of men, submitting to the control of a human head centre, located somewhere; but in this sense the Church never had organic unity since it first became international. With this meaning, it is absurd to speak of the restoration of its organic unity; for that which it never had cannot be restored to it. If, on the other hand, organic unity is the unity of the organs of a single living Divine product, then the existing unity of the visible Church is organic. But, without insisting on this word organic, it is at least true that the visible Church has never, since its foundation, ceased to be a unit. It has had divisions and schisms, but these do not in the least change this fact. The mountain is a unit, though its parts are separated by chasms; the mountain range is one, even though there are broad valleys between its peaks; the ocean is one, though we call the different parts of it by different names. The visible Church is a unit like these, a unit created by God; men can divide it only as they can divide the mountain by digging ditches, or the ocean by building embankments. Israel was just as really one people in the days of the judges, when the families were relatively independent, as in the times of the minutely organized kingdom of David. When we study Church History, we study a single subject, no matter into how many branches it may divide itself. Nobody has any difficulty in recognizing this sub-