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ART. I.—THE IDEA OF THE CHURCH CATECHISM.

IN the March number of the CHURCHMAN I was allowed to compare the new Free Church Catechism with the old Catechism of the Church of England. It seemed to result from the comparison that, whilst exclusive Churchmen glory in the Church Catechism as dogmatic, and Dissenters repudiate it as denominational and sectarian, it is, in fact, peculiarly undogmatic and undenominational. The word "dogmatic" is used in ways which make it desirable in general not to use it at all; but I have used it in the convenient sense that identifies a dogma with a doctrine—that is, with a proposition which affirms something concerning God and the things of God. The Free Church Catechism is chiefly made up of such propositions or definitions; in the Church Catechism they are strikingly absent.<sup>1</sup> And in the modernized beliefs of the Nonconformist bodies, or of that anti-Sacerdotalist Federation into which they are being incorporated, there is nothing that makes it impossible for them, with the exception of the Baptists, any more than it is impossible for the other great Christian communions of the world, to accept the Catechism of the Church of England.

I am encouraged to believe that it may be worth while to develop more distinctly and more fully than I was led to do

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<sup>1</sup> It is instructive to notice that at the Savoy Conference the criticism of the Catechism by the Presbyterian divines is to the following effect: "The doctrine of the Sacraments is much more fully and particularly delivered than the other parts, in short answers fitted to the memories of children; therefore they propose a more distinct and full application of the Creed, the Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, and to add somewhat particularly concerning the nature of faith, repentance, the two covenants, justification, sanctification, adoption, and regeneration."

in my former article what I have called "The Idea of the Church Catechism."

It is convenient to regard the Church Catechism proper as closing with the paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer. The questions and answers relating to the Sacraments form an appendix, having even less organic connection with what goes before it than appendices usually have. Speaking roughly, we may say that the original Catechism was authorized in the middle of the sixteenth century, under Edward VI., and that the account of the Sacraments was added to it half a century afterwards, under James I.

The keynote of the Catechism is struck by the first question, "What is your name?" The name by which the child is known at home, and by which he knows himself, is made to remind him that he has been christened, or is a Christian. "You are a Christian." It is the name and profession of a Christian that the instruction uses as a starting-point. The child, having been present at christenings, has seen the minister take the infant, sprinkle water upon it, and at the same time say, "I baptize thee into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Out of this germ, of Christian Baptism, the Catechism develops what the Christian ought to know and to do.

Each of the three sacred names with which the child was sealed in his Baptism had some significance for him. He was claimed for the Father. That means, obviously enough, that the infant was taken to be the child of the heavenly Father. He was claimed for the Son. Who was the Son? He was the Lord Jesus Christ. What could anyone be to Him? All Christians were adherents of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, believers in Him, followers of Him; they had Him for their Head, and were formed into a society under Him. The baptized infant was joined to Christ, made a member of the body or community of which Christ was the Head. He was claimed in the third place for the Holy Ghost. The nature and action of the Holy Ghost are difficult for anyone, specially difficult for a child, to understand. But *breathing* is naturally connected with the Holy Ghost, or Spirit, the Divine Breath. The Holy Ghost is to be known through air, the unseen air which is breathed, which supports life. This name speaks of a Christian as being in an unseen world, to which his inner man belongs, and in which his inner man is vivified by heavenly influences. The child as claimed by the Holy Ghost is in a spiritual realm to which he belongs, as he belongs by his body to the world or kingdom of nature, and as the English child belongs to the country and realm of England. So the Catechism tells the child that

when he was christened he was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

Presently the Catechism describes this triple condition as a state of salvation, and bids the child rejoice thankfully that he has been called to it. "Called to a state or condition"—that is the Catechism's own variation of the phrase "made" in Baptism. And then the child is taught to pray that by the help of God's grace he may abide as long as he lives in the blessed state to which he has been called; that he may not fall away from being the child of God, and member of Christ, and subject of the heavenly kingdom, that God would have him be. The child should often say to himself: "In dependence on my heavenly Father's help, I am to be a dutiful child towards the heavenly Father; I am to be a faithful adherent of my Lord Jesus Christ; I am to be a loyal freeman in the kingdom of the Holy Spirit. I shall be an enemy to myself, as well as ungrateful to my gracious God, if I willingly fall away from that state."

