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ART. I.—*A Discourse on the Moral Tendencies and Results of Human History*, delivered before the Society of Alumni in Yale College, on Wednesday, August 16, 1843. By Horace Bushnell. Published by request of the Society. New Haven, 1843.

It is proper to explain for what reason we make this speech the subject of a review, and with painful endeavour attempt to resuscitate and bring again into notice what, to judge by the usual fate of such productions, Time something like two years since should have put into his wallet as alms for Oblivion. Indignation perhaps may be kindled in some breast respectful for the dead, and surprise in others, that in the case of such an evident "relictum," such a ghost as a speech becomes when disembodied of speaker, audience, and elocution, we should seek

"To offer it the show of violence;
For that 'tis as the air, invulnerable."

It should indeed have been permitted to die where it fell,

"Troje sub mœnibus altis
. . . . ubi tot Simois correpta sub undis
Scuta virum galeasque et fortia corpora volvit."

But since it was taken up, we must believe by no friendly deities, and driven on a hostile shore, it is incumbent on us to say that for our own part we notice it, first, for the double cause of

plest and most obvious construction, Dr. Coit desires his book to be regarded not as a tempest but a stone, which is, in some respects, much more appropriate. None but a Puritan would venture to remind him that, according to his own chosen emblem, long before the short-lived storm has ceased to vex the surface, the stone that raised it will be quietly reposing at the bottom.

We have now sufficiently expressed our own opinion of this interesting work. It would neither be ingenuous nor wise, however, to dissemble our belief, that it will meet with critics less indulgent than ourselves. Our expectation is that there will be but three opinions with respect to it. The first is the opinion of that great and growing party, whose shibboleth appears to be the lauding of Laud. These will regard Dr. Coit's book as triumphantly successful and unanswerable. The next is the opinion of the zealous Puritans and prejudiced New Englanders. These will consider it an odious tissue of parricidal calumnies. The third is the opinion of the rest of men. This we cannot, of course, undertake to predict with so much confidence or precision. But we greatly fear that it will set the book down as consisting of a little seasonable truth, as to the excesses of pilgrim-worship and the Chinese self-complacency which frequently attends it, mixed with a vast amount of silly paradox, as to the real greatness and goodness of the founders of New England, the whole presented in a form so crude and immethodical, so tasteless and unscholarlike, so warped and disingenuous, that we ourselves may not escape reproach for having even noticed it.

ART. VIII.—*The Unity of the Church.* By Henry Edward Manning, M. A. Archdeacon of Chichester. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1844. pp. 305.

THIS is one of the ablest productions of the Oxford school. The theory of the church which that school has embraced, is here presented historically, in the first instance, and then sustained by arguments drawn from the design of the church, as a divine institute, and the common conclusion is arrived at

and urged, that the one church, as described by the author, is the only revealed way of salvation. Archdeacon Manning's work has excited no little attention in England; and its republication in this country, has been warmly welcomed by the Oxford party in America.

We do not propose to make the book before us, the subject of particular examination; but simply to exhibit the theory of the church which it advocates, in connection and contrast with that which necessarily arises out of the evangelical system of doctrine. The church as an outward organization is the result and expression of an inward spiritual life; and consequently must take its form from the nature of the life whence it springs. This is only saying, in other words, that our theory of the church, depends on our theory of doctrine. If we hold a particular system of doctrine, we must hold a corresponding theory of the church. The two are so intimately connected that they cannot be separated; and it is doubtful whether, as a matter of experience, the system of doctrine most frequently leads to the adoption of a particular view of the church, or whether the view men take of the church more generally determines their system of doctrines. In the order of nature, and perhaps also most frequently in experience, the doctrine precedes the theory.

History teaches us that Christianity appears under three characteristic forms; which for the sake of distinction may be called the Evangelical, the Ritual, and the Rationalistic. These forms always co-exist in the church, and are constantly striving for the mastery. At one period, the one, and at another, another gains the ascendancy, and gives character to that period. During the apostolic age, the evangelical system prevailed, though in constant conflict with Ritualism in the form of Judaism. During the next age of the church we find Rationalism struggling for the ascendancy, under the form of Gnosticism and the philosophy of the Platonizing fathers. Ritualism, however, soon gained the mastery, which it maintained almost without a struggle until the time of the Reformation. At that period evangelical truth gained the ascendancy which it maintained for more than a hundred years, and was succeeded on the continent by Rationalism, and in England, under Archbishop Laud, by Ritualism. This latter

system, however, was there pressed beyond endurance, and the measures adopted for promoting it, led to a violent reaction. The restoration of Charles the II. commenced the reign of the Rationalistic form of doctrine in England, manifesting itself in low Arminian or Pelagian views, and in general indifference. This continued to characterize the church in Great Britain, until the appearance of Wesley and Whitefield, about a century ago, since which time there has been a constant advance in the prevalence and power of evangelical truth both in England and Scotland. Within the last ten or fifteen years, however, a new movement has taken place, which has attracted the attention of the whole Christian world.

