

The Evangelist.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—ACTS XVII. 11.

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NEW YEAR'S DAY.
Evil have been my years, and few;
Of these one more has roll'd away;
Come, then, my soul, the past review
This new year's day.

By the Redeemer's cleansing blood
Dost thou appear in white array?
Art thou, my soul, at peace with God
This new year's day?

In flow'ry paths where dangers roan,
Has folly taught my steps to stray?
Or am I nearer to my home
This new year's day?

And would I rise on wings of love,
And heavenward speed my joyful way,
If God my soul should hence remove
This new year's day?

O God! I how before thy throne,
And thus with quiv'ring lips I pray:
Accept and seal me for thine own
This new year's day!

Mary S. B. Dana, in the
Am. Christian Observer.

THE LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE.

The following is the introduction to the address referred to, with a short extract, on the second page of our last number:—

To those throughout the World who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

The Church of Christ has all along been one. It is made up of all those, and only those, who in every place, and of every party, believe on the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, and obey him as their Sovereign. One life pervades the whole band of discipleship—that life of which the regenerating Spirit is the source: so that they are vitally one. And in the eye of Omnipotence one prevailing character marks them all—a character predominating over all singularities of creed, and peculiarities of temper and practice—the all-absorbing feature of oneness with Christ. Vitally one,—viewed from the highest of all standing points, they are visibly one.

And there was once a time when nothing was more notorious than the Church's unity. From no peculiar gait, from no studious uniformity, but from the warmth of their affections and the depth of their sympathies, so obvious was their oneness that mere onlookers said, "Behold these Christians, how they love one another!" Filled with the Holy Ghost, "the multitude of believers were of one heart and of one soul."

But these days have passed away, and for ages a divided Church has been the lamentation of the holiest men; and the healing of its divisions has been the anxious problem of many of the Church's wisest members. Various schemes have been suggested. Some have sought the remedy in vigorous legislation. They have recommended as the cure of discord a general council followed up by the edicts of kings and emperors. They have said, "Let the most learned divines assemble and determine the true theology; and then let the rulers of the land enforce it. Let royal proclamation or act enjoin one creed, one worship, and one polity throughout the country, and then we shall have unity." And it is with this view that the decrees of councils have so often been enforced by civil law, and that dissent from the legalized religion has so often been made a crime forbidden by the statute and punished by the judge. But another and milder class—aware that compulsion is not concord, and that a forced concord is not faith—have tried another plan. They have taken up the points of difference, and have defined and explained and distinguished, and have attempted to show that after all there is no diversity, but that Lutherans and Calvinists and Arminians mean the same thing, though they have an unfortunate way of expressing their mutual harmony; or if there really be some discrepancy, it is so slight that they might well consent to split the difference. On this system Richard Baxter tried to reconcile the advocates of a limited and a universal atonement, and Archbishop Usher sought to unite the opposing forms of Episcopacy and Presbytery. But the usual upshot of these eclectic efforts is a new division, and the *via media* proves a *via terrena*. The difference is split, but the division is not healed. Another and an increasing class have, therefore, felt that Christian concord can never be effected by civil compulsion on the one hand, nor by a scheme of giving and taking on the other. They feel that Christian Union is an affair of neither legislation nor logic; but, as in the beginning, must be the result of love. Intelligent enough to distinguish the outward differences of his brethren, but perspicacious enough, through all peculiarities, to discover their vital identity—magnanimous enough to overlook much that he may reckon odd or erroneous, for the sake of more that he deems noble and right—full of that regenerate instinct which loves the Saviour's image more than his own facsimile, and shining in those holy beauties which win each Christian heart—so amiable as to make his fellowship an object of desire, so cordial and catholic that he rejoices to give it, but withal so loyal to the truth, and so explicit in his conduct, that he can give it, without suspicion of his personal soundness—style of Christianity far above that truncated sectarianism which, to fix it in the chain of orthodoxy, has nothing but on the one side the book of rigid opinionateness, and on the other the eye of some iron article—he is the complete, and right-hearted disciple, and his the true attitude for Union, who lays the warm hand of affection on one, and holds out the pure hand of attraction to another. In healing the dissensions of a divided Church, legis-

lation will fail, and logic will fail, but LOVE will never fail.

