

Christian Union.

We take the following extract from the eloquent and Christian address of welcome delivered by Rev. Dr. Adams, of New York, at the meeting of the Conference of the Evangelical Alliance in New York.

It was the conceit of classic mythology that the muse of History was the daughter of Jove. The thought thus suggested was put into a better Christian phrase, believing in the unity of God's purpose and providence. That which we receive from our Bibles has been wrought out in philosophic form by Schlegel and Muller. Look at detached parts of the drama—at the Huguenots of France, exiled, massacred, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; at the Hollanders, harried by Philip of Spain; at the Puritan Nonconformists of England during the Five-mile act of the Stuarts—and you would be bewildered and depressed, as if there were no equitable power to protect and reward virtue. But these are only "parts of God's ways." To judge them as if they were independent and insulated events is as if one, gazing only on some eddy or back water in the Mississippi, should infer that the mighty river was running upward and backward. Sweep a wide vision; make a more copious induction; wait and look again; cross the ocean, whither all these brave exiles betook themselves, and observe the institutions of religion and civil liberty; the churches, the schools, the happy homes, which have sprung up in this New World, and behold the vindication of Divine equity, progress, and development in the magnificent plan of Divine Providence. Coligny and Calvin did not join in person in the several expeditions to the American coast which they so zealously patronized; but Coligny and Calvin, and Knox, and Grauner, and Ridley, and Hooper, and Latimer are living and working upon our soil to-day. John Hampden, whose society, Richard Baxter said, would give a charm to the everlasting rest of the saints, ceased not to live when he fell in battle, for the patriot statesman walks abroad in our own land. The "good old cause," for which Algernon Sidney prayed with his last breath, on Tower Hill, in London, did not perish when that noble martyr was beheaded. We ask you, coming from the Old World, to see and judge for yourselves the fruitage of great events, which call us all back to the cell of Argyll, the scaffold of Russell, the grave of Wickliffe, and the ashes of Huss. It has verily seemed to us that it was not so much we as they that were welcoming you to these shores; that the very air was full of the martyr-spirits of the mighty dead, our common ancestry, bidding us, in our blessed brotherhood, to enjoy together the rich results of their faith, prayers and agonies in a free religion, a free Bible, free schools, a free press, a free church—a glorious legacy of the past to the present; the seed-corn and the roots beyond the sea in the Old—the harvest and the compensation in the New.

The object of our Conference is neither political nor ecclesiastical. We come not to discuss forms of Church organization or government, or anything which is extrinsic and casual. We meet to manifest and express our Christian unity. Divers are the names we bear both as to countries and churches—German, French, Swiss, Dutch, English, Scotch, Irish, Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Baptist, Independent—but we desire and intend to show that, amid all this variety of form and circumstances, there is a real unity of faith and life; believing, according to the familiar expression of our common Christian creed, in "the Holy Catholic Church" and "communion of Saints."

We are living in times when, all over the world, there is a manifest longing for more of visible unity. France and Germany have both given in new words expressive of their desire for cosmopolitan unity. Conventions and expositions are held, in which representatives from all countries meet to compare and interchange ideas and commodities. These are signs which, like the tufts of grass and sprigs of red berries which caught the eye of Columbus from the mast-head of the Pinta, betoken the vicinity of land. We may be mistaken in our reckoning; fog-banks may be mistaken for land; but we know in what direction the land lies, and we must sail onward till we reach it. We pretend not to create unity—certainly not by artificial ligatures; but to testify to that which exists already. God is one. The redemption by Jesus Christ is one. The body of Christ is one. The Kingdom of God on the earth, for the coming of which all hearts and voices are taught to pray, is presented as an object in the singular number, one, and not many. What is of essential benefit to one church and one nation, in course of time becomes the property of all. You cannot fence off the great ocean into private pastures; you cannot partition off the firmament into household lots; you cannot divide sun, moon, and stars into bits of personal property; you cannot by any process monopolize great Christian ideas; you cannot play Robinson Crusoe in the Church of God. No man can appropriate to himself in an insular spirit any exclusive right in these great matters, to the discussion of which we now welcome free Christian faith, plain life, plain work, plain hope, and plain duty. Bigots may misunderstand this, and lend themselves to what is private, local, and exclusive, but there is no such thing as private property in good thoughts, good deeds, and good men. Paul is ours, and Cephas is ours, and Apollo is ours. All the great historic names associated with scholarship, philanthropy, and religion, no matter in what land they were born, or in what church they were baptized, are the common property of all Christian believers. All truths, all discoveries, all inventions, all things good and worthy, in due time are as sure to diffuse themselves abroad in every direction as water to find its level and the free air of heaven to flow into every open space. By no method can we prevent this if we would. Believing in this great ordinance of God, we welcome you most heartily to the expression and enjoyment of this high Christian unity. It has been said, whether by poetry or science, it matters not, that there is a certain point in the upper air in which all the discordant sounds

