

**INITIA SACRA: OR, INSTRUCTION IN
THE DOCTRINE AND CONSTITUTION
OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND; TO
WHICH IS ADDED A SYNOPSIS
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY**

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Initia Sacra: Or, Instruction in the Doctrine and Constitution of the Church of England; To Which Is Added a Synopsis Ecclesiastical History by Geldart J. E. Riadore

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GELDART J. E. RIADORE

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CHURCH OF ENGLAND;

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SYNOPSIS OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

BY THE

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PART I.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH.

Q. 1. To what Church do you belong?

A. To that branch of the Holy Catholic or universal body of Christ's members called the Church of England.

Q. 2. Where do you find an authorised exhibition of its doctrines?

A. In the Creeds, and the Thirty-nine Articles and Prayer Book generally.

Q. 3. Why is this church called the Church of England?

A. Because it is recognised as such by the civil power; and because it is a constant and marked protest against usurpation of her rights and titles by any Christian community setting up in opposition to her.

Q. 4. What do you understand by the catholic church of Christ?

A. The words of the 19th Article of our Church are sufficiently broad; but perhaps the definition of any particular church may be resolved into two or more individuals united in the three Creeds, and living under apostolical succession.

Q. 5. What is the derivation of the word church?

A. It is derived from a Greek word *ecclesia*, an assembly of the faithful. The additional epithet catholic

was not known to the primitive church. Justinian first ordered the word to be applied to all Christians receiving the Nicene Creed, at the same time commanding every person and people of the empire to be called Roman. From which elementary idea, the usurpation of Rome must advance every theory.

Q. 6. Is the church visible and invisible?

A. Yes. The visible is the congregation of the faithful; the invisible is that of the just made perfect.

Q. 7. How are we to regard different communions of Christians?

A. The Catholic Church includes all in her definition if they have been baptized. If they deny her, they cannot deny the responsibility they had then. Whatever they observe that is taught by the Church, so far they are of the Church as far as known and recognised by such characteristics. They are to be pitied as denying to themselves the blessings which full communion with the Church brings with it.

Q. 8. If the doctrines they teach are such as to be totally inconsistent with the three Creeds, in what light are they to be looked upon?—Col. i. 18.

A. As heretics.

Q. 9. Who are schismatics?

A. Those guilty of separating from the Church government.

Q. 10. In what sense is Christ the Head of the Invisible Church?—Eph. i. 21, 22.

A. He is the Lord of those who have departed this life in His faith and fear, whose good examples we have to follow, considering the end of their conversation. It is His body that filleth all in all.

Q. 11. How is the Church visible?

A. By her members, government, duties, discipline, and ordinances.

Tertullian an African Father, calls Christ the head of the faithful, in the form of the word Church, *Christus Ecclesia Veri.*—(*De panit: p. 302*).

Q. 12. How is a Church visible in its "Catholicity?"—Eph. iv. 11, 13.

A. If, as in the Church, for fifteen hundred years, Episcopacy be the method of rule.

Q. 13. How in its "antiquity?"

A. Episcopacy is as old as the apostolic institution.

Q. 14. How in "duration?"

A. Episcopal government is divine, and, therefore, has lasted, and apparently will last.

Q. 15. How in "amplitude?"

A. Episcopacy was the sole form of government over the Roman empire.

Q. 16. How is a Church visible by "Consent?"

A. The Church of England agrees with the customs of the first three centuries, and the conclusions of the four great councils.

Q. 17. How in "unity" with Christ as the Head?

A. The Churches Episcopal have never differed from each other since the reformation, in matters of moment or salvation.

Q. 18. How in apostolic doctrine?

A. The few pure doctrines entirely resting on the Bible, and received by the entire early Church, are jealously guarded by the Church of England, in her Creed, Liturgies, and Articles.

Q. 19. How in general reception?

A. The Doctrines and Articles of the Church of

England, are either the foundations of all those Churches which have arisen from her in her colonies, or are received in general as the credenda of the pure faith, by Churches and all christian communities.

Q. 20. How in "holiness?"

A. The lives of her martyrs, bishops, pastors, and confessors shew this.

Q. 21. How in Prophecies?

A. Sermons on prophecies have ever been greatly honoured means of grace in the Anglican Church.

Q. 22. How in confession of adversaries?

A. It is a remarkable fact that all sects and conditions of men have, in their fiercest vein, universally given credit to the Church of England as next to their own, which is a great and wonderful test of its merits,—a homage paid from human vanity.

Q. 23. Is temporal prosperity a visible mark necessary?

A. No. Inward peace and external suffering are more likely to be so. When in the middle ages the Roman See taught as a divine right, the doctrine of its supreme authority, which had never existed in the primitive Church in the remotest sense,—thenceforward the power of Rome descended.

Q. 24. How is Christ the chief and head of this visible Church?

A. He is the author and finisher of the faith visible here on earth in all her members.

Q. 25. What is the meaning of the words, "The head of every man is Christ?"—1 Cor. xi. 3.

A. That every man is bound to regard the Saviour as the sole fountain to him of every individual grace and assistance. This also allows a man to strive to

comprehend, with all saints, the love of God, that passeth understanding. He is bound to try the spirits whether they are of God, by previously revealed or previously decided truth. This private judgment, so far as sanctioned by the Church in England, is involved in the Headship of Christ.

Q. 26. Does not this countenance private judgment?

A. Private judgment is and must be exercised. In the Church of Rome, for instance, hesitation in believing everything an ignorant priest might say, would be "private judgment," and must be exercised frequently in Ireland or in Naples. To think conscientiously, and to discriminate between private teaching of a priest and church doctrine as propounded by a synod, is private judgment. A Unitarian would not think it right for a man to deny the moral code laid down in the sermon on the Mount. Judgment is only lawful in subordination to God's fixed laws—beyond that it is nonsense.

Q. 27. Our Lord said to St Peter, "on this rock will I build my Church,"—What did He mean?

A. He alluded to the foundation which was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when St Peter converted the first 3000 souls to Christ. St Peter is not foretold to be the head, but the "foundation."

Q. 28. Is Christ the head of the nations?—Rev. i. 5; xix. 16.

A. Yes, as He is Prince of the kings of the earth. Therefore it is evil and sinful to deny in a christian country, that the government thereof has any necessary connexion with the national religion.