The address proceeds to describe efforts which have been made for drawing Christians more closely together, followed up by the meeting of the Conference at Liverpool, and the basis of union as printed in our number of Nov. 13:—it offers the recommendation of forming an institution to be called THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE, and, to prevent misconception, it is at once stated that it is not intended to ask any *surrender* of conscientious convictions—not that any one should *conceal* his religious convictions—not that any denominational effort or attempt at ecclesiastical development should cease. These disclaimers are enlarged upon at some length, and the aim of the Alliance is proposed to be, "1st, to promote a closer intercourse, and warmer affection among the people of God now scattered abroad." Under this head we find the following passage:—

Dear Brethren,—The Evangelical Alliance is primarily a Society for the increase and diffusion of Christian love. Love is a noble grace, and any pains expended in fostering and spreading it will be well bestowed. The magnanimity which bears the infirmities of the weak, the charity which receives one another as Christ also received us, the consideration which denies itself and pleases a neighbour for his good, the love which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things,"—this love is as rare as it is Christ-like—as difficult as it is divine. To our proud carnality there may be something more commanding in the boisterous and belligerent attributes; but to a sanctified apprehension there is something more sublime in his brave charity who quells a feud, or subdues his own offended spirit. He may be a valiant man who points his gun in the hour of battle; but he is a bolder man who lifts the shell from the crowded deck and flings it hissing into the surge. He may be a valiant spirit who, muzzle to muzzle, piles his roaring artillery in the belthoored and reluctant Church, and waves his victorious stamp as he sees the hostile flag come down; but he is the trust here, who, espousing an explosive mischief on deck—a bomb fraught with foolish questions and logomachies, contrives to pitch it timely overboard. There may be something august in the dark thunder-cloud as it roars and grumbles over quaking fields; but there is something mightier and more wondrous in the lightning-rod which is gradually stealing from that cloud its fiery elements, and converting its dicky wrath into harmless vapour. And there is something commanding in the flashing, zealous, and muttering orthodoxy of the surcharged disputant—something that calls a ruseful attention to himself in the wilful spirit as he heaves his towering bulk against a happy Church and the smiling firmament; but there is something nobler in that wise and quiet spirit, that lightning-rod, whose gentle interference and noiseless operations are drawing off the angry sparkles, and thinning the gloomy mischief into azure and daylight again. And there may be grandeur in the hail-storm which hurls its icy boulders over a dismantled province—which strews the battered sod with dead birds and dragged branches, and leaves the forest a grisly waste of riven trunks and leafless antlers. But who does not rather bless the benignant rain as it comes tenderly down on the mown grass, or the rainbow as it melts in fragrant drops and glowing flowers, and then from grateful fields and laughing hills glides back into its parent sun? Even so, there may a terrible importance attend the rattling zealot, who sends a storm of frozen dogmas through Christendom or through his particular society, and leaves it a desolation—where certain kills some weeds, but demolishes each radiant flower and annihilates the season's crop. Yet who does not rather pray that his may be the brotherly kindness which dissolves in mild enchantment on sultry natures, and in genial invigoration on such as are drooping or dying—a transforming love like his whose calm descending is forthwith followed by the flourishing of righteousness and the abundance of peace?

We extract a passage on the second aim proposed by the Alliance, namely—

To exhibit as far as possible the existing oneness of the Christian Church. It may sometimes be a mere pretext for carelessness, but we believe it is often a real stumbling-block to earnestness, that Christians are so divided; and though it may be very just to argue that amid all this diversity there is an actual identity, it would be more convenient to exhibit it. The communion of saints is a tenet in every creed, and a matter of regenerate consciousness with every Christian; but to a worldly man it is a thing so recalcitrant, in affair of such delicate induction, and contradicted by so many appearances, that he may well be excused for overlooking it. As a source of comfort to Christians, this latent unity is valuable; but before it can become an argument and an element of influence on those who are without, this latent unity must be made obvious and palpable, and if possible, notorious.