of the earth, the rattle of wheels, the chiming of bells, the roll of the drum, the laugh of the child, and the moan of the beggar, meet and blend in perfect harmony. Surely it is something more than a poet conceit, even the sure word of inspiration that when once we are lifted up to a fellowship with Christ Jesus we must in a high and heavenly place, where "all things are gathered together in one, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in Him;" an elevation so high that there is a complete oblivion to all those manifold distinctions of country, race, and name which belong entirely to a lower and heavier atmosphere.

The pleasure of our Conference is subject to abatement. Some whose presence would have graced this occasion are not, for God has taken them. If, as we believe, departed spirits are conscious of what occurs on earth, those beloved friends and brethren are not indifferent to a scene like this—Merle d'Aubigne, Count Gasparin, Hoffmann, Norman McLeod, Henry Alford, Dr. Guthrie, and our own Melville and Schmucker. If it be good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity upon the earth, how much better, more fragrant than precious ointment and sweeter than the dew of Hermon, will it be when all who are united to one another through Christ shall be welcomed to his presence by the Lord of Glory. Ancient philosophy dreamed of a symposium which all the wise and good should enjoy in a fabled Elysium, but inspiration has specified this as one of the elements of Christian blessedness, that we are come to "the spirits of the just made perfect"—"to the general assembly of the Church of the first-born written in Heaven." Welcoming one another to these Christian assemblies upon the earth; greeting every occasion like this for the expression of Christian confidence and love; beseeching you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that we strive together in our prayers to God; that, coming together with joy by the will of God, we may with you be refreshed, our thoughts run forward with gladness to the time when all the true servants of Christ, coming from the East, the West, the North, and the South, with their bosoms full of sheaves, shall meet together at the harvest-home, in the end of the world. In the very words of Dean Alford, whose personal presence we miss among us, words which were chanted at his funeral service in Canterbury Cathedral,

Ten thousand times ten thousand In sparkling raiment bright, The armies of the ransomed saints Throng up the steep of light. 'Tis finished—all is finished. Their fight with Death and Sin: Flung open wide the golden gates And let the victors in.

O then what rapturous greetings On Canaan's happy shore, What knittings severed friendships up Where partings are no more.

So it is that our hopes of Heaven enter into the welcome we once more give you in the name of the Lord Jesus and of Christian brotherhood.

The People who mean to Resign.

In nearly every Church and Sabbath-school, in fact in nearly every benevolent organization, there may be found one or two people immensely valuable, often of rare executive ability, useful and willing, who yet manage to neutralize all their good gifts, and render them of small account, by continually threatening them to resign. If a by-law is passed, a resolution offered, a change made without their being deferentially consulted, they hand in their resignation. If their services are in any way overlooked, or taken without thanks or special notice, they are slighted, and refuse any longer to work. In twenty ways they render themselves unhappy, and keep their friends in a ferment.

Take them at their word, and receive their action as a matter of course, and they are deeply wounded, for they do not acknowledge it even to their own hearts, they rather enjoy, in anticipation, the fuss that will be made over their withdrawal, the solicitations to return, and the conciliating things that will be said. Fly to them with open arms and tears in your eyes, and beg them to reconsider and remain, and you may be certain that tears and entreaties will be your part, and sweet forgiveness theirs, for periodical times in the years to come. I have often thought that I would like to say a few plain words to those people who mean to resign, when things do not suit them. In the first place, for whom are you working? For the Master? Then why give up labor if your fellow workers offend you? Shall Christ's cause be hindered while his people stand still to dispute?

In the next place, don't you think that you may be setting too high a value on your own services? It is wonderful, after all, how well the world and the work can get along, even without those who seem to be of the greatest use and consequence. A man or woman is active in society in the church, in the Sabbath-school or in the Christian association. "What could we do without?" say friends and fellow-toilers. But God has other work for his servant, or he calls him up higher. A pause, a little space for tears, a vacant place soon filled that is, ocean of human activity. Like the old French proverb, "The king is dead—long live the king," the succession of God's workers goes on, other hands take up the weapons, other feet stand where those feet stood that are still forever. And while from the earthly standpoint this is humiliating, I think from the heaven-side it is very comforting. For, after all, what are we? If Christ's kingdom but come, what difference does it make by what hands its banners are borne? In the long roll of glory, no name will be left out of all who have served in his ranks.

