

ance in St. Paul's, London, or in the Minster in York, where all outward order is observed as it has been for centuries? I ask again, as we study this picture, what is essential to a Church, what is it without which a Church is an utterly empty thing, a mockery? Is it not that souls be saved, that lives be purified, that natures be sanctified? If such fruits be present, you have all that is needed to make a Church of the living God. On the other hand, you may have office-bearers from the Pope himself, with all his pretensions to be vicegerent of Christ, down through an endless grade of office-bearers, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, deans, priests, and deacons, down to acolytes, and if there be any humbler than that put them all if you please, and be destitute of the presence of the Spirit of God with His converting and sanctifying power. I say it is possible to have this, though I trust such emptiness of real spiritual power is not often found, and if so, what then? May I not say everything in its order, and that order the order of importance in God's sight? What is of most importance is surely that which all evangelical Churches have in common; what is of least importance is that wherein good men differ. But is there a sillier thing to do than when one Church proceeds to unchurch all others, not because of doctrines that are essential, but because of mere orders? Can a more contemptible thing be thought of than that men who profess to be followers of Jesus and the apostles should dare to tell other men, "Except ye have the apostolic order as we understand it, and we claim to have it, ye are not a Church at all, and your chances of salvation are very slight?"