And does not this unity exist? Independently of the outward character which they exhibit, are there not certain great facts which all Christians credit, and certain feelings which all Christians share in common? That the Bible is the word of God—that our earth was visited eighteen centuries ago by the Son of God incarnate—that in his sufferings and death he effected an atonement for sinners of mankind—that this atonement is available to the entire and instant justification of the sinner who believes in Jesus—that Christ now lives and reigns the Head of his ransomed Church—and that the Holy Spirit is sent

forth into the world to convince of sin, and to conduct souls to the Saviour, and to sanctify the children of God: truths like these every Christian credits. There may be favourite ways of stating them, and there may be different ways of systematising and arranging them; but there is no variance as to their revealed reality and historic verity; they are *facts* which have the suffrage of consenting Christendom. And even so there are certain *feelings* which distinguish the whole family of the faithful—complacency in the revealed character of the living God, love to his holy law, hatred of sin, a desire to do their Heavenly Father's will and possess his conscious favour, zeal for his honour, love to his people, and delight in his worship; these affections, whether constant or intermittent—whether vivid or more vague, every disciple of Jesus knows them. Every man is a Christian who rests on the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, who obeys him as his Lord, and who rejoices in him as his all-sufficient Friend. And as all Christians are united in LOVE AND LOYALTY TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, why should they not proclaim to the world their one opinion regarding him?

In treating of united measures for the defence and extension of the common Christianity, as a third object, the address says:—

Even now there are many Antichrists. The priestly office of our blessed Lord is nullified by Socinianism, and similar systems, which make the sinner his own Saviour. His prophetic office is assailed by Romanism and Romaniac theology, which reserve what the Saviour revealed, and shut those Scriptures which the Saviour bids us search. And his kingly office is impugned, and his royal claim rejected by a lawless world, and a large amount of licentious priesthood—whilst each office of the Saviour is impugned by many of the afore-mentioned, and other forms of error. There are many adversaries; and it is time that right-hearted men were striving together in the defence of the Gospel. To meet the insidious infidelity and Atheistic blasphemy of some—the soul-deluding superstition of others—the profligacy and flagrant immorality of many more—to meet the entire godlessness of this Bible-burning, Bible-wrestling, and Bible-abhorring age, demands the united energies of all to whom the Bible is inspiration and the Saviour Divine.

The small progress and scanty triumphs of the Gospel are not owing to its inherent weakness, nor to the fewness of its friends. The Gospel is mighty. The truth of eternity—the power of God is in it; and its believers are many—perhaps never so numerous as now: and their aggregate resources are immense. It is astonishing, when you consider the amount of learning and intellectual opulence, and social influence—it is delightful to recount the various accomplishments and talents which, in one form or another, and within this living age, have been laid at the Saviour's feet. And whilst the Church is numerous and powerful, there is no lack of zeal. There are vitality, and energy, and sometimes stupendous exertion; but the misery is, that so much of it is zeal mispent—that so much of it is energy devoted to mutual destruction. The elastic vapour which murmurs in the earthquake, or explodes in the mud volcano, if properly secured or turned on in the right direction, might send the navy of an empire all round the world, or clothe with plenty an industrious realm. And the zeal which has hitherto rumbled in ecclesiastical earthquakes, and left no nobler mementos than so many steaming cones—so many mud-craters, on the sides of the great controversial Jorillo,—if rightly directed, might long before this time have sent the Gospel all over the globe, and covered a rejoicing earth with the fruits of righteousness. The river which Ezekiel saw was a tiny till when it first escaped from the temple, but a course of a thousand cubits made it acre deep, and a few more furrows saw it a river that he could not pass over—the waters were waters to swim in. And this is the course of the Gospel, when Christians do not hinder it. But instead of clearing the common channel, and strengthening the main embankments for its universal and world-glaudening flow, the effort hitherto has been to divert it all into denominational reservoirs. Each one has gone with his spade and pick-axe—has breached the grand embankments, and tried to tempt the mighty stream into his own more orthodox canal. And the consequence of these sectarian efforts—these poor attempts to monopolize the Gospel—the consequence is, that like a certain river in the southern hemisphere which has only been known to reach the ocean once during the last thirty years—betwixt the searching secularities over head, and the selfish interpretations of the stream, it is only now and then that the Gospel is allowed to flow far enough to fertilize new territory, and gladden weary souls. But a better day is coming, and these movements we hail as its dawn. Instead of monopolizing or dividing the stream—instead of breaking its banks, or interrupting its course—our individual and our united efforts shall hereafter seek to clear its channel, and deepen its flow; and the work of our different denominations shall be, not to pierce the bank or dig diverting canals, but each to strengthen the enclosing mounds and remove the interrupting rocks as it sweeps along against their respective territories. Thus acting, thus seeking not their own things, but the things of Jesus Christ; we shall soon behold the little stream which welled up at Jerusalem eighteen hundred years ago, holding on its prosperous course. We shall see life leaping in its sunny ripple, and a joyful world resorting to its genial current; we shall see one fold reposing on its green margin, and beside the still waters one shepherd leading them. And best of all,

