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## THE QUESTION OF ENDOWING MISSION CHURCHES.

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The Christian finds himself within the large embrace of three concentric horizons. The outermost is the Spiritual Church, that vague and majestic conception which glimmers here and there in Holy Scripture and reminds us that all souls, whether dwelling on this green earth or in any other world, who turn reverently and obediently to what light they have, belong to one flock and have one Shepherd. It is not to this, of course, that the term *church* relates, as it occurs in the subject of our discussion. Again, there is a second religious horizon that environs us less remote and more definite. Within the Spiritual Church we find rigid ecclesiastical crystallizations, with one or another of which each one of us has come somehow or other to be identified. We are Romanist, or Anglican, or Wesleyan, or Baptist, or Congregationalist, or Presbyterian. These social organisms are called denominations or communions, and sometimes in loose and popular phrase, with slight if any vestige of scriptural warrant, churches. It is not to these religious phenomena that we refer when we speak of endowing churches. No one ever thinks, in this country at least, for instance, of endowing the Anglican communion. Our subject relates rather to what is sometimes called the *local church*, which constitutes our innermost ecclesiastical horizon. It includes those believers in Christ who habitually meet together for worship. They form a society into which new members are initiated by baptism. It is their custom at stated seasons to take the bread and the chalice in memory of Christ. They remind each other of His teachings, and they praise and adore the Eternal God as foreshortened and revealed to the human consciousness in His personality and character. In these ways they help one another to become like Him. Nor is this all. They endeavor to change for the better the character of the circumjacent community, which they call the world, by bringing into the consciousness of individuals those great truths concerning God and duty and the future life which Christ taught and exemplified. This they accomplish by preaching, by private conversation, by