

and to hold for the purpose for which it was founded. And the Apostles and the early Christians very evidently believed that they possessed that truth in all its fulness, and that the Church collectively was made the depository, the keeper, and the witness of that truth, thus: S. Paul exhorts those to whom he writes to "stand fast in the faith" (1 Cor. xvi. 13), to "examine themselves whether they be in the faith" (2 Cor. xiii. 5), to "strive together with one mind for the faith of the Gospel" (Phil. i. 27), to "continue in the faith grounded and settled" (Col. i. 23), to "walk established in the faith as ye have been taught" (ii. 7), and tells Titus to rebuke the Cretians "sharply that they may be sound in the faith" (i. 13); and he speaks of those who have made shipwreck of the faith (1 Tim. i. 19) and "concerning the truth have erred" (ii. 18); he tells Titus that a Bishop must be one "holding fast the faithful word as hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (i. 9), and Timothy that he must "hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me" (2 Tim. i. 13), and thanks God that the members of the Church in Rome had "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine whereunto ye were delivered"—i.e. pledged in their baptism (Rom. vi. 17). He distinctly asserts that the Church is "the pillar and ground (or stay) of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15). S. Jude exhorts those to whom he writes "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

The Church, therefore, has ever held that the Truth in all its fulness—the full and entire truth—on all subjects necessary for us to know for certain was revealed to the Apostles, given as a "deposit" enshrined as "the faith once delivered to the saints."

The function of the Church is to be the "pillar and ground," "the witness and keeper" of that truth once for all delivered to it.

Even the Church of Rome is obliged to accept this in theory, though in practice it departs very far from it. "All revelation came from God alone through His inspired ministers, and was complete in the beginning of the Church. The Holy Father has no more authority than you or I to break one iota or tittle of the Scripture, and he is equally with us the servant of the divine law." [Cardinal Gibbons, *Faith of our Fathers*, p. 148] "First of all," wrote Cardinal Newman, many years after he joined the Roman Church, "*ex abundanti cautela*"—that is, something too obvious to need stating—"every Catholic holds that the Christian dogmas were in the Church from the time of the Apostles; that they were ever in their substance what they are now." "But this is exactly what is *not true*, for instance, of the immaculate conception of the Mother of our Lord; of the treasury of merits to be dispensed in indulgences; of the papal infallibility. If there is such a thing as history, it bears unmistakable witness that those beliefs were not in substance part of the original Christian faith."—C. Gore, *Bampton Lectures*, 1891, p. 201.

The manner in which the Church exercised this its function of a witness and keeper of the Truth, was by the coming together of the Bishops, or Rulers, of the Church together with representative Presbyters from all parts in Councils

or Synods. But the object of such Synods was never considered to be the declaration of new truths, but simply to testify what the Church diffusively had at all times and in all places received as the truth once for all delivered to it. Nor were the decisions of such Councils regarded as binding on the Church till they had been ratified by the acceptance of the Church at large.

The body of truth thus ascertained to have been that "once delivered to the saints," and therefore necessary for the stability of the Church, and for the salvation of individual souls, was consolidated into short Forms, the Creeds we now possess—while the Church was still one—before the division of the East and West in Europe, and while it could, therefore, speak with the full authority of the whole Church, to which the promise that "the gates of hell should not prevail against it," was given. For it must be particularly noted, the promise was given to the Church as a whole. There is no promise that parts of the Church will not fall away from the faith. Indeed, four out of the seven Churches to which S. John wrote, in the book of the Revelation, are threatened with extinction for falling from the faith, or for evil deeds (Rev. ii. 5, 16, iii. 1, 16).

The Nicene Creed is indeed the only one that has the actual authority of a Council, but the others teach only exactly the same truths. This Creed was first framed by the Council of Nice, at which 318 Bishops were present, in 325. It then ended with the words, "I believe in the Holy Ghost." It was professed to be the Creed that had always previously been received by the Church, with the addition of one clause, "of one substance with the Father," which was found necessary to exclude the heresy of Arius, who denied the essential Deity of our Lord. It was confirmed and completed by the addition of the remaining clauses [with the exception of the words, "and from the Son," in the article concerning the Procession of the Holy Ghost], which were also gathered from Creeds that had been previously in use by the Council of Constantinople, at which 150 Fathers met, in 381. It was again confirmed by the third general Council at Ephesus, 431. That Council further declared in its seventh Canon that "No one shall be permitted to introduce, write, or compose any other faith, besides that, which was defined by the holy Fathers assembled in the city Nice with the Holy Ghost."