on its teeming brink we shall again behold the long exotic Tree of Life—its laden branches mirrored in the tranquil tide, and showering on the azure amplitude its leaves of heavenly healing.

As means by which the friends of union may most effectually advance their object, the address recommends: Personal adhesion to the Alliance—the diffusing of information on the subject—pecuniary contributions—simultaneous weekly petitions to the throne of grace, in secret and in families, suggesting the forenoon of Monday as the time for that purpose.

A GERMAN CHRISTIAN

ON THE TRACTARIAN VIEWS OF EPISCOPACY.

Allow me to add in a few words, in what way and for what reasons I do and ever shall protest against another and widely different view of Episcopacy and its *absolute* right. Not, if apologetically a Church, like that of England, says, through some of her not authoritative organs, although it *may be* by fathers and luminaries, that the *apostolic succession*, taking this ministry as an indivisible body, but as a ministry in the Church, not as the Church itself is only manifest and efficient, if it includes Episcopacy; and therefore it is even identical and exclusively identical with Episcopal succession. I certainly cannot consider this otherwise than many similar points in English life, viz., as the *insular idiosyncrasy* in declaring and embodying a *catholic truth*, and as the national expression of a catholic principle. If the national Church finds it convenient to express thus a principle in a national form, the misunderstanding of which she has guarded against by Liturgy and Articles, and the unlimited acknowledgement of the paramount authority of the Bible, no wise man will therefore quarrel with her, although it may be good she should from time to time be made aware of the difference between idea and form, of relative and absolute *right*, and above all, between *right* and *truth*. But if *and whenever* Episcopacy is to be made the badge of churchship not constitutionally and nationally (which is lawful constitution of national sovereignty), but of principle and catholicity:—*if the Church*, as manifesting itself and existing through Episcopacy, is to take place of *Christ* and the *Spirit* who alone can give real churchship, because new life (viz., filial thankfulness and self-devotion) springing out of the divinely free will, instead of the feeling of accustomedness and despair, consequences of the bondage of self)—*if coextensive salvation* is to be made dependent upon this Episcopacy, then I think the *deathblow* is aimed at the Church's inmost life, the eternal decree of condemnation is passed upon her, unless she repeat, For she is seeking salvation in man, and not in God—in the beggarly elements of this world, and not in the Divine life, source of all life, and sole deliverer from death and corruption; she is attacking the glorious liberty of the children of God; Christ's redeemed, and the native citizens of Christ's kingdom; she is crucifying Christ, and practically denying the merits of his sacrifice. Not the Gentiles, but the Jews crucified Christ, and so they do still. Of all this I feel convinced, as I feel convinced of the existence of God, and as I believe in the saving death and divinity of Christ, and in the ever renewing almighty power of the Spirit. I hope I should feel so, although to my deep affliction, if God had made me to be born in the Roushian Church. I do not say any particle of this as a Protestant, although I bless the Reformers for having taught it me, opening to me the sense of Scripture and Church history. But it is unnecessary to add, that I should consider it as a privilege; I act (besides its being godless in my mind, at all events) if I did not vow to devote all the energies of my mind, insignificant as they are, and the last drop of my blood, to protest against such an Episcopacy in the Church of that nation to which it is my privilege (I say so in thankfulness) to belong. If an angel from heaven should manifest to me, that by introducing, or asserting, or favouring only, the introduction of such an Episcopacy into any part of Germany, I should not only make the German nation glorious and powerful over all the nations of the world, nay, combat successfully the unbelief, pantheism, atheism of the day—I should not do it, so help me God. Amen! We may be doomed to perish, Church and State; but we must not be saved and cannot be saved by seeking life in externals.—*Letter from Chevalier Buisson to the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.*