From its earliest days of intelligence the child is taught that there is danger of such falling away, and that it will be always necessary for him to cleave to the Divine Power to which he belongs.

In one of our Collects we pray that grace may be granted to us to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to follow our God, the only God. Each of these powers, the devil and the world and the flesh, is exhibited to us in Scripture as a rival of the heavenly Father, and therefore to be expressly repudiated and resisted by God's dutiful children. Our Lord, whose denunciations were not wanting in severity and plainness, said once to the Jews who rejected Him, "Ye do the works of your father" (St. John viii. 41). They had made themselves, He said, children of the devil, and not of God. The devil was a murderer and a liar, and they were doing the works of their father. So we learn that our Lord regarded ill-will and falsehood as the special works of the Evil One. Our God is love, and His word is truth; everyone, therefore, who surrenders himself to ill-will instead of love, and to falsehood instead of truth, is making himself a child of the devil and refusing to be the child of the heavenly Father. Of the world St. John says: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 15, 16). The spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father, is directly opposed to the flesh in us: "they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. viii.

5-16). The child is taught, therefore, that, inasmuch as the Father in heaven has called him to be His child, he is bound to be on his guard against each of these severally—the devil, the world, and the flesh; to strive against becoming ill-disposed and false, worldly, sensual. In the prayer which the child learns, as not only the best of prayers, but as the guide to all praying, the first serious wishes which he who prays is taught to cherish are that the name of the Father, the Father who is in heaven, may be regarded with due reverence by all men, that the Father's kingdom may come with power, and that the Father's will may be done perfectly over all the earth.

The second character to which the baptized person has been called, answering to the second of the Divine names, is that of member of Christ. He is to have Christ for his Head. Who is Christ? What is the meaning of being a member of Christ? These are questions to which the young Christian must learn by degrees to give fuller and fuller answers. Our whole knowledge about Christ may be said to be contained in the Gospels, if we add that this is illustrated and developed by the Acts and all the history and literature of the Church. And it is through Christ that we receive our truest knowledge of the Father also. It is remarkable that the Catechism has no direct mention of the Bible, or of the New Testament, or of the Gospels. It refers the learner to the summary of Christian belief which we have in the Apostles' Creed. The greater part of this summary consists of the particulars of the manifestation of the Son of God, who lived and died as Jesus of Nazareth, and who was proclaimed as the Christ or King of the Jews. The Lord Jesus Christ attached a few men very closely to Himself whilst He was visible on the earth; when He had gone up to His Father's right hand, He sent down the Holy Spirit and created a society of persons drawn to Him and accepting Him as their Head. It was of the essence of belief in Him that He should be known as the Son of the Father. Thus believed in He had the power to deliver men out of bondage to darkness and nature into the freedom of having trust and hope in God. He who has been baptized into the name of the Son of God is attached to the Redeemer whose nature and work are set forth in the Apostles' Creed; and it is his privilege to learn more and more of Christ's nature and work as controlling the life of His adherents.

The character given by being baptized into the name of the Holy Ghost is represented by the title, "an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." The word "inheritor" has no doubt aided that understanding of "heaven" as a place of future felicity which is so unlike what may be learnt about heaven

from the New Testament. But the kingdom of heaven is the spiritual kingdom—the world or commonwealth which we apprehend and in which we live through the Divine Spirit; the invisible kingdom which Christ established and of which He is King, and which all Christian communities seek with more or less of imperfection to realize and exhibit in the visible world. And an inheritor of this kingdom is one who may claim all the rights and possessions of a subject and citizen of it. And the young citizen of the kingdom of the Spirit has the simple duty of learning and obeying the laws of it—laws which are defined as God's holy will and commandments. The Ten Commandments of the ancient Mosaic Law hold an honoured place in the Scriptures of the Old Covenant. They are Jewish rather than Christian, but it is found that with a certain amount of translation, and with reasonable spiritual interpretation, they can be advantageously used for instruction in Christian duty. The Jew was taught that he must have no other god than his own God Jehovah, who had brought him out of his bondage in Egypt; that he must make no images, lest they should lead him into idolatry; that he must treat the name of Jehovah with reverence; that he must observe the seventh day of the week as a day of rest; that he must set his hopes on prosperity in the new land which his God Jehovah was giving him. The Christian understands that he must have for his only God the Father who has given him redemption through His Son Jesus Christ; that he must not allow any visible things to seduce him from loyalty to his God; that he must cherish reverence towards the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; that he must provide for the due rest of those who labour, and therefore that he must lend himself to the wise observance of the Christian Lord's Day; that he must promote such honouring of parents and of those who have any of the authority of parents as will guard the permanence and well-doing of human society. That all God's commands have reference primarily and ultimately to the inner man is a truth upon which the Lord Jesus is known to have continually insisted.

