

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

ART. IV.—THREE CHURCHES.

RECOGNITION AND COMMUNION UNION.

THE word "Church" is ambiguous, and hence verbal controversies, and substantial disputations.

Notice of the usual prefixes to the word may clear the subject.

THE—A—OUR.

We say *The Church*—*A Church*—*Our Church*.

I.—The Church is the Catholic Church described in Scripture as "The general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in heaven," and as "The Church built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner-stone." It is incidentally defined by *our Church* as "the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people." The Church of Scotland has this definition: "The Catholic or Universal Church, which is *invisible*, consists of the whole number of the elect which have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof, and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." These quotations point to the members of the Catholic Church—the elect, first-born, written in heaven, the blessed company of all faithful people. It is a Church not discernible by the eye of man, but as it is written: "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Some are soldiers of the Cross now militant here on earth; some in Paradise rest with Christ; some as yet mere dust wait for the breath of an immortal life.¹

Neither Scripture nor *OUR Church* connects *THE Church* with any special form of Church government. Verily, neither Episcopalian Churches nor non-Episcopalian Churches have the exclusive possession of the keys of the kingdom of heaven. μή γένοιτο.

II.—*A Church* is a visible Church, and is defined in *OUR Article XIX.* :—

A "visible Church of Christ is a congregation (*i.e.*, society, *ecclesia*) of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."² Here we find the three essentials of a visible Church, viz., a company of faithful men, the pure preaching of the Gospel, and the due administration of the sacraments. This definition excludes from the visible Churches

¹ Cf. Hooker, iii. 1.

² See Whately, "Kingdom of Christ," 114 note.

of Christ all societies in which the *pure* Word is not announced or wine is not given as in Christ's ordinance. It manifestly excludes the Church of Rome¹ and Socinian Societies, albeit members of these societies doubtless may be and have been members of THE Church. On the other hand, this definition does not require any special form of Church government as necessary to a visible Church. Neither *Apostolical succession* nor *Episcopacy* is so much as mentioned in the Article.

Doubtless in the writings of Romanists and of Anglicans who, like the Irish agitator, have given their hearts to Rome, we shall find other descriptions. Here is a specimen: "The holy Catholic Church is an Episcopal Church, or a Church ruled by Bishops, and by this sign in whatever country we may travel"—Italy, Switzerland, Germany—"we may know the true Church—a Church whose form of government is Episcopalian, and whose Bishops can trace their descent by apostolical succession"²—albeit the pure Gospel is not preached, and the Lord's Supper is not duly administered!

III.—OUR Church is the Church of Ireland or of England—a visible Church, which possesses all the essentials mentioned in the Article, and adopts, not as necessary, but as expedient, profitable, and the most ancient form, Episcopal government, and the three orders of ministers.

OUR Church holds that it is evident to all men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church—bishops, priests, and deacons—and that these orders should be continued and reverently used and esteemed in OUR Church.

For us—for baptized members, communicants, of the visible Church of Ireland or England, good Churchmanship consists in admission into the Catholic Church, loving communion with all visible Churches, and devoted loyalty to *our* Church, the Church of Ireland—the Church of England.

I have noted that the Churches of Ireland and England hold the historical Episcopacy as expedient, not as necessary—not as necessary to the constitution or existence of a visible Church of Christ.

I cannot discover in the formularies or Articles of *our* Church a word to justify the allegation that OUR Church holds Episcopacy as of the essence of a visible Church. The silence of Article XIX.—the exclusion of all allusion to Episcopacy from this formal definition of a visible Church—seem con-

¹ Homily for Whit Sunday, Pt. 2: "We may all conclude, according to the rule of Augustine, that the Bishops of Rome and their adherents are not the true Church of Christ."

² *Dawn of Day*, 1890, p. 187. S.P.C.K.

clusive—" *expressio unius.*" The limitation, in the Preface to the forms of Consecration and Ordination, of the necessity of Episcopacy to the particular Churches of Ireland and England, as distinguished from visible Churches universally—and also the rubrics which direct that on the occasion of the ordination of a deacon or a priest there shall be a sermon declaring how necessary *these* orders are in the Church of Christ, whereas there is no corresponding rubric in relation to Bishops—ratify the conclusion that Episcopacy, in the view of OUR Church, is not of the *essence* of a visible Church. I claim the right to press this *argumentum ad hominem* on members of OUR Church; and it is for loyal members of OUR Church that I write this paper.