The introduction of the clause "and from the Son," was first made in an authorised manner by the Churches of Spain and France (589). Pope Leo III (716-741) declared in a Synod that no such addition should be made at Rome, and caused the original Creed to be graven on silver plates. It was, however, introduced at Rome under Nicolas I. [855-867]. Under Leo IX [1048-1054], after repeated quarrels, the rupture between the Eastern and Western branches of the Church finally took place, chiefly owing to this introduction into the Creed of a claim that had only the sanction of a portion of the Church. It must be remembered, however, that though the Eastern Church opposed on principle any addition to the Creed, and did not think the words used justifiable, both branches of the Church virtually hold the same doctrine on the subject. The Western Church did not intend to assert, by the added words, a double origin of Life in the Godhead, while the Eastern Church admitted that the Holy Spirit of the Son as of the Father, and that He proceeded from the Father through the Son.

Thus, while we may well regret that ever this addition has been made to the Creed as received from the whole Church, thus causing misunderstanding and division, we may be satisfied that nothing has been introduced not capable of being explained in harmony with the belief of the Eastern Church.

Concerning these necessary, fundamental truths, these which were declared by the Church

in Synod assembled to have been the Faith held by the Church everywhere from the first, we may, relying on the promise of Christ to His Church, be as certain, as we can be of anything in the world, that we have undoubtedly the Truth, and that sufficiently for the safety of our souls.

WHY AM I A CHURCHMAN ?

(Continued from Number of July 27th.)

To the above witnesses to the continuity of the Church may be added witnesses from the Official Documents of the Church herself.

I. Witness of the Canons. 1603.

These Canons were agreed upon by the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, and published by the king's authority, under the great seal, and are still legally in force.

Canon 3. Whosoever shall affirm that the Church of England is not a true and Apostolical Church is to be excommunicated.

C. 8. Whosoever "shall separate themselves from the Communion of Saints, as it is approved by the Apostles' rules, in the Church of England, and combine themselves together in a new brotherhood," "to be excommunicated."

C. 30. Concerning the use of the Cross in Baptism, these words occur: "So far was it from the purpose of the Church of England to forsake and reject the Churches of Italy, France, Spain, Germany, or any such like Churches, in all things which they held and practised, that it doth with reverence retain those ceremonies which do neither endanger the Church of God nor offend the minds of sober men; and only departed from them in those particular points wherein they were fallen both from themselves in their ancient integrity and from the Apostolical Churches, which were their founders." It also speaks of abiding by the "judgment of all the ancients Fathers."

C. 31 speaks of the Four solemn Ember Seasons for Ordination having been, after the example "of the ancient Fathers of the Church," "appointed in ancient times for prayer and fasting, and so continued at this day in the Church of England."

C. 60. Concerning Confirmation. "It hath been a solemn, ancient, and laudable custom, continued from the time of the Apostles, that all Bishops should lay their hands upon children Baptized," &c.

II. Witness of the Homilies.

These Homilies were set forth to be read in Churches in reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth. The Homilies continually appeal to and quote the "Catholic Fathers"; they speak of an ancient Church then, and in the time when the Homilies were written, as one, "though cleansed and purged from errors which through blind devotion and ignorance had crept into the Church" (2nd B. 3), and they give the following description of the true Church, which could certainly not have been given by a body that was conscious of having broken off from the unity of a previously existing body. "The true Church in an universal congregation or fellowship of God's faithful and elect people, 'built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner stone.' And it hath always three notes or marks whereby it is known: pure and sound doctrine; the Sacraments ministered according to Christ's holy institution; and the right use of ecclesiastical discipline. This description of the Church is agreeable both to the Scriptures of God, and also to the doctrine of the ancient Fathers, so that none may justly find fault therewith."

III. Witness of the Prayer Book.

A. The very title of the book bears witness to the claims of the Body using it as part of the Catholic Church.

It reads

The Book of Common Prayer, and Adminis-