It is true that the Catechism does not show upon its surface an intention of developing the Christian calling according to the method set forth in the above exposition; but I think it will be recognised that the order which I have indicated, and which may be seen at a glance in the following conspectus, does not add anything to the Catechism or change anything in it, but only gives a more systematic form to what it teaches :

## THE CHRISTIAN CALLING.

The threefold <i>Divine name</i> into which the Christian is baptized.	The Father.	The Son.	The Holy Ghost.
His threefold <i>condition</i> , or the state of salvation to which he is called.	A child of God.	A member of Christ.	An inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.
His threefold <i>obligation</i> .	To be dutiful to the Father, and to refuse to be the child of the devil (John viii. 42-44), of the world (1 John ii. 15, 16), or of the flesh (Rom. viii. 8-15).	To believe in Christ and adhere to Him as his Head.	To keep the laws of the kingdom, written by the Spirit on the heart.
Three <i>forms</i> which will help him to abide in his calling.	The Lord's Prayer (Our Father).	The Creed.	The Ten Commandments.

The questions and answers relating to the Sacraments form a part of the Church Catechism as we have it now, and it is of an importance which can hardly be overrated, as setting forth in a definite and logical manner the views concerning the Sacraments which our Church commends to its young learners. Let me apply to this appendix the same kind of consideration as I have applied to the original Catechism.

The governing idea of this part is to be found in the word "grace." Looking at the word from an etymological point of view, we may trace its meanings thus: (1) Originally it means that which pleases in anything, what we may call *charm*. (2) What chiefly pleases in a person is *kindness*, and this is the predominant meaning of grace. (3) Then it means an act of kindness, a *gift* of some kind. (4) And as kindness evokes an answering kindness, grace is used in Greek and in Latin for thankfulness or *thanks*—a meaning retained in the phrase "Grace before or after meat." We may dismiss meanings (1) and (4) from our consideration. The others—(2) and (3)—are what concern us.

The Catechism does not ask, "How many Sacraments are there?" but, "How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in His Church?" We find two ceremonies, or practices, of a "general" or universal character recorded in the Gospels as having been instituted by our Lord Himself. And these have the character of being *signs*, outward actions appealing to

the senses, and intended to convey something unseen to the inward man. And it is assumed that our Lord ordained these for universal use in His Church. When Christ breathed upon His disciples, and said to them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (or Breath), He was doing a sacramental action; and it is conceivable that He might have ordained this action for use in His Church. But His disciples did not understand Him to be doing so. The laying-on of hands in the ordinance of Confirmation or Strengthening is very near the two Sacraments in character and authority, and it is of general or universal use. But there is no record of Christ's having instituted it, though it is open to anyone to think it probable that the Apostles were carrying out an unrecorded direction of their Master in laying their hands on the baptized. A sacramental interpretation of this ordinance is given in the Order of Confirmation. The Bishop prays: "We make our humble supplications unto Thee for these Thy servants, upon whom (after the example of Thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands, to certify them (by this sign) of Thy favour and gracious goodness towards them. Let Thy fatherly hand, we beseech Thee, ever be over them." Through the laying-on of the Bishop's fatherly hand the confirmed are encouraged to see the fatherly hand of God laid for blessing and care and guidance on their spiritual heads.