I now refer to considerations outside of the authority of OUR Church.

Take the New Testament. Is a verse to be found in the Gospels or Epistles, the Acts, or the Apocalypse, which proves, or even suggests, Episcopacy as necessary, by Divine institution, to the constitution of a Church of Christ? Nay, is not the silence of the Book irreconcilable with the notion of *necessity*? Christ founded a Church to include all His peculiar people, endowed it with the power of the keys and sacramental functions. It is alleged that the primary requisite of this institution is Episcopacy—that without Episcopacy there is no Church—no power of absolution, no sacramental authority; and yet neither Christ in the Gospels, nor yet the Holy Spirit in the rest of the New Testament, has so much as suggested the necessity of Episcopacy! Is not this a *reductio ad absurdum*?

It is alleged, indeed, that the sacraments are not valid unless when administered by a minister ordained by a bishop. Adelbert Anson, Bishop, writing to the *Guardian*,¹ says he had listened with pain, indignation, and humiliation while the President of the Birmingham Church Congress stated "that he did not consider Episcopacy *necessary* for the Church, or for the validity of the sacraments," *i.e.*, the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, stated by our Church to be generally necessary to salvation. Take Baptism—the sacrament of admission to Christ's Church. I defy any man to adduce any proof of this episcopal and sacerdotal *necessity* from Scripture or the formularies of our Church. The contrary has been decided as regards our Church; and I dare say the Bishop is aware that the doctrine of the Roman Church is even more clearly against him. Baptism by a layman was allowed in the medieval Church, and in primitive times.² I wonder

¹ October 7th, 1893.

² Bingham, xvi. 1.

was this eminent Bishop indignant when the Bishop of Edinburgh said in the Congress: "Was there anyone present who did not know that anyone who was baptized in the name of the Blessed Trinity was baptized in the most true and real sense into the body of Christ's Church? No Churchman who regarded such proposals as that made by the Archbishop of Dublin as really vital, ever looked upon Dissenters as anything else than members of the true Church of Christ."

I also refer to the resolution of the Lambeth Conference on the subject of the sacraments, where the essentials are stated thus: use of Christ's *words* of institution, and of the *elements* ordained by Him: the *matter* and the *words* are the essentials. Such Anglicans as Bishop Anson say: 1. No man is a Christian unless baptized; 2. No man is baptized unless by an episcopally ordained minister; and therefore, 3. No Presbyterians or Nonconformists are either Churchmen or Christians!

It has been suggested, alleged, that when Christ during the forty days spoke to the Apostles of the "things pertaining to the kingdom of God," He probably did institute Episcopacy, and made it of the essence of a Church. This is a mere guess in the absence of any sufficient reason—a guess not probable, but most improbable, when we consider the supreme importance of the subject, and the absence of reference to it, even in such writings as the Pastoral Epistles.

It is a mere guess that Christ spoke on the subject of Episcopacy at all; and must we not conclude that if He did speak of the subject, His words were not words of command, but rather suggestions, to be acted on as might be found from time to time expedient, according "to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church"?

And how can a suggestion or guess that Christ made Episcopacy of the essence of His Church be reconciled with the fact proved by Bishop Lightfoot that during an interval between the Ascension and the death of St. John visible Churches existed without Bishops? I refer to his observations on the Gentile Churches, where he says, "It is the conception of a later age which represents Timothy as Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus Bishop of Crete," and that "as late as the year 70 no distinct signs of Episcopal government have hitherto appeared in Gentile Christendom."¹

Moreover, those who contend for Episcopacy as, by Divine institution, of the *essence* of a Church, mean Episcopacy connected with Apostolical succession: compare this also with Lightfoot, where he shows that in the great Church of

¹ "Dissertation," pp. 199, 201.