Friends, think. Is there not something unworthy, undignified, in being so ready to be hurt and wounded? Rather think less of self, and more of Him who is the one perfect type of entire unselfishness.—S. S. Times.

Out of three hundred and fifty churches in New York City, sixty-seven were closed during the "season."

Troublesome Minorities.

There is hardly any one thing bearing upon the peace, growth and usefulness of our churches which should so claim our earnest and prayerful consideration as that of minorities. It is the source of untold troubles, depression and losses to our churches every year. We all know a few members of a church, or even a single person, unscrupulous in the employment of means to gain an end, and by constant agitation, can disturb the peace and retard the progress of any church.

This is one of the most prolific causes of short pastorates, pastoral resignations and failure to settle pastors when destitute, that has any bearing upon these relations at the present time; and as it is high time that churches came to a realizing sense of their magnitude and evil, and subject it to prompt, decided, yet Christian discipline. It is not the duty of any church to allow its good name in the community, its prosperity and usefulness, all to be destroyed by the turbulence of a small minority.

Hon. Francis Wayland, of Connecticut, the President of the National Educational Convention, held in Philadelphia, last May, said in a speech made during the proceedings of that meeting, that it was easy for a few discontented men in any society to unsettle any minister if they have sufficient perseverance. An able, honest, worthy and most faithful clergyman can, in six months, be ejected from his church and turned adrift upon the world, without a dollar in his pocket and with a family to support for no other reason than the enmity of two or three men. I have seen it over and over again. I never knew it tried thoroughly where it failed. Now, this certainly is not the fault of the clergyman.

Multitudes of pastors,—good men, able, efficient men, men who were held in high esteem by the community, men under whose labors the church was prospering,—have been driven to resign by the unchristian conduct of a small minority, when ministers, or even more, of the whole church and congregation were his warmest friends and admirers, and earnestly desired the continuance of his labors with them. Frequently, too, the men composing these minorities have but little Christian character, are strangers to the social meetings of the church, but they have a little money or social position, are merchants, lawyers, or teachers, and the church will consent to sacrifice the pastor, or let him be sacrificed instead of disciplining these agitators. I know of churches whose reputation in the community has been greatly tarnished, and prejudices awakened that years will hardly efface, because they would allow such minorities to rule, and let their pastors leave, when they ought to have said to the minority, "Behave or you must leave." I know of other churches that have been kept pastorless month after month, constantly losing ground, when they could have secured the services of good men, men who have been successful leaders of Christ's flock, but a small minority was not pleased, or were determined to have their own way, regardless of right or the best interests of the church. Such instances are not so rare as we might suppose or wish them to be.

It is the ulcer that is eating out the life of many a church. If it cannot be cured, ought it not to be cut out? May not churches bear too long with such parties and influences within their enclosures? Do not both the honor of the Master's name and the honor and usefulness of the church require promptness and decided action with these minorities.

There are churches that will never command the respect or influence of the communities in which they are located, until they cease to allow one man or a handful of men to settle and unsettle pastors; in short control the Church.—Watchman and Reformer.

Not Enough of Christ in the Sermon.

A minister in one of our large cities had prepared and preached, as he supposed, a most convincing sermon for the special benefit of an influential member of his congregation, who was well known to be of an infidel turn of mind.

The sinner listened unmoved to the well-turned sentences and the earnest appeals; his heart was unaffected. On his return from church he saw a tear trembling in the eye of his little daughter, whom he tenderly loved, and he inquired the cause. The child informed him that she was thinking of what her Sabbath-school teacher had told her of Jesus Christ.

"And what did she tell you of Jesus Christ, my child?"

"Why, she said He came down from heaven and died for poor me!" and in a moment the tears gushed from eyes which had looked upon the beauties of only seven summers, as in the simplicity of childhood she said, "Father, should I not love One who has so loved me?"

The proud heart of the infidel was touched. What the eloquent plea of his minister could not accomplish, the tender sentence of his child had done, and he retired to give vent to his own feelings in a silent but penitential prayer. That evening found him at the praying circle, where, with brokenness of spirit, he asked the prayers of God's people. When he came to relate his Christian experience, he gave this incident, and closed his narration by saying, "Under God I owe my conversion to a little child, who first convinced me by her artless simplicity that I ought to love One who had so loved me."

The minister, on returning from this meeting, took his sermon and read it over carefully, and said to his family and to himself: "There is not enough of Jesus Christ in this discourse."

Never hold anybody by the button or the band, in order to be heard out; for if people are not willing to hear you, you had much better hold your tongue than them.