After the fall of Archbishop Laud, the banishment of James II. and the gradual disappearance of the non-jurors, the principles which they represented, though they found here and there an advocate in the Church of England, lay nearly dormant, until the publication of the Oxford Tracts. Since that time their progress has been rapid, and connected with the contemporaneous revival of Popery, constitutes the characteristic ecclesiastical features of the present generation. The church universal is so united, that no great movement in one portion of it, can be destitute of interest for all the rest. The church in this country, especially, is so connected with the church in Great Britain, there are so many channels of reciprocal influence between the two, that nothing of importance can happen there, which is not felt here. The church in the one country has generally risen and declined, with the church in the other. The spiritual death which gradually overspread England and Scotland from the revolution of 1688 to the rise of Wesley, in no small measure spread its influence over America; and the great revival of religion in England and Scotland before the middle of the last century, was contemporaneous with the revival which extended in this country from Maine to Georgia. The recent progress of Ritualism in England, is accompanied by the spread of the same principles in America. We are not, therefore, uninterested spectators of the struggle now in progress between the two conflicting systems of doctrines and theories of the church, the Evangelical and the Ritual. The spiritual welfare of our children and of the country is deeply concerned in the issue.

The different forms of religion to which reference has been made, have each its peculiar basis, both objective and subjective. The evangelical form rests on the scriptures as its objective ground; and its inward or subjective ground is an enlightened conviction of sin. The ritual system rests outwardly on the authority of the church, or tradition; inwardly on a vague religious sentiment. The rationalistic rests on the human understanding, and internally on indifference. These are general remarks, and true only in the general. Perhaps few persons are under the influence of any one of these forms, to the exclusion of the others; in very few, is the ground of belief exclusively the Bible, tradition, or reason. Yet as general remarks they appear to us correct, and may serve to characterize the comprehensive forms which the Christian religion has been found to assume.

The evangelical system of doctrine starts with the assumption that all men are under the condemnation and power of sin. This is assumed by the sacred writers as a fact of consciousness, and is made the ground of the whole doctrine of redemption. From the guilt of sin there is no method of deliverance but through the righteousness of Christ, and no way in which freedom from its power can be obtained, but through the indwelling of his Spirit. No man who is not united to Christ by a living faith is a partaker either of his righteousness or Spirit, and every man who does truly believe, is a partaker of both, so as to be both justified and sanctified. This union with Christ by the indwelling of his Spirit is always manifested by the fruits of righteousness; by love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Where these fruits of the Spirit are, there, and not elsewhere, is the Spirit; and where the Spirit is, there is union with Christ; and where union with Christ is, there is membership in his body, which is the Church. True believers, therefore, according to the scriptures, are the *κλητοι*, the *εκλεκτοι*, the *εκκλησια*. This is the fundamental principle of the evangelical theory respecting the church. It is the only view at all consistent with the evangelical system of doctrine; and as a historical fact, it is the view to which those doctrines have uniformly led. If a man holds that the church is the body of Christ; that the body of Christ consists of those in whom he dwells by his Spirit;

that it is by faith we receive the promise of the Spirit; and that the presence of the Spirit is always manifested by his fruits; then he must hold that no man who does not possess that faith which works by love, is united to Christ or a member of his church; and that all, no matter how else they may differ, or where they may dwell, who have that faith, are members of that body, which is his church. Such is the unavoidable conclusion to which the evangelical system leads as to the nature of the church. The body to whom the attributes, the promises, the prerogatives of the church belong, consists of all true believers. This also is the turning point between the evangelical and ritual theories, on which all other questions concerning the church depend. To the question, what is the church? or, who constitute the church? the Evangelical answer, and must answer, True believers. The answer of the Ritualists is, The organized professors of the true religion subject to lawful pastors. And according as the one or the other of these answers is adopted, the one or the theory with its consequences of necessity follows.

The church, in that sense in which it is the heir of the promises and prerogatives granted in the word of God, consists of true believers, is in one aspect a visible, in another, an invisible body. First, believers as men are visible beings, and by their confession and fruits are visible as believers. "By their fruits ye shall know them." In their character also of believers, they associate for the purposes of worship and discipline, and have their proper officers for instruction and government, and thus appear before the world as a visible body. And secondly, as God has not given to men the power to search the heart, the terms of admission into this body, or in other words, the terms of Christian communion, are not any infallible evidence of regeneration and true faith, but a credible profession. And as many make that profession who are either self-deceived or deceivers, it necessarily follows that many are of the church, who are not in the church. Hence arises the distinction between the real and the nominal, or, as it is commonly expressed, the invisible and the visible church. A distinction which is unavoidable, and which is made in all analogous cases, and which is substantially and of necessity admitted in this case even by those whose whole theory rests