Alexandria, at the close of the second century, the Bishop was nominated and apparently ordained by the twelve presbyters of the Church out of their own number.¹

It has been suggested that Episcopacy could stand the test "*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus!*" Did the wit of man ever invent anything more absurd than these three universal affirmatives of Vincentius Lirinensis, as a test of truth or doctrine? Of course, no one of these universal affirmatives could be truly predicated of any opinion on any subject. I suppose no one ventures to do so; but men qualify each of these universals according to their own preconceived notions to suit their own opinions—defining the qualifications with vague uncertainty, and reducing the universality to the orthodox and the orthodox to those who agree with the controversialist—all who differ, or have differed, being heterodox, if not heretics. If the test in any sense can be applied to any doctrine or practice, it cannot be applied to Episcopacy. Take the interval between the Ascension and the death of St. John. I do not repeat the familiar arguments of Bishop Lightfoot, to which I have already referred. Suffice it to say that he proves, in his well-known "Dissertation," that as regards Asia and Africa Episcopacy did not exist, *semper, vel ubique, vel omnibus*. Take the last three hundred years: has Episcopacy obtained *semper, vel ubique, vel omnibus?*

Observe, the controversy is not as to the excellence of Episcopacy, which I strongly hold, but as to its *necessity*—whether any society can be a visible Church of Christ unless it be subject to Episcopal government—whether, I suppose, any are entitled to profess and call themselves Christians, albeit they may have been led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and righteousness of life, unless their society is Episcopal. How can any allege or suggest that the proposition that the historical Episcopacy is of the *essence* of a visible Church can stand the test of Vincentius? Are not the last three hundred years included in *semper*, and Great Britain, Germany, Australia, and America in *ubique*, and the Bishops and Doctors, whose names I select from a mighty host, in *omnibus*—Jewell, Hooker, Whitgift, Andrews, Bancroft, Bramhall, Cosin, Usber, Hall,² Sancroft, Wake, Tenison, Moule,³ and Salmon and Lightfoot—both zealous Episcopalians? Dr. Salmon says: "The Prayer-Book does not say that Episcopacy is so *essential* that without it the being of a Church is impossible: and I do not feel myself called on to go beyond what *the* (our) Church

¹ "Dissertation," p. 226.

² Not always quite consistent.

³ "Outlines," Chaps. ix. and x.

has asserted. In matters where Scripture contains no express command I will not undertake to limit the power of *the* (a) Church to modify its institutions so as to adapt them better to the changing conditions of successive ages."¹ And the latter admits² that facts do not allow us to unchurch other Christian communities differently organized.

I submit that the foregoing remarks upon the three Churches are well founded, independently of the *ad hominem* argument; but writing as a loyal member of our Church to others who are or profess to be loyal, I decline to enter into an internecine controversy with *them* as to the truth of her doctrine. At the same time, I am ready, I trust, with a candid mind, to consider what her doctrine is on the subject of the *essentials* of the Church or a Church.

I wish to found upon these observations some conclusions upon two subjects of which we hear much at the present time. I refer to the authority claimed for the voice of *the* Church, and to the "re-union" or communion of Churches.

"Hear the Church," it is said, "for it is written: 'If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man.'" This does not relate to matters of doctrine, and the Church means the particular local assembly of which the disputing brothers are members,³ as Bengel says, "*Quæ est in eo loco: non hic sermo est de Ecclesia Catholica.*" I quote a recent deliverance on this subject. The *Church Review*, criticising Bishop Westcott's "Gospel of Life," says: "We are afraid that Bishop Westcott would attach less importance to the decisions of the Church,"⁴ etc.; "for when it is realized that revelation reaches its climax in Christ, and that His words are Divine truth, we fail to see any escape from the belief that the *Catholic* Church is His organ in such a sense that *her real voice* is infallibly true." This points to the Catholic Church as that whose voice we are bound to hear. What is the Catholic Church? Is it the invisible Church which I have noted as *the* Church? If not, what is the Catholic Church? How is it to be defined or described? How is it defined by Scripture or by *our* Church? I know the definition of the Roman Church; but no one who ever pretends to be a loyal member of *our* Church accepts its definition. But if the Catholic Church be indeed *THE* Church as defined by *our* Church and by Scripture—where shall we find her voice—her real voice? Who is the spokesman? Where and how shall we hear or read its decisions? I can *understand* the infallible voice of a Pius or a Leo; but I

¹ Sermon at Consecration of Bishop Dowden. ² "Dissertation," p. 267.

³ Cf. 1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. xi. 10.

