

invisibility of the Church, I would still ask him to consider whether it is wise or safe to put the opinions of men in a time of confessed fluctuation and transition above the Scriptures of truth and the judgment of fifteen hundred years of the Church's life. I say above the Scriptures, for, with your permission, I will undertake in my next letter to show that the professor's theory, that the Church of Jesus Christ, to which the promises belong, is an invisible thing, has not one shred of authority in the Bible, and is absolutely excluded by many of its statements.

LETTER III.

To the Editor of The Mail.

SIR,—I do not feel that I would be called upon or justified in criticizing Dr. MacLaren's opinion as to what the Church of Christ is were it not that he has published that opinion to the world as dispensing with the duty or even the desirability of arriving at and striving after visible reunion. And indeed, if his opinion be correct, the state of division that exists at the present time is the divinely intended and normal condition of the Christian Church, and it is therefore wrong to try to end it.

In his lecture, at the re-opening of Knox College, the professor states in explicit terms that the Church for which Christ prayed, the Church to which pertain the promises, is not a visible society. And again, "That the Church as set forth in the New Testament.... is not a mixed body made up of all sorts of men, good and bad." "It includes none but believers." "There are no hypocrites and no reprobates in this Church." On the positive side the professor tells us that "the Church of Christ is a congregation of the members of Christ, that is, of the saints who do truly believe and rightly obey Christ." Or, "the society of believers whom God hath predestinated to eternal life." This, Professor MacLaren tells us, is the Protestant conception of the Church, and he says it is derived from a careful examination and induction of the teaching of Scripture, direct and indirect, bearing upon it. I can only say that there is nothing more astonishing in the history of human opinion than the fact that people think they find in the Bible, or may deduce from it, that which is manifestly not only not contained in it, but which is altogether excluded by many of its plainest statements. And, to my mind, there is no more astounding illustration of this