

God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this "amazing manifestation of Almighty power and of Omniscient wisdom. And this is the substance of the explanation which the same apostle made to the crowd of people who had witnessed the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple. It was the name of Jesus which had made the lame man whole, and this was because though Jesus had been lately crucified, yet that He had risen from the dead. To Cornelius, St. Peter witnessed: "Him Whom they slew and hanged on a tree God raised up the third day." St. Paul also made the Resurrection the grand subject of all his discourses. In the Synagogue at the Pisidian Antioch, on the steps of Areopagus at Athens, before Agrippa, and in his Epistles, this great apostle unflinchingly testified "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again according to the Scriptures." And in that magnificent book which closes the canon of the Holy Writings, the Personage of and from Whom it is a Revelation, announces Himself:—"I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."

Both on account of the assaults which, in subtle form, infidelity is now making on our faith, from without the Church, and also from unfaithful men within the Church, whose aim it is to ignore or at least to undervalue the instrumentalities and institutions of Christianity, it is more than ever necessary that we should dwell on the Resurrection as the one fact in connection with Christianity which cannot with any show of fairness or of reason be disputed, and as involving all that it concerns us to know or to practice in connection with the Christian religion. It was in the firm enunciation of this truth that, by the grace of God, Christianity was established, the Christian priesthood was unfolded, and the means of grace were instituted; and it will be in the continued practical exhibition of the same truth that the Christian Church will rise to the fulness of all gospel blessing.

FREE AND OPEN CHURCHES.

THE movement in England in favor of free and open churches—that is, in opposition to pew rents and churches closed nearly all the week, is making considerable progress both in England and Scotland. At an Annual Commemoration in connection with the Scottish Church held in Dundee, in the present year, Lord Forbes (in the chair) read a communication from Lord Kinnaid expressing his sympathy with the movement. His lordship particularly expressed a hope that something would be done to ensure the new cathedral at Edinburgh being both free and open. The Bishop of Brechin advocated the same principle. He maintained not only that the practice of seat letting for money, but even the appropriating of particular seats for particular persons, was unscriptural. In the opening of mission rooms or new churches in his Diocese, he would set

his face against all letting or appropriating seats. Many speakers present advocated the movement and contended that all churches should be free, and that they should be open at all times.

Under the pew rent system the father of a family must pay for a sitting for each member of his household. It makes no difference whether he is a rich man with a small family, or a poor man with a large family, still he must pay a certain fixed price for every seat allotted to him. The whole system is condemned for these reasons:

First; It assimilates itself to the system adopted in stage performances, and public shows, and it is an historical fact that it emanated therefrom. The worship of God, however, should be regarded as a totally different thing from stage performances, nor should there be reserved seats in God's house.

Second; There is too much compulsion involved in it. The amount of payment is not left to the conscience of the contributor any more than to his ability: it is fixed for him by others. Then if he cannot pay his pew rent, he is ashamed of his inability, and feels he cannot attend the church.

Third; It is unjust to the poor. A man's income may be small, that makes no difference. His family may be large; but that fact only increases the amount he has to pay.

Fourth; It is unjust to those in wealthier circumstances, because it deprives them of the privilege of contributing according to their ability—to use the Scriptural expression, according as God has prospered them; or at least, it furnishes them with an excuse, sometimes a convenient one, for not doing so; and altogether fails to bring before them the fact that their responsibilities and their obligations, especially in reference to the Church of God, are in exact proportion to their ability; and thus fostering the idea that they are only called upon to contribute according as they may make use of the church. It allows the man in easy circumstances to think that if he pays his pew rent, he has discharged his whole duty to the Church, as far as contributing to its funds is concerned.

Fifth; It conceals the fact that giving to the cause of Christ is a blessed privilege; and so it begets a mechanical and perfunctory habit of giving. It puts giving in the light of a mere duty, and that of a fixed character irrespective of a man's income; and it consequently deprives it of the power, to be a spiritual blessing to the giver, which characterizes a spontaneous, generous, and a Scriptural liberality.

Sixth; It prevents the growth and expansion of the prosperity of the Church. If the sittings of the church are let at a certain fixed price, the income of the church must also be fixed. The only addition that can be made to it is from the contributions of new comers.

Seventh; It has a tendency to prevent the setting apart permanently a portion of a man's property for the continued support of the worship of God; whereas it cannot be doubted that it is just as much his duty to set apart permanently that which will con-

tinually keep up the blessed privileges he now enjoys as it is to make provision for the future requirements of his family.

These, among other arguments, are employed with success against the system of pew rents; a barbarous and unchristian system, which we rejoice to find is fast dying out not only among all sound Churchmen in this Dominion, but also in the Mother Country.

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED.

BY THE REV. JOHN FLETCHER, A. M.

II.—CONFIRMATION.

§ 5. *Modern character of opposition to Confirmation.*—The leading bodies in this Dominion, who have laid aside the practice of Confirmation, or speak disparagingly of it, are in the order of their origin Lutherans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Methodists. I shall first briefly point out the times when these several bodies commenced, in order that the extremely modern date of opposition to the administration of the rite of confirmation may at once be clearly seen. From extracts, shortly to be adduced, it will be seen that this opposition did not originate with the founders of these sects, but that, on the contrary, they strongly advocated the continued use of the rite. The Lutherans, as their name implies, are the followers of Luther, who, in 1517, separated from the Church of Rome: in Germany, the fatherland of this denomination, confirmation is still practised, and looked on as a rite of very great importance. The Presbyterian form of church government was altogether unknown previous to the Reformation, and is derived from Calvin, who, in 1533, composed his Institutes, and settled his church at Geneva, according to the system he therein lays down; its distinguishing tenets seem to have been first embodied for Scotland in the formulary of faith attributed to John Knox, and compiled by that Reformer in 1560. In England, this denomination did not separate from the established Church until 1571. The Congregationalists were first founded in 1580 by Robert Brown, from whom they were called Brownists; through the want of toleration in church matters, which was then the rule in England, the leaders of the sect were subjected to severe treatment by the ruling powers, the result of which was that its founder returned to the Church, and his followers chiefly emigrated to Holland, where they fully organized their scheme of church government: in 1616, some of them returned to England, and formed their first congregation in that country. The Baptist denomination in the British dominions dates from the year 1608: a body opposed to infant baptism had previously existed in Germany under the name of Anabaptists, and was known in England as early as 1549; but the political opinions entertained by those men were of the wildest character, and are repudiated by modern upholders of the impropriety of infant baptism. Methodism was originated in 1789 by the Rev. John Wesley, as a society in the Church, in which state it