on the denial of it. The Bible promises great blessings to Christians; but there are real Christians and nominal Christians; and no one hesitates to make the distinction and to confine the application of these promises to those who are Christians at heart, and not merely in name. The scriptures promise eternal life to believers. But there is a dead, as well as a living faith; there are true believers, and those who profess faith without possessing it. No one here again refuses to acknowledge the propriety of the distinction, or hesitates to say that the promise of eternal life belongs only to those who truly believe. In like manner there is a real and a nominal, a visible and an invisible church, a body consisting of those who are truly united to Christ, and a body consisting of all who profess such union. Why should not this distinction be allowed? How can what is said in scripture of the church, be applied to the body of professors, any more than what is said of believers, can be applied to the body of professed believers? There is the same necessity for the distinction in the one case, as in the other. And accordingly it is fact made by those who in terms deny it. Thus Mr. Palmer, an Oxford writer, says, The church, as composed of its vital and essential members, means "the elect and sanctified children of God;" and adds, "it is generally allowed that the wicked belong only externally to the church." vol. I. p. 28, 58. Even Romanists are forced to make the same admission, when they distinguish between the living and dead members of the church. As neither they nor Mr. Palmer will contend that the promises pertain to the "dead" members, or those who are only externally united to the church, but must admit them to belong to the "essential" or "living" members, they concede the fundamental principle of the evangelical theory as to the nature of the church, viz: that it consists of true believers, and is visible as they are visible as believers by their profession and fruits, and that those associated with them in external union, are the church only outwardly, and not as constituent members of the body of Christ and temple of God. In this concession is involved an admission of the distinction for which the evangelical contend between the church invisible and visible, between nominal and real Christians, between true and professing believers.

Such being the view of the nature of the church and of its visibility, to which the evangelical system of doctrine necessarily leads, it is easy to see wherein the church is one. If the church consists of those who are united to Christ and are the members of his body, it is evident that the bond which unites them to him, unites them to each other. They are one body in Christ Jesus, and every one members of one another. The vital bond between Christ and his body is the Holy Spirit; which he gives to dwell in all who are united to him by faith. The indwelling of the Spirit is therefore the essential or vital bond of unity in the church. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, for we are partakers of that one Spirit. The human body is one, because animated by one soul; and the church is one because actuated by one Spirit.

As the Spirit wherever he dwells manifests himself as the Spirit of truth, of love, and of holiness, it follows that those in whom he dwells must be one in faith, in love, and holy obedience. Those whom he guides, he guides into the knowledge of the truth, and as he cannot contradict himself, those under his guidance, must in all essential matters, believe the same truths. And as the Spirit of love, he leads all under his influence to love the same objects, the same God and Father of all, the same Lord Jesus Christ; and to love each other as brethren. This inward, spiritual union must express itself outwardly, in the profession of the same faith, in the cheerful recognition of all Christians as Christians, that is, in the communion of saints, and in mutual subjection. Every individual Christian recognises the right of his fellow Christians to exercise over him a watch and care, and feels his obligation to submit to them in the Lord.

Since however the church is too widely diffused for the whole to exercise their watch and care over each particular part, there is a necessity for more restricted organizations. Believers therefore of the same neighbourhood, of the same province, of the same nation, may and must unite by some closer bond than that which externally binds the Church as a whole together. The church of England is one, in virtue of its subjection to a common head, and the adoption of common formularies of worship and discipline. This more intimate union of its several parts with each other, does not in any measure vio-

late its unity with the Episcopal body in this country. And the Presbyterian church in the United States, though subject to its own peculiar judicatories, is still one with the church of Scotland. It is evident, and generally conceded, that there is nothing, in independent organization, in itself considered, inconsistent with unity, so long as a common faith is professed, and mutual recognition is preserved. And if independent organization on account of difference of locality or of civil relations, is compatible with unity, so also is independent organization on the ground of diversity of language. The former has its foundation in expediency and convenience, so has the latter. It is not true, therefore, as Ritualists teach, that there cannot be two independent churches, in the same place. Englishmen in Germany and Germans in England may organize churches not in organic connection with those around them, with as much propriety as Episcopalians in England and Episcopalians in Scotland may have independent organizations.

Still further, as independent or separate organization is admitted to be consistent with true unity, by all but Romanists, it follows that any reason not destructive of the principle of unity, may be made the ground of such separate organization; not merely difference as to location, or diversity of language, but diversity of opinion. It is on all hands conceded that there may be difference of opinion, within certain limits, without violating unity of faith; and it is also admitted that there may be independent organization, for considerations of convenience, without violating the unity of communion. It therefore follows, that where such diversity of opinion exists, as to render such separate organization convenient, the unity of the church is not violated by such separation. Diversity of opinion is indeed an evidence of imperfection, and therefore such separations are evil, so far as they are evidence of want of perfect union in faith. But they are a less evil, than either hypocrisy or contention; and therefore, the diversity of sects, which exist in the Christian world, is to be regarded as incident to imperfect knowledge and imperfect sanctification. They are to be deplored, as every other evidence of such imperfection is to be regretted, yet the evil is not to be magnified above its just dimensions. So long as unity of faith, of love, and of

obedience is preserved, the unity of the church is as to its essential principle safe. It need hardly be remarked, that it is admitted that all separate organization on inadequate grounds, and all diversity of opinion affecting important doctrines, and all want of Christian love and especially a sectarian, unchurching spirit, are opposed to the unity of the church, and either mar or destroy it according to their nature.

