

open to every rank and order, and most open to the humblest.

The Southern Churchman says that:—

Christian men should not forget that while the religion of the age does not always open the eyes of the spiritually blind, neither does it seal those of the worldly observing. Many a man as insensible as a mummy to his own moral deformity and spiritual deadness, is thoroughly alive to every defect of the kind in his Christian neighbor. The prime evil which results, is not so much that the latter is detected and faulted, as that through his fault, the other is confirmed in self-blindness to his own destruction. But neither directly, nor indirectly if it be possible to avoid it by a holy life, should we destroy him for whom Christ died.

We quote the following from the *Guardian* editorial on the London Mission:

"Speaking from a layman's point of view, who is every Sunday at least the helpless patient at the mercy of his practitioner, we may express the modest hope that the London and country clergy will learn from their experience of the Mission, that a sermon may be made interesting, stimulating, and conducive to the quiet contemplation of things above the rain clouds which dim the sphere of politics and merchandise, without sharpening the edges of intellectual debate, rasping the minds of listeners who are still old-fashioned enough to enjoy their Sunday as a day of rest, or spinning airy, fairy gossamers out of the sentiments of the English poets, or the æsthetics of modern art. The average English clergyman has yet to learn that the function of the preacher is to apply the wondrous powers of the old Gospel with fresh enthusiasm and keen incisiveness and manly dignity to the wants and desires of modern English life."

Reasons for being a Churchman.

ADDRESSED TO ENGLISH SPEAKING CHRISTIANS OF EVERY NAME.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR WILDE LITTLE, M.A.

From the Living Church.

DID CHRIST FOUND A CHURCH WHICH STILL EXISTS?

On this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.—*Words of Christ.*

Guizot has said: "Christianity came into the world as an *idea to be developed*. Christianity did nothing of the kind. The Christian "idea" of which the learned Frenchman speaks can only mean the truth which Christ revealed, which was definite and complete, the "faith which was *once for all** delivered to the saints." (St. Jude i. 3.) And that was given to develop men, not to be developed by men. (It is not our duty to develop the faith, but by the grace of God to develop ourselves in the faith.) According to our Lord's teaching, that Faith was embodied in a visible organism, which He calls *His Church*, or *His Kingdom*. Indeed the Faith is so identified with the Church that Christ calls His Gospel *the Gospel of the Kingdom*. The Church is an integral part of the Faith, and a belief in the Church is an article of the Apostolic Creed.

Observe, then, the teaching of our Divine Master. He began His ministry by authoritatively repeating the words of St. John Baptist. For we read (St. Mark i. 14.): "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and

saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' Later on, after He had appointed the twelve Apostles, He says to the multitude (St. Luke xi. 20.): "No doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you." Though our Lord occasionally uses Kingdom to mean Heaven, and once or twice to mean His spiritual dominion in our hearts, yet more than nine times out of ten it means simply His Church in the world—the Empire He was founding on the earth but not of the earth. Out of his thirty-two recorded parables, nineteen are "parables of the Kingdom." More than half of His discourses were what some people now-a-days would call "Churchly." But He spoke with authority. Notice a few of the wonderful prophetic parables which bring out the visible character of Christ's Church.

In one He likens the Church to a field of wheat and tares, which grow together until the harvest. (St. Matt. xiii. 25.), showing that the Church while on earth will contain good and bad, and that it is wrong to make separations in the Church, even for so laudable a purpose as to weed out the unworthy. And this phase of the Church, its unity even at the cost of having some bad men in it, He emphasises by an additional parable, that of the net (St. Matt. xiii. 47.), "which tells us how the Church, having swept through the ages, from one end of the world to the other, will finally land those whom it has caught on the shore of eternity, and *there* the separation shall take place." The parable of the Mustard Seed (St. Mat. xiii. 31.) shows the Catholic or universal extent of the Church. That of the Vine and its Branches, (St. John xv. 5.) our Lord's last and crowning parable of His Kingdom, shows that His Church is a *visible organism* which, like a plant, however complex, has a unity dependent on the branches remaining in physical, vital connection with the root. Some of our Lord's parables refer to doctrine, some to morals, some to individual religious experiences; but I challenge any one to show a parable which teaches that His Church is not *one, visible, and Catholic*, or which can possibly justify the "developments" of Romanism or the separations of Protestantism. He prays for the unity of all Christians, "that they may be one." (St. John xvii. 21.) He says of the sheep that *hear his voice*. (St. John x. 16. The rendering "one flock" instead of one fold, adapted by the Revisers, scarcely alters the metaphor at all, and certainly does not in the slightest degree affect the argument.) There shall be *ONE FOLD* and one Shepherd." He admits that "the wolf" may *catch* the sheep, or may *scatter* the sheep, (St. John x. 12.) but not that the wolf or any one else may construct a new fold, much less three or four hundred new folds, for the flock of which He Himself is the Good Shepherd, and for which He has already built the "one fold." The first miraculous draught of fishes (St. Luke v. 6.) implies that the "Net" may break and some of the fishes slip out through the breach; but not that the Great Net may be made over into little hand nets, or that the fishes who swim back into the lake are still *in the Net*, or surrounded, forsooth, by an "invisible net."

But in addition to the figurative language with which Christ illustrates the unity, the visibility, and the authority of His Kingdom, He gives what a learned priest has well called "a prophecy of the foundation of the Church, of its endless devotion, and of the name by which it should be called." When St. Peter confessed the Divinity of Christ, what said the Son of God? "*On this Rock I will build MY CHURCH and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*"

St. Matthew xvi. 18. See the masterly exposition of this passage by Dr. J. H. Hopkins in the *American Church Review*, October, 1884.

Again He says as a matter of discipline in the case of an erring brother: "Tell it to the Church, but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (St. Matthew xviii. 17.)

(*To be Continued.*)

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