Let us take that phrase of the Bishop's prayer, "Thy favour and gracious goodness towards them," as expressing more fully the meaning of the word "grace" in the doctrine of the Sacraments. I gave "kindness," or favour and gracious goodness, as the second meaning of "grace." The third was "a gift." And in this third sense "grace" is very largely used in the New Testament. St. Paul called the collection for the poor Christians of Jerusalem a grace (2 Cor. viii. 4, 6, 19). It was his habit to speak of his Apostolic commission as the grace that had been given to him, his grace—the special favour granted to him. It is under this head that we must place the spiritual influence which grace so often means. But I wish to ask whether we have not fallen into the habit of *detaching* spiritual influence—the gift—from God or Christ or the Holy Spirit, the Giver, more than the Apostles did or could have done. To them the spiritual influence was in the grace or kindness or love of God felt by the heart of man. "If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pet. ii. 3). To St. John all human goodness was love; and "we love because He first loved us" (1 John iv. 19). And St. Paul's account of the influence which produces human goodness is, "God's love has been poured out upon our hearts" (Rom. v. 5). When St. Paul prayed, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus

Christ be with you," he meant, "May Jesus Christ in His grace be present with you." We are following the Apostles if we take the grace given to us in the Sacraments as being, not some gift separable from God, but God's favour and gracious goodness expressing itself towards us.

The sign in Baptism is a double one, appealing to the eye and the ear. What is seen is a washing with water; but in the act of washing the minister seals the baptized with the spoken name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Christian, holding this sign to be ordained by Christ Himself, sees and hears God in His gracious goodness forgiving and accepting the baptized person, and claiming him for His own. That is the grace signified by the sign. The gracious God is seen raising the person brought to Him out of subjection to nature and the earth and the darkness and evil of the merely natural condition, into fellowship with Himself. To accept this grace is to put away sin and to live to God—to cherish continual repentance and faith.

In the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, the minister is seen setting apart bread and wine to represent the Body and the Blood, the Body broken and the Blood poured out of the Son of God, who gave Himself for men. The Christians go up together, and have bread from the one loaf and wine from the one cup given to them. What is seen by the Christian through this sign is, God in His grace giving His Son, crucified for men, to be the spiritual nourishment of those who will feed together on Him. To feed on Christ is a very strong image; but it was one chosen and repeated by Christ Himself, and it has a visible form given to it in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. We may translate it into: Look to Him, pray to Him, study Him, follow Him, depend upon Him. But the sign which He ordained, the partaking of His Body and of His Blood for the strengthening and refreshing of the soul, carries more spiritual force with it, conveys the grace of God more effectively, than any multiplication of these phrases. And the Christian response to this grace of God is, obviously, to live more and more in spiritual association with Christ and with the brethren.

I repeat that, in order to enter into the true doctrine of the Sacraments, we ought to accustom ourselves to the Apostolic manner of regarding the action of God's grace, and that it may help us in doing this to render in our minds the grace of each Sacrament by God's favour and gracious goodness towards us. In the Sacrament of reception the gracious God is seen pardoning, receiving, taking into union with Himself. In the Sacrament of continual nourishment and



incorporation the gracious God is seen giving the crucified Christ to be the life of the Christian community. It is appointed that for our new or spiritual life we should be thus surrendered to the love of our God and kept under its eternal power.

J. LLEWELYN DAVIES.

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ART. II.—"LIFE AND LETTERS OF BROOKE FOSS WESTCOTT, D.D."

II.

THE first ninety pages of the second volume deal with Dr. Westcott's work as Canon of Westminster from 1883 to 1890. How he regarded this post may to some extent be judged from the fact that the offers of three deaneries—Exeter, Lincoln, and Norwich—were unable to tempt him away from it.

With this period I must not stay to deal at length. Undoubtedly, Dr. Westcott's position at the Abbey caused him to become much more widely known to the general public, and, as his son writes, "it was while he was at Westminster that my father's interest in social questions first became manifest, though he had for years previously<sup>1</sup> been an anxious student of such matters" (p. 15). Among social questions we must in this connection include his intense interest in bringing the teaching of the Gospel to bear upon international relations, of which, speaking at a Peace Conference, he said: "The question of international relations has not hitherto been considered in the light of the Incarnation, and till this has been done I do not see that we can look for the establishment of that peace which was heralded at the Nativity" (p. 23).

Among the letters belonging to this period will be found some very striking and valuable sayings—*e.g.* :

"A sermon means to me a week's work . . . the summer sermons are already (February 28) filling up fragments of thought" (p. 36).

"It will be well to make some rule about assistance in the distribution of the elements at large Communion. For the first time for many years I was lately present in a church when the elements were administered to a 'railleful' at a time, and I was much impressed by the solemn silence. Perhaps Convocation may sanction this" (p. 42). "I ought to say that I feel strongly that the adoration of a localized Presence

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. ii., p. 261.