The sense in which the church is catholic depends on the sense in which it is one. It is catholic only as it is one. If its unity, therefore, depends on subjection to one visible head, to one supreme governing tribunal, to the adoption of the same form of organization, then of course its extent or catholicity are limited by these conditions. If such be the nature of its oneness, then all not subject to such visible head, or governing tribunal, or who do not adopt the form of government assumed to be necessary, are excluded from the church. But if the unity of the church arises from union with Christ and the indwelling of his Spirit, then all who are thus united to him, are members of his church, no matter what their external ecclesiastical connexions may be, or whether they sustain any such relations at all. And as all really united to Christ are the true church, so all who profess such union by professing to receive his doctrines and obey his laws, constitute the professing or visible church. It is plain therefore that the evangelical are the most truly catholic, because, embracing in their definition of the church all who profess the true religion, they include a far wider range in the church catholic, than those who confine their fellowship to those who adopt the same form of government, or are subject to the same visible head.

It is easy to see how, according to the evangelical system the question, What is a true church is to be answered? Starting with the principle that all men are sinners, that the only method of salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ, and that all who believe in Him, and show the fruits of faith in a holy life, are the children of God, the called according to his purpose, that is, in the language of the New Testament, the *ἐκκλησία* the *ἐκκλησία*, that system must teach that all true believers are members of the true church, and all professors of the true faith are members of the visible church. This is the only conclusion to which that system can lead. And therefore the only essential

mark of a true church which it can admit, is the profession of the true religion. Any individual man who makes a credible profession of religion we are bound to regard as a Christian; any society of such men, united for the purpose of worship and discipline, we are bound to regard as a church. As there is endless diversity as to the degree of exactness with which individual Christians conform, in their doctrines, spirit and deportment, to the word of God, so there is great diversity as to the degree in which the different churches conform to the same standard. But as in the case of the individual professor we can reject none who does not reject Christ, so in regard to churches, we can disown none who holds the fundamental doctrines of the gospel.

Against this simple and decisive test of a true church it is objected on the one hand, that it is too latitudinarian. The force of this objection depends upon the standard of liberality adopted. It is of course too latitudinarian for Romanists and High churchmen, as well as for rigid sectarians. But is it more liberal than the Bible, and our own Confession of Faith? Let any man decide this question by ascertaining what the Bible teaches as the true answer to the question, what is a Christian? And what is a church? You cannot possibly make your notion of a church narrower than your notion of a Christian. If a true Christian is a true believer, and a professed believer is a professing Christian, then of course a true church is a body of true Christians, a professing or visible church is a body of professing Christians. This is the precise doctrine of our standards, which teach that the church consists of all those who profess the true religion.

On the other hand, however, it is objected that it cannot be expected of ordinary Christians that they should decide between the conflicting creeds of rival churches, and therefore the profession of the truth cannot be the mark of a true church. To this objection it may be answered first, that it is only the plain fundamental doctrines of the gospel which are necessary to salvation, and therefore it is the profession of those doctrines alone, which is necessary to establish the claim of any society to be regarded as a portion of the true church. Secondly, that the objection proceeds on the assumption that such doctrines cannot by the people be gathered from the

word of God. If however the scriptures are the rule of faith, so plain that all men may learn from them what they must believe and do in order to be saved, then do they furnish an available standard by which they may judge of the faith both of individuals and of churches. Fourthly, this right to judge and the promise of divine guidance in judging are given in the scriptures to all the people of God, and the duty to exercise the right is enjoined upon them as a condition of salvation. They are pronounced accursed if they do not try the spirits, or if they receive any other gospel than that taught in the scriptures. And fifthly, this doctrinal test is beyond comparison more easy of application than any other. How are the unlearned to know that the church with which they are connected has been derived, without schism or excommunication, from the churches founded by the apostles? What can they tell of the apostolical succession of pastors? These are mere historical questions, the decision of which requires great learning, and involves no test of character, and yet the salvation of men is made to depend on that decision. All the marks of the church laid down by Romanists and High-churchmen, are liable to two fatal objections. They can be verified, if at all, only by the learned. And secondly, when verified, they decide nothing. A church may have been originally founded by the apostles, and possess an uninterrupted succession of pastors, and yet be now a synagogue of Satan.

