

FOR THE CHURCH CHRONICLE.

Rev. and Dear Sir,—Permit me to bring to your notice, for insertion in the *Church Chronicle*, the following striking and valuable leading article from the *Church Journal* of the 14th inst., published in New York. The concluding paragraph of that article does indeed seem to indicate "light from the darkest quarter."

I remain,

Your faithful servant,

R. W. LOWRY.

LIGHT FROM THE DARKEST QUARTER.

In contemplating the reunion of the three great divisions of Christendom, the Oriental, the Roman, and the Anglican, the prospect of success always looks the darkest from the Roman quarter. Rome has the decided majority of all Christendom as to numbers. Rome, by her arrogance, her tyranny, her corruptions doctrinal and practical, has been the great and original author of the existing divisions. By her alliances with secular governments she has gained a peculiar power, which has been strengthened by her secular sovereignty. By her practical developments she has gone on, making the logical necessity of division broader and deeper with the lapse of time. By her assumed infallibility she contrives to shoulder all the burden of the past, as well as the increasing load of the present. By her professed principles, she is pledged to resist all reunion, except on terms of unconditional surrender to her absolute despotism. She will not even permit her people to unite with us in the private use of an entirely unobjectionable prayer for such peace and unity as are agreeable to Our Lord Christ. This, at least, is her official and ostensible position, according to the past and present temper of the Court of Rome.

But there are symptoms that this monstrous overgrowth of assumption is beginning to break down of its own weight. There is a strong and fearful probability that when it breaks it will produce—as Dr. Pusey so sadly forecasts in his *Eirenicon*—a fearful flood of unbelief, so as to be one chief means of the bringing in of the reign of Antichrist. And the infidelity and blasphemy which are to, so great an extent mingled with the present movement against the Papacy in Italy, together with the terrible prevalence of those evils in France and Germany also, point but too surely to the bitter fruits that are ripening in that direction. Yet there is, at the same time, an entirely different set of symptoms, looking towards the return of a large portion of those who are now under the Roman obedience, towards a more truly ancient and catholic position, both as to doctrine and discipline.

The school of theologians to which the late Abbé Laborde belonged in France, and the Abbé Guettée (until he became an Oriental), and Prompsault, and d' Erlanger, and the author of *Le Maudit*, and many others, with the Archbishop of Paris at their head (in sympathy), their organs being the *Observateur Catholique* and the *Union Chrétienne*, is a school of steadily increasing importance. In Italy, the party among the ecclesiastics who are looking to a genuine Reform upon the ancient basis, is gaining in strength from day to day. In Germany, the party was represented by the late Hirscher, and its living head is Dollinger—by general consent the profoundest and most learned theologian on the Continent. In Teutonic Europe, indeed, real Ultramontanism is scarcely to be found.

But it is in England that we find the most promising signs, because under the most unpromising circumstances. Romanists being there but a small minority of the population, the constant and urgent struggle for existence and growth would