

## OUR NEED OF A CATHOLIC CHURCH

so were these others. Isaiah looks forward to a time when 'Israel sh<sup>l</sup> be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth: for that the Lord of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance'.<sup>1</sup> If the New Testament lays all its emphasis on the universal note, it is only because this lesson of the prophets was not yet learnt, and needed still to be uttered with renewed emphasis; it is not because nationality is ignored. No citizen ever loved his country more than Christ loved Israel; there are no instances of patriotism more glowing than the patriotic ardour of St. Paul. Our task therefore is to allow both Church and nation freedom to do just what each can do for the realization of the Kingdom of God.

### THE NATION, THE CHURCH, AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The nation is a natural growth with a spiritual significance. It emerges as a product of various elementary needs of man; but having emerged it is found to possess a value far beyond the satisfaction of these needs. The Church is a spiritual creation working through a natural medium. Its informing principle is the Holy Spirit of God in Christ, but its members are men and women who are partly animal in nature as well as children of God. The nation as organized for action is the State; and the State, being 'natural', appeals to men on that side of their nature which is lower but is not in itself bad. Justice is its highest aim and force its typical instrument, though force is progressively less employed as the moral sense of the community develops: mercy can find an entrance only on strict conditions. The Church, on the other hand, is primarily spiritual; mercy will be the chief characteristic of its judgements, but it may fall back on justice and even, in the last resort, on force. Both State and Church are instruments of God for establishing His Kingdom; both have the same goal;

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xix. 24-25.