The theory of the church, then, which of necessity follows from the evangelical system of doctrine is, that all who really believe the gospel constitute the true church, and all who profess such faith constitute the visible church; that in virtue of the profession of his common faith, and of allegiance to the same Lord, they are one body, and in this one body there may rightly be subordinate and more intimate unions of certain parts, for the purposes of combined action, and of mutual oversight and consolation. When it is said, in our Confession of Faith, that out of this visible church, there is no ordinary possibility of salvation, it is only saying that there is no salvation without the knowledge and profession of the gospel; that there is no other name by which we must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ. The proposition that "out of the church there is no salvation" is true or false, liberal or illiberal, ac-

ording to the latitude given to the word church. There was not long since, and probably there is still in New York a little society of Sandemanian Baptists, consisting of seven persons, two men and five women, who hold that they constitute the whole church in America. In their mouths the proposition above stated would indeed be restrictive. In the mouth of a Romanist, it means there is no salvation to any who do not belong to that body which acknowledges the Pope as its head. In the mouths of High Churchmen, it means there is no salvation to those who are not in subjection to some prelate who is in communion with the church catholic. While in the mouths of Protestants, it means there is no salvation without faith in Jesus Christ.

The system, which for the sake of distinction has been called the Ritual, agrees of course with the evangelical as to many points of doctrine. It includes the doctrine of the Trinity, of the incarnation of the Son of God, of original sin, of the sacrifice of Christ as a satisfaction to satisfy divine justice, of the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification, of the resurrection of the body and of an eternal judgment. The great distinction lies in the answer which it gives the question, what must I do to be saved? or by what means does the soul become interested in the redemption of Christ? According to the Evangelical system, it is faith. Every sinner who hears the gospel has unimpeded access to the Son of God, and can, in the exercise of faith and repentance, go immediately to him, and obtain eternal life at his hands. According to the Ritual system, he must go to the priest; the sacraments are the channels of grace and salvation, and the sacraments can only be lawfully or effectively administered by men prelatially ordained. The doctrine of the priestly character of the Christian ministry, therefore, is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Ritual system. A priest is a man ordained for men, in things pertaining to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices. The very nature of the office supposes that those for whom he acts, have not in themselves liberty of access to God; and therefore the Ritual system is founded on the assumption that we have not this liberty of drawing nigh to God. It is only by the ministerial intervention of the Christian priesthood, that the sinner can be reconciled and made a

partaker of salvation. Here then is a broad line of distinction between the two systems of doctrines. This was one of the three great doctrines rejected by Protestants, at the time of the reformation. They affirmed the priesthood of all believers, asserting that all have access to God through the High Priest of their profession, Jesus, the Son of God; and they denied the official priesthood of the clergy.

The second great distinction between the two systems of doctrine, is the place they assign the sacraments. The evangelical admit them to be efficacious signs of grace, but they ascribe their efficacy not to any virtue in them or in him by whom they are administered, but to the influence of the Spirit in them that do by faith receive them. Ritualists attribute to them an inherent virtue, an *opus operatum* efficacy, independent of the moral state of the recipient. According to the one system, the sacraments are necessary only as matters of precept; according to the other, they have the necessity of means. According to the one, we are required to receive baptism, just as we are under obligation to keep the Sabbath, or as the Jews were required to be circumcised, and yet we are taught that if any man kept the law, his uncircumcision should be counted for circumcision. And thus also, if any one truly repents and believes, his want of baptism cannot make the promise of God of none effect. The neglect of such instituted rites may involve more or less sin, or none at all, according to the circumstances. It is necessary only as obedience to any other positive institution is necessary; that is, as a matter of duty, the non-performance of which ignorance or disability may palliate or excuse. According to the latter system, however, we are required to receive baptism because it is the only appointed means of conveying to us the benefits of redemption. It is of the same necessity as faith. It is a *sine qua non*. This alters the whole nature of the case, and changes in a great measure the plan of redemption.

The theory of the church connected with the Ritual system of doctrine, that system which makes ministers priests, and the sacraments the only appointed channels of communicating to men the benefits of redemption, is implied in the nature of the doctrines themselves. It makes the church so prominent that Christ and the truth are eclipsed. This made Dr. Parr call the

whole system Churchianity, in distinction from Christianity.

If our Lord, when he ascended to heaven, clothed his apostles with all the power which he himself possessed in his human nature, so that they were to the church what he himself had been, its infallible teachers and the dispensers of pardon and grace; and if in accordance with that assumption, the apostles communicated this power to their successors, the prelates, then it follows that these prelates, and those whom they may authorize to act in their name, are the dispensers of truth and salvation, and communion with them, or subjection to their authority, is essential to union with the church and to eternal life. The church is thus represented as a store-house of divine grace; whose treasures are in the custody of its officers, to be dealt out by them, and at their discretion. It is like one of the rich convents of the middle ages; to whose gates the people repaired at stated times for food. The convent was the store-house. Those who wanted food must come to its gates. Food was given at the discretion of its officers, to what persons and on what conditions they saw fit. To obtain supplies, it was of course necessary to recognise the convent as the depository, and its officers as the distributors; and none who refuse such recognition, could be fed from its stores. The analogy fails indeed as to an essential point. Food could be obtained elsewhere than at the convent gates; and none need apply, who did not choose to submit to the prescribed conditions. Whereas according to Ritualists, the food of the soul can be obtained nowhere but at the doors of the church; and those who refuse to receive it there, and at the hands of authorized ministers, and on the terms they prescribe, cannot receive it at all. Unless in communion of the church we cannot be saved; and unless in subjection to prelates deriving the gift of the Spirit by regular succession from the apostles, we cannot be in communion of the church. The subjection to the bishop, therefore, is an indispensable condition of salvation. He is the centre of unity; the bond of union between the believer and the church and thus with Christ.