Ten theatres are now used in London for special religious services for the masses. This movement originated some years ago, and is quite well sustained.

Missionary News.

CHERRING NEWS FROM INDIA.

The Friend of India contains some important information respecting the mission work in India. At nearly all points the work was advancing with encouraging success. The Assam mission is enjoying a good revival interest. Rev. Dr. Ward reports an increase of membership. Rev. Dr. Kronson, of Nowgong, speaks of considerable prosperity. An Englishman recently converted, belonging to the government service, and familiar with the language of the natives, has been laboring as a local preacher for the past year, and his labors have been attended with the divine blessing, and have resulted in the conversion of at least forty souls. And though receiving from government \$2,100, with a prospect of increased pay, he is very anxious to be released from his present position, and enter upon the work in the India Mission Conference. The gospel is achieving wonders in India.

CHINA.

Bishop Alford has contributed a valuable paper to The Mission Field, in which he gives his personal knowledge of China and the missionary work there. The following thoughts in his communication are important and suggestive:—"Mission in China is sound and real. As for numbers, had our missionaries thought fit to baptize indiscriminately, and to admit to holy communion without examination, the number of professing Christians in our China missions might have amounted to ten times what it is. But applicants were tested, and they only who gave marks of pure motives, of true repentance, and of sincere conversion were accepted. "The work is a growing work, growing generally in proportion to the strength and efficiency of the missionary agency. It is wonderful how the Fochow mission has expanded through the country districts; so that we can number, under the charge of two European missionaries and one native missionary clergyman at Fochow, eighteen branch stations within a radius of about a hundred miles. Fochow, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Peking need more missionaries. And I believe that, if we would hold the ground, extension is a necessity. Retrospection, even in appearance, emboldens the adversary (and he is 'legion' in China) to bestir himself to drive the missionary out of the land. "Without depreciating the value of the European agency, and gladly testifying that the European and American missionaries in China are generally men of unusual ability, judgment, and enterprise, let us rejoice in the native agents. Let us pray to God largely to increase the number of native catechists. Europeans cannot preach as they can. Europeans cannot penetrate to the places they can visit. Europeans cannot discriminate Chinese character as they can. Europeans cannot live on Chinese food nor bear Chinese climate as they do. No matter how long a missionary may have been in China; however well he may be supposed to speak the language of his hearers; however much he may live like them and dress like them, there must ever be a great gulf—national, at least—between an Englishman and a Chinaman—the one a sort of unintelligible mystery to the other. The Chinese need a Chinese ministry. Englishmen cannot, in their own persons, supply the need. It is our duty to intrust the soles of China with these precious gifts, even as we ourselves have been entrusted with them."

No Human Confessors.

Canon Ryle, of the Church of England, is publishing a series of Tracts bearing upon the present state of that Church, which have the true ring of Reformation. In one entitled "Do You Confess?" called forth by the effort to revive the Confessional in the Church of England, he says:—

We honor the minister's office highly, but we refuse to give it a hair's breadth more dignity than we find given in the Word of God. We honor ministers as Christ's ambassadors, Christ's messengers, Christ's watchmen, helpers of believers' joy, preachers of the Word, and stewards of the mysteries of God. But we decline to regard them as priests, mediators, confessors and rulers over men's faith, both for the sake of their souls and of our own.

Listen not to those who tell you that Evangelical teaching is opposed to the exercise of soul-discipline, or heart-examination, or self-humiliation, or mortification of the flesh, or true contrition. Opposed to it! There never was a more baseless assertion. We are entirely favorable to it. This only we require, that it shall be carried on in the right way. We approve of going to a confessor; but it must be the only true One, Christ the Lord. We approve of submitting consciences to a priest; but it must be the great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God. We approve of unbosoming our secret sins, and seeking absolution; but it must be at the feet of the great Head of the Church, and not at the feet of his weak members. We approve of kneeling to receive ghostly counsel; but it must be at the feet of Christ, and not at the feet of man.

Reader, beware of ever losing sight of Christ's priestly office. Glory in His atoning death. Honor Him as your substitute and surety on the cross. Follow Him as your Shepherd. Hear His voice as your Prophet. Obey Him as your King. But in all your thoughts about Christ, let it be often before your mind that He alone is your High Priest, and that He has deputed His priestly office to no order of men in the world. This is the office of Christ, which the Satan labors above all to obscure. It is the neglect of this office which leads to every kind of error. It is the best safeguard of this office which is the best safeguard against the plausible teaching of the Church of Rome. Once right about this office you will never greatly err in the matter of the confession of sin. You will know to whom confession ought to be made, and to know that rightly is no slight thing.