⁴ July, 1893.

cannot understand the infallible voice of the universal invisible Church. Does any visible Church represent the Catholic Church? Which of them—that of England or Rome?

Again, it has been lately said: "The Church is the only trustworthy interpreter of Scripture."¹ Again I inquire, What Church? will Canon Little accept the decisions of a Church as defined in Article XIX. as infallibly true? I think not. The authority and function of OUR Church is to be the witness and keeper of Holy Writ;² or shall we go to General Councils for the real and infallible voice of the Church? Have their decrees been always consistent? No; Ecumenical Councils have contradicted one another; and what saith our Article XXIV.? "They may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God; therefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture." Or shall we refer to ancient Fathers or modern Popes? Do the voices of Origen and Jerome, Tertullian and Ignatius, Augustine and Chrysostom, etc., come to our ears with the *harmony* of well-tuned cymbals?

For myself, I recognise two, and only two, authorities on Christian doctrine, principles, or practice. One is the supreme and infallible authority of Holy Scripture; the other the subordinate, fallible authority of OUR Church: and in all controversies I appeal to their authority as final and conclusive for loyal Churchmen.

I strive to hear the voice of Scripture, and to obey—and then the voice of MY Church, OUR Church, as expressed in her articles, creeds, and formularies.

On the subject of the union and communion of OUR Church with other so-called Churches—I think there cannot be any union: I think there ought not to be any communion between OUR Church and any society which is not a visible Church of Christ, within the meaning of Article XIX. Such societies ought not to be recognised by us as visible Churches. This excludes from consideration the Roman Church and all societies which reject the truths enunciated in the creeds mentioned in the resolution of the Lambeth Conference, and limits the discussion to societies which possess the qualifications of the article, but which differ from OUR visible Church inasmuch as they are not Episcopalian Churches. Let us take as a test case "the Established Church of Scotland." How ought OUR Church and its members to treat this the Church of Scotland?

¹ Canon Knox Little, discussed in *The Contemporary Review*, September, 1893, by Archdeacon Farrar.

² Article XX.

“It is THIS Church for which every English Churchman is asked to pray, by the canon of the English Convocation, which enjoins that prayers are to be offered up for Christ's Holy Catholic Church—that is, for the whole congregation of Christians dispersed throughout the world, especially for the Churches of England, *Scotland*, and Ireland.” “There can be no doubt,” says the candid and accurate annalist of Scottish Episcopacy, “that the framers of this have meant to acknowledge the northern ecclesiastical establishment, at that time Presbyterian, as a Christian Church. With the exception of the Roman Catholic, it was the only Christian communion then existing in Scotland. It is this also which is recognised in the most solemn form by the British Constitution. The very first declaration which our Sovereign made is that in which, on the day of her accession, she declared that she would inviolably maintain and preserve the government, worship, discipline, rights, and privileges of the Church of Scotland as by law established.”¹ And this Most Gracious Lady, who is also the supreme temporal head of OUR Church, selects her chaplains from OUR Church *and* the Church of Scotland, and is in full communion with both Churches, a noble and Catholic precedent worthy of honour, gratitude and imitation. “In the Act of Union itself, which prescribes this declaration, the same securities are throughout enacted for the Church of Scotland as are enacted for the Church of England; and it is on record that when that Act was passed, and some question arose amongst the Peers as to the propriety of so complete a recognition of the Presbyterian Church, the then Primate of England, the ‘old rock,’ as he was called, Archbishop Tenison, rose and said, with a weight that carried all objections before it, ‘The narrow notions of all Churches have been their ruin. I believe that the Church of Scotland, though not so perfect as OURS, is as true a Protestant Church as the Church of England.’”²

If, then, in this Established Church there are faithful men and the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered—*i.e.*, as the Anglican Bishops put it, with unflinching use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by Him—and if Episcopacy is not of the very essence of a visible Church, why should OUR Church or any Churchman refuse to recognise the Established Church of Scotland as a visible Church? But in this Church are faithful men, the pure Word of God is preached and Baptism and the Lord's Supper are duly administered, and Episcopacy (how

¹ Stanley, “Church of Scotland,” Lecture II.