The unity of the church, according to this theory, is no longer a spiritual union; not a unity of faith and love, but an union of association, an union of connection with the authorized dispensers of saving grace. It is not enough for any socie-

ty of men to show that they are united in faith with the apostles, and in heart with all the people of God, and with Christ by the indwelling of his Spirit, as manifested by his fruits, they cannot be recognized as any portion of the true church, unless they can prove historically their descent as a society from the apostles through the line of bishops. They must prove themselves a church, just as a man proves his title to an estate. No church, says Mr. Palmer, not founded by the apostles, or regularly descended from such a church without separation or excommunication, can be considered a true church; and every society that can make out such a descent, is a true church, for a church can only cease to be united to Christ by its own act of separation, or by the lawful judgment of others, vol. i. p. 84.

This also is what is meant by apostolicity as an attribute and mark of the church. A church is not apostolical because it holds the doctrines, and conforms to the institutions of the apostles, but because it is historically derived from them by an uninterrupted descent. "Any society which is in fact derived from the apostles, must be so by spiritual propagation, or derivation, or union, not by separation from the apostles or the churches actually derived from their preaching, under pretence of establishing a new system of supposed apostolic perfection. Derivation from the apostles, is, in the former case, a reality, just as much as the descent of an illustrious family from its original founder. In the latter case it is merely an assumption in which the most essential links of the genealogy are wanting." Palmer, Vol. I. p. 160. This descent must be through prelates, who are the bonds of connection between the apostles and the different portions of the one catholic and apostolic church. Without regular consecration there can be no bishop; and without a bishop no church, and out of the church no salvation.

The application of these principles as made by their advocates, reveals their nature and importance, more distinctly than any mere verbal statement of them. The Methodists, for example, though they adopt the doctrinal standards of the church of England, and have the same form of government, are not and never can become, according to this theory, a part of the church, because the line of descent was broken by Wesley. He was but a presbyter and could not continue the succession

of the ministry. A fatal flaw thus exists in their ecclesiastical pedigree, and they are hopelessly cut off from the church and from salvation.

The Roman and Eastern churches, on the contrary, are declared to be true churches, because descended from the communions founded by the apostles, and because they have never been separated from the church catholic either by voluntary secession or by excommunication. The Nestorians, on the other hand, are declared to be no part of the true church; for though they may now have the orthodox faith, and though they have preserved the succession of bishops, they were excommunicated in the fifth century, and that sentence has never been revoked.

The church of England is declared to be a true church, because it has preserved the succession, and because, although excommunicated by the church of Rome, that sentence has not been ratified by the church universal. All other ecclesiastical societies in Great Britain and Ireland, whether Romanist or Protestant, are pronounced to be cut off from the church and out of the way of salvation. This position is openly avowed, and is the necessary consequence of the theory. As the Romanists in those countries, though they have the succession, yet they voluntarily separate themselves from the church of England, which as that is a true church, is to separate themselves from the church of Christ, a sin which is declared to be of the same turpitude as adultery and murder, and as certainly excludes from heaven. As to all other Protestant bodies, the case is still plainer. They have not only separated from the church, but lost the succession, and are therefore out of the reach of the benefits of redemption, which flow only in the line of that succession.

The church of Scotland is declared to be in the same deplorable condition. Though under the Stuarts episcopacy was established in that country, yet it was strenuously resisted by the people; and under William III. it was, by a joint act of the Assembly and Parliament formally rejected; they thereby separated themselves from the successors of the apostles, "and all the temporal enactments and powers of the whole world could not cure this fault, nor render them a portion of the church of Christ." Palmer, Vol. I. p. 529. The same judg-