We learn that Lord Dalhousie is to lay the foundation-stone of a new Free Church in Dunkeld early in November.

Miscellaneous.

The coal fields of China cover over \$400,000 square miles. A single Province has no less than 81,000 square miles, with veins from 12 to 80 feet thick.

It is intended to erect on a suitable place in the centre of London statues to the memory of Wycliffe and Tyndale, in connection with their efforts to secure "a free and open Bible" for the people.

Be men! Beware of the tyranny of trade. Beware of its hold on your spirits. Let it be very much without you, that when you have done it, it may not leave its mark on you.—Pulsford.

It appears that Evangelical Christianity in Boston and vicinity is largely on the increase. In 1850 the Liberal churches numbered about half as many as the Evangelical; 1870, they were about one-third as many.

The parish of Crathie, Balmoral, the Queen's Church, is shortly to become vacant in consequence of the promotion of the Rev. Dr. Taylor, the present minister, to the charge of the church of Morningside, in Edinburgh.

An English reviewer thinks that Jonathan Edwards was by nature intended to be a meditative Professor in a German university, rather than a minister in a restless and money-making colony with a craving for excitement of all kinds.

Dr. Littledale, of England, estimates that out of the 20,000 clergy of the English Church 10,000 belong to the various altitudes of the High-church party, 5,000 to the Low-church, 3,000 to what he calls the colorless or nondescript, and 2,000 to the Broad-church party.

The Father of all mercies has given us to believe not in a wooden but a living Christ. And if Satan towers yet higher, and rages more fiercely, he shall not weary us out, unless he could tear down Christ from the right hand of God.

A Methodist clergyman gives, as a part of his experience, that sinners striving after sinless perfection are easily managed, but that those of his flock who attain to it, become thenceforward exceedingly crooked and contrary sticks.

Among the distinguished men attending the Evangelical Alliance is the Rev. Narayan Shehadri, the Free Church native preacher of India. In England and Scotland he has attracted great attention by his eloquent missionary addresses. He speaks English with great correctness and facility.

Mr. George Smith has just discovered the fragments of an ancient Assyrian Canon, from the Babylonian copy of which the much contested Canon of Berous was unquestionably derived. This relic will form the substance of a paper shortly to be read before the Society of Biblical Archeology by its fortunate discoverer.

Some of the British papers expressed indignation at the bad taste, to say nothing of the implied blasphemy, of Mr. Morley in writing the sacred names God, Christ, &c., without capitals. The best rebuke which we remember to have seen was the proposition of a correspondent in an English paper, that Mr. Morley should be addressed as Mr. John Morley.

Bishop Quintard, of Tennessee, has written a letter affirming the real presence of the body and blood in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which he declares to be a true Protestant doctrine. Perhaps some other Episcopal dignitary will soon declare that the infallibility of the Pope is a "true Protestant doctrine."

The first ear of corn, a bunch of grapes, and early fruit of any kind, awakens a strange delight. "That we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures."—James 1; 18. It looks as though redeemed men would be such, in the view of other beings, owing to the infinite cost at which we have been produced in this most unpromising and once accursed field.—N. Adams.

A Presbyterian church organization has been completed in Spain, under the title of "Spanish Christians church." This organization is composed of the union of two separate movements, of which the first step toward union was made at Selville, in 1871. It comprises sixteen different congregations, four of which are in Madrid, and they are divided into four Presbyteries. The Confession of Faith is founded upon the Westminster Catechism.

There are some varieties among the descendants of Ham as among those of Shem and Japhet. In fact, the retreating forehead and prominent jaws are the exception in Africa as a whole. Tribes almost contiguous may be physically exceedingly unlike. The Bojesmen in South Africa, for instance, are small in body, stunted in mind; their language is not much more than a gibberish.

There is an old gentleman living in Owen county, Indiana, ninety years of age, who has been a minister of the gospel from his youth, and has had eleven children, all sons and all ministers. He has of children, grand children and great grandchildren three hundred and four. And, strange to say, there has been but two deaths in all his family—the two wives of the old gentleman.

Unto one of the Shetland Islands, and the Ultima Thule of the group, has for its Free Church minister probably the most aged minister in Christendom. This venerable man, the Rev. Dr. Ingram, is now in his 98th year, and our Berwick correspondent writes that he attended a Sunday-school 72 in the island a few days ago, and addressed the children on the occasion. The doctor, though his years number within two of one hundred, is in good bodily health, and has no appearance of the decrepitude of age about him. His voice is still full and strong. Last year his portrait, painted by Mr. Otto Leyde, was presented to the Free Church of Shetland.