² *Ibid.*

excellent soever it may be) is not necessary to the existence of a true Church; when Dr. Salmon, as we have seen, speaking of the Presbyterian Church, admits that our Prayer-Book does not say that Episcopacy is essential, and that Scripture contains no express command on the subject, and has declined to go beyond what the Church has asserted; and when the Angel of OUR Church at Durham has admitted that the facts do not allow us to unchurch such Christian communities—is it not presumptuous and unrighteous folly to refuse to recognise this visible Church, and to allege that “it is false to the position and claims of the Church of England and Ireland to speak of the Nonconformists as Churches at all”? Frank and cordial *recognition* is the first step to be taken—a recognition by words and deeds of Christian charity and brotherly love—by cordial support in the present struggle of this Church against the threats of the destroyer. So long as OUR Churches delay or withhold the name of a Church, they cannot hope for cordial feelings; the Church of England cannot expect sympathy or aid from the Church of Scotland in resisting the foes who desire to disestablish her and confiscate her property.

What I have said of the Established Church of Scotland, for the greater part and in principle, applies to all orthodox Presbyterian Churches. As Stanley puts it: “In Scotland, with very rare exceptions, all the Presbyterian communions acknowledge not only the same Westminster Confession, but also the same Catechism, the same form of Presbytery, and the same order of Divine worship—the same form in the sacramental ordinance,” etc. Therefore it is meet and our bounden duty to recognise as true Churches the Free Church of Scotland and all other orthodox Presbyterian communities; and the principle, of course, leads on to a *recognition* of other congregations which fall within the definitions of Article XIX.

RECOGNITION—cordial, outspoken recognition—is obviously the first step towards unity of spirit, godly union, and concord—to union.

Let this recognition be conceded, and then why should there not be COMMUNION also between all recognised visible Churches? The details must be mutually arranged; but I confess I do not see why the ordained ministers of one visible Church (subject to the control of the Bishop as regards OUR Church) should not be permitted, when convenient, to occupy the pulpit of another visible Church, or why members of one Church should not be permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper at the table of another Church. Hear Usher:¹ “For the testifying any communion with these Churches (of France

¹ Cited by Moule, “Outlines,” p. 232.

and the Netherlands), which I do love and honour as true members of the Church Universal, I do profess that, with like affection, I should receive the Blessed Sacrament at the hands of Dutch ministers, if I am in Holland, as I should do at the hands of the French ministers, if I were at Charenton." And Cosin, who had attended the Huguenot sacrament at Charenton, wrote: "Considering there is no prohibition of our Church against it (as there is against our communicating with the Papists, and that well grounded upon the Scripture and will of God), I do not see but that you may (either in case of necessity, or in regard of *declaring your unity in professing the same religion*) go otherwhiles to communicate reverently with them of the French Church." As regards the rubric at the end of the Order of Confirmation of OUR Church, it is a very proper direction, given *not to the minister*, but to the members of OUR Church who present themselves at the table. It has no application to members of other Churches; it neither obliges nor permits ministers to refuse the elements to unconfirmed persons; and I think it has only reference to the first time any person presents himself: so that it has not any application to cases when, from any cause, an unconfirmed person shall have once received the Lord's Supper. In our Church a minister cannot, without Episcopal ordination, consecrate the bread and wine for the Lord's Supper. The Act of Uniformity forbids it, and I for one do not suggest that this law should be superseded or interfered with.

So much on the *recognition* of visible Churches; so much on the *inter-communion* of recognised visible Churches.

But what shall be said as to *union* or reunion?

At the Birmingham Congress, Mr. Gore said: "When an Anglican Churchman thinks of reunion, two great classes of Christians, from whom he is separated, present themselves chiefly to his mind—the magnificent communion of Rome, on the one hand, and, on the other, the various Nonconformist bodies. The heart of anyone must beat with excitement and joy at the mere thought of ministering in any way to the reunion of the Anglican Church with the great Apostolic See of Rome, with its splendid traditions, and its world-wide privileges of Christian communion. The same thrill of joy must come over one at the prospect of seeing the breaches healed which separate us from Nonconformists."¹

These "visions splendid" present themselves, as in the words quoted by the President, "apparelled in celestial light." But do these visions commend themselves to our reason as real, or to our imagination only as indeed "visionary gleams"?

¹ *Guardian*, October 11, 1893.