ment is pronounced on all the churches in this country except the church of England. The Romanists here are excluded, because they are derived from the schismatic Papists in Great Britain and Ireland, or have intruded into sees where bishops deriving authority from the Anglican church already presided. How this can be historically made out as regards Maryland, and Louisiana, it is not for us to say. The theory forbids the existence of two separate churches in the same place. If the church of England in Maryland is a true church, the church of Rome is not. Bishop Whittingham, therefore, with perfect consistency, always speaks of the Romanists in the United States as schismatics, and schismatics of course are out of the church. As to non-episcopal communions in this country, they are not only declared to be in a state of schism, but to be destitute of the essential elements of the church. They are all, therefore, of necessity excluded from the pale of the church. The advocates of this theory, when pressed with the obvious objection that multitudes thus excluded from the church, and consequently from salvation, give every evidence of piety, meet the objection by quoting Augustine, 'Let us hold it as a thing unshaken and firm, that no good men *can* divide themselves from the church.' "It is not indeed to be supposed or believed for a moment," adds Mr. Palmer, "that divine grace would permit the really holy and justified members of Christ to fall from the way of life. He would only pervert the unsanctified, the enemies of Christ to sever themselves from that fountain, where his Spirit is freely given." Voluntary separation therefore from the church, he concludes is "a sin which, unless repented of, is eternally destructive of the soul. The heinous nature of this offence is incapable of exaggeration, because no human imagination, and no human tongue can adequately describe its enormity." Vol. I. p. 68. The only church in Great Britain, according to Mr. Palmer, be it remembered, is the church of England, and the only church in this country according to the same theory and its advocates, is the Episcopal church. Thus the knot is fairly cut. It is apparently a formidable difficulty, that there should be more piety out of the church, than in it. But the difficulty vanishes at once, when we know that 'no good man *can* divide himself from the church.'

If this theory were new, if it were now presented for the

first time, it would be rejected with indignation and derision ; indignation at its monstrous and unscriptural claims, and derision at the weakness of the arguments by which it is supported. But age renders even imbecility venerable. It must also be conceded that a theory which has for centuries prevailed in the church, must have something to recommend it. It is not difficult to discover, in the present case, what that something is. The Ritual theory of the church is perfectly simple and consistent. It has the first and most important element of success in being intelligible. That Christ should found a church, or external society, giving to his apostles the Holy Spirit to render them infallible in teaching and judging, and authorize them to communicate the like gift to their successors to the end of time ; and make it a condition of salvation that all should recognise their spiritual authority, receive their doctrines and submit to their decisions, declaring that what they bound on earth should be bound in heaven, and what they loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven, is precisely the plan which the wise men of this world would have devised. It is in fact that which they have constructed. We must not forget, however, that the wisdom of men is foolishness with God.

Again, this theory admits of being propounded in the forms of truth. All its fundamental principles may be stated in a form to command universal assent. It is true that the church is one, that it is catholic and apostolical ; that it has the power of authoritative teaching and judging, that out of its pale there is no salvation. But this system perverts all these principles. It places the bond of unity in the wrong place. Instead of saying with Jerome, *Ecclesia ibi est, ubi vera fides est*, or with Irenaeus, *ubi Spiritus Dei, illic ecclesia*, they assume that the church is nowhere, where prelates are not. The true apostolicity of the church, does not consist in an external descent to be historically traced from the early churches, but in sameness of faith and Spirit with the apostles. Separation from the church is indeed a great sin ; but there is no separation from the church involved in withdrawing from an external body whose terms of communion hurt the enlightened conscience ; provided this be done without excommunicating or denouncing those who are really the people of God.

The great advantage of this theory, however, is to be found in its adaptation to the human heart. Most men who live where the gospel is known, desire some better foundation for confidence towards God, than their own good works. To such men the church, according to this theory, presents itself as an Institute of Salvation; venerable for its antiquity, attractive from the number and rank of its disciples, and from the easy terms on which it proffers pardon and eternal life. There are three very comprehensive classes of men to whom this system must commend itself. The first consists of those who are at once ignorant and wicked. The degraded inhabitants of Italy and Portugal have no doubt of their salvation, no matter how wicked they may be, so long as they are in the church and submissive to officers and rites. The second includes those who are devout and at the same time ignorant of the scriptures. Such men feel the need of religion, of communion with God, and of preparation for heaven. But knowing nothing of the gospel, or disliking what they know, a form of religion which is laborious, mystical, and ritual, meets all their necessities, and commands their homage. The third class consists of worldly men, who wish to enjoy this life and get to heaven with as little trouble as possible. Such men, the world over, are high churchmen. To them a church which claims the secure and exclusive custody of the blessings of redemption, and which she professes to grant on the condition of unresisting submission to her authority and rites, is exactly the church they desire. We need not wonder, therefore, at the long continued and extensive prevalence of this system. It is too much in accordance with the human heart, to fail of its support, or to be effectually resisted by any power short of that by which the heart is changed.

It is obvious that the question concerning the nature and prerogatives of the church, is not one which relates to the externals of religion. It concerns the very nature of Christianity and the conditions of salvation. If the soul convinced of sin and desirous of reconciliation with God, is allowed to hear the Saviour's voice, and permitted to go to him by faith for pardon and the Spirit, then the way of life is unobstructed. But if a human priest must intervene, and bar our access to Christ, assuming the exclusive power to dispense the blessings Christ

has purchased, and to grant or withhold them at discretion, then the whole plan of salvation is effectually changed. No sprinkling priest, no sacrificial or sacramental rite can be substituted for the immediate access of the soul to Christ, without imminent peril of salvation.

