

Current Topics.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

THAT was a very notable convention which met in Association Hall in the month of April. The meeting of leading men of light and learning of the different Churches gathered for friendly consultation as to points of agreement in Christian faith and practice, and for devising means for promoting Christian unity and co-operation in Christian work, cannot fail to be greatly helpful in bringing those Churches nearer together, even if it do not lead to organic union. It is said that no similar convention has been held since the Reformation. It is no small honour to our country that here, where the most conspicuous examples of Christian unity in the consolidation of the several branches of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches have taken place, this further effort at union of Christendom should be attempted.

There are few notes to which the great heart of Christendom so strongly responds as to that of Christian unity. In all evangelical Churches there is, we believe, a yearning to repair the breaches and heal the strifes of the past. The liberalizing spirit of the age is breaking down the barriers which have kept Christian Churches and Christian people apart. As more of the spirit of the Master abounds in the heart, more love will abound to our brethren of other sections of Christ's Church. Too long have the Churches been estranged from one another, often persecuting one another—"at one time with the sword of the State, at another time with the more cruel swords of pen and tongue."

It behooves all earnest Christians—all who desire to see the complete and final victory of Christ's kingdom over the kingdom of Satan and sin—to labour and pray for this spirit of unity and co-operation in the work of bringing the world to the

feet of Jesus. In the words of the common creed of Christendom, "we believe in the Holy Catholic Church,"—the whole body of true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet how often have wrath, strife, envy, and all uncharitableness marked the conduct toward each other of the different sections of that Catholic Church? Thank God that a brighter day is dawning, that the hearts of Christians in the different Churches are yearning toward each other, and that they are stretching out hands of brotherly greeting over the barriers which so long have kept them apart. May the time soon come when everywhere shall be realized the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace—when Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

We do not ask, Is an intimate organic union, exhibiting complete oneness of doctrine, and discipline, and mode of worship—such as that which, under the blessing of God, has put an end to the divisions by which Canadian Methodism has been rent during half a century—we do not ask, we say, Is such a union as this possible? But, Is a Christian union, which—while recognizing diverging schools of thought, and traditional or national modes of worship, or even varying ecclesiastical politics—shall bind with the bonds of a common love, and common zeal, and common work *all*—by whatever name they are named—who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth? We not only believe that this is possible, but that it is as sure as the never-failing Word of God. "Yes," is the answer that Faith must give, "for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

We rejoice that the centrifugal repulsions which have so long divided and weakened the moral forces of