As regards the Roman Church, Mr. Gore did not write hopefully. He says:

“We could *individually* obtain the Roman communion by submitting to the doctrines, for instance, of the Treasury of Merits, of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, and the Infallibility of the Pope. As, in fact, these doctrines did not belong to the original Christian faith, so no candid inquirer can reasonably pretend to find their certificates in the New Testament. Now, this appeal to the New Testament, as the final criterion of what belongs to the faith of our salvation, is the essential for maintaining the Catholic Church.”

Well, this only points to *individual communion*, not to reunion of Churches, and Mr. Gore might have stated the difficulties of even communion more strongly, for our Church and her members protest against other Roman inventions unknown to the Apostles or the early Fathers, such as “Purgatory,” “Worshipping of Images,” “Invocation of Saints,” “Transubstantiation,” and “The Denial of the Cup to Lay-people.” The dogma of Infallibility makes it more unlikely than at any former period in the history of the Roman Church that it would reform and abjure its errors. No reasonable expectation of this can be entertained at present; therefore we cannot rest with pleasure upon this vision; we cannot regard it otherwise than as a “baseless fabric.” I shall not contemplate the possibility of reunion through the sacrifice, by our Church, of Scripture, and the principles of the Reformation, albeit the history of the past and its results (since Tract X.C.) is not without cause for alarm.

As regards the Church of Scotland and English Nonconformists, union or reunion, as distinguished from Christian communion, appears to be in the nature of things impossible, until our Church gives up Episcopacy, or the Church of Scotland, etc., accept Episcopacy. I see no sign of either alternative at present. Nothing said in the Birmingham Congress, or at Grindelwald last year, points to such an event at present as even contemplated.

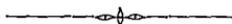
The controversy rages about the question, whether ministers of orthodox non-Episcopal Churches should be admitted to the offices of ministers of OUR Episcopal Church without Episcopal ordination. I express no opinion on the question whether such admission would or would not be wrong in the abstract, in its own nature; but I venture to express an opinion that it would be wrong in the sense that anything likely to injure our Church, anything inexpedient, is therefore wrong.

The effect of such a step would not be the union of the Churches; it would be the mere admission of a few ministers, now ministers of another Church, into our Church. The effort

would be attended with the greatest difficulty. Our Church would have to give up the Preface to the Ordination Forms, and to obtain the repeal of the Act of Uniformity. I concur with the Bishop of Edinburgh, that "the proposal if carried out would split the Church in two." I also agree with the Bishop and Mr. Gore in their advice—"Let them not be in too great a hurry. Let them be patient and prayerful, and trust in God, and the work"—*i.e.*, of union—"would be done."

Let our Church *recognise* the Church of Scotland, etc., as visible Churches. Let us candidly acknowledge the validity of their sacraments. Let us cherish *intercommunion*, as far as is possible, between Churches which are not actually in union; and then, resting in quietness and confidence, we may dare to hope that, in the providence of God, in His own good time, *this* celestial vision shall be a real and glorious birth.

THE RIGHT HON. ROBERT R. WARREN.



ART. V.—THE BENEFITS OF THE REFORMATION.

HIS Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury has lately, on two prominent occasions, called attention to the habit of treating the Reformation with disparaging remarks. He has himself reminded us that the Reformation was the greatest event in the history of Christendom since the days of the Apostles. And he has borne emphatic testimony to the fact that the Reformers must always rank amongst the most learned and greatest theologians of any age. I do not think that at the present day the enormous and incalculable benefits of the Reformation are sufficiently studied and understood. It is a hurrying age, and innumerable ideas confront our minds; and it is not everybody who has time to think and inquire. It is a time when there is a tendency to consider one set of principles as good as another. The instinct of fair play is a grand characteristic of Englishmen; but it is a travesty of that instinct when it leads you to neglect your own principles in favour of those of other bodies antagonistic to your own. It is an abuse of that liberal habit of mind when it makes you disparage facts and influences which have been a power for good in the history of your country which is beyond all estimation.

It is not my habit to reflect on anybody, whether in the Church of Rome or outside of it. Everybody has the right to believe as he pleases, and to express his belief. But sometimes the recognition of that liberty of conscience and of prophesying is taken to imply that everybody has the right