It is not, however, merely the first approach to God, or the commencement of a religious life, that is perverted by the ritual system; all the inward and permanent exercises of religion must be modified and injured by it. It produces a different kind of religion from that which we find portrayed in the Bible, and exemplified in the lives of the apostles and early Christians. There every thing is spiritual. God and Christ are the immediate objects of reverence and love; communion with the Father of Spirits through Jesus Christ his Son, and by the Holy Ghost, is the life which is there exhibited. In the Ritual system, rites, ceremonies, altars, buildings, priests, saints, the blessed virgin, intervene and divide or absorb the reverence and homage due to God alone. If external rites and creature agents are made necessary to our access to God, then those rites and agents will more or less take the place of God, and men will come to worship the creature rather than the creator. This tendency constantly gathers strength, until actual idolatry is the consequence, or until all religion is made to consist in the performance of external services. Hence this system is not only destructive of true religion, but leads to security in the indulgence of sin and commission of crimes. Though it includes among its advocates many devout and exemplary men, its legitimate fruits are recklessness and profligacy, combined with superstition and bigotry. It is impossible, also, under this system, to avoid transferring the subjection of the understanding and conscience due to God and his word, to the church and the priesthood. The judgments of the church, considered as an external visible society, are pronounced even by the Protestant advocates of this theory, to be unerring and irrefragable, to which every believer must bow on pain of perdition. See Palmer, vol. ii. P. 46. The bishops are declared to stand in Christ's place; to be clothed with all the authority which he as man possessed; to be invested with the power to communicate the Holy Ghost, to forgive sins, to make the body and blood of Christ, and to

offer sacrifices available for the living and the dead. Such a system must exalt the priesthood into the place of God.

A theory, however, which has so long prevailed need not be judged by its apparent tendencies. Let it be judged by its fruits. It has always and every where; just in proportion to its prevalence, produced the effects above referred to. It has changed the plan of salvation; it has rendered obsolete the answer given by Paul to the question, What must I do to be saved? It has perverted religion. It has introduced idolatry. It has rendered men secure in the habitual commission of crime. It has subjected the faith, the conscience, and the conduct of the people to the dictation of the priesthood. It has exalted the hierarchy, saints, angels, and the Virgin Mary, into the place of God, so as to give a polytheistic character to the religion of a large part of Christendom. Such are the actual fruits of that system which has of late renewed its strength, and which every where asserts its claims to be received as genuine Christianity.

It will not be necessary to dwell on that theory of the church which is connected with Rationalism. Its characteristic feature is, that the church is not a divine institution, with prerogatives and attributes authoritatively determined by its author, but rather a form of Christian society, to be controlled according to the wisdom of its members. It may be identified with the state, or made dependent on it; or erected into a co-ordinate body with its peculiar officers and ends. It is obvious that a system which sets aside, more or less completely, the authority both of scripture and tradition, must leave its advocates at liberty to make of the church just what "the exigency of the times" in their judgment requires. The philosophical or mystic school of Rationalists, have of course a mystical doctrine of the church, which can be understood only by those who understand the philosophy on which it rests. With these views we have in this country little concern, nor do we believe they are destined to excite any general interest, or to exert any permanent influence. The two theories of the church which are now in obvious conflict, are the Evangelical and Ritual. The controversy between Protestants and Romanists, has, in appearance, shifted its ground from matters of doctrine to the question concerning the church. This is, however, only a

change in form. The essential question remains the same. It is still a contention about the very nature of religion, and the method of salvation.

ART. IX.—*The Attraction of the Cross, Designed to Illustrate the leading Truths, Hopes, and Obligations of Christianity.* By Gardiner Spring, D.D., Pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in the City of New York. Published by M. W. Dodd, Brick Church Chapel, Corner of Park Row and Spruce Street, opposite the City Hall. pp. 413, Svo.

It is a matter of regret that this important work did not come to hand, until the number of our periodical now in the press, was so near to its completion; which will prevent us from making as thorough and extended a review as under other circumstances we should be disposed to give it. But unwilling to let it lie over to the time of our next quarterly publication, we have determined to do the best in our power, in communicating to our readers the views which we entertain of the character and contents of this interesting volume.

Few events occur among us, which possess more real importance than the publication of a new book, which is likely to become a standard work for the instruction of mankind, not only in the present, but in future generations. And the importance of such an event is greatly increased when the book relates to the infinite concerns of the future world; the destiny of multitudes may depend on the publication of such a work. Authors, therefore, assume an awful responsibility, and seldom when writing, are aware of the momentous consequences which are suspended on their works. On this account, it is important that new productions, issued from the press, should be subjected to an impartial review. The reviewer, therefore, has his share of responsibility; and it is evidently for the public good, that he should perform his duty without fear or favour; and there seldom occurs an occasion, when the impartial exercise of this office is more important, than in the