TRACTARIAN DEFERENCE TO EPISCOPAL AUTHORITY.

Pastoral Letter from the Right Rev. M. Eastburn, D. D., Bishop of the Prot. Ep. Church in Massachusetts, to the Clergy of his Diocese.

REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN:—A deep sense of the responsibility attached to my office, as the chief Pastor of this portion of our common fold, has constrained me to address you on a subject, in regard to which I would fain, if duty would have permitted, have remained silent.

It is already known to you, that towards the close of the last year, a parish was incorporated in the north-western part of this city, under the name of the Church of the Advent. Its commencement afforded me sincere pleasure; and, having been begun with the avowed intention, on the part of the respectable persons engaged in it, of establishing a Church with free sittings, I commended it to the liberal aid of the Episcopalians of Boston. On the evening of Sun-

day, the 23rd of last month, according to previous appointment, I visited the temporary place of worship of this parish for the purpose of administering the apostolic rite of Confirmation; and there observed, to my inexpressible grief and pain, various offensive innovations upon the ancient usage of our Church. In the form of the Communion Table; in the decorations of golden candlesticks; and of a large wooden cross, by which it is surmounted; and in the postures used in front of it by the Assistant Minister, who, as I learned from the Rector, was only conforming to the constant practice of the latter on all occasions except the service of that evening; I perceived with sorrow superstitious puerilities of the same description with those, which already, in the case of another parish Church of this Diocese, had called forth a public expression of disapprobation, *first from my revered predecessor*, now resting from his labours, and subsequently from myself, in the Address to the Convention of 1841.

I feel, my reverend brethren, that I should be guilty of a dereliction of plain duty, were I not to express, in this public manner, my utter and unqualified condemnation of these practices, carried on in the principal city of the Diocese, and under my own immediate eye. Were these novelties nothing more than childish, they would be on that account sufficiently objectionable to call forth my censure; for it certainly must be a fit subject of rebuke, that there should be found a disposition among any of the Clergy to abandon, in their mode of conducting divine service, that masculine simplicity and dignity, by which our beloved and venerable Church both here and in England, has been so long and so justly distinguished. But chiefly do I condemn these innovations upon established custom, because of their pointed and offensive resemblance to the usages of that notorious Papal Communion, against which our Prayer Book so strenuously protests; and because, where a Communion Table is fitted up like a Romish altar, and certain postures are used by the Clergy indicative of reverence towards that altar, the certain effect of such a spectacle is to produce gradually among the congregation those very corruptions, in regard to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, from which, by the good providence of God, we have been so graciously delivered. Those who are familiarized, by the officiating minister, with the forms of error, will fall, by an imperceptible but sure process, into error itself, and thus our people will be led, by the very services in which they engage while actually within the bosom of our own Protestant Church, into doctrinal departures of the most grievous and vital character. And in addition to these considerations, I will not dispense the pain which such practices give me on another account,—namely, the ridiculous and contempt to which they expose the Church of our affections, from all sensible and enlightened persons of other Christian bodies.

In view of the dangers above stated, and considering this subject as far from being a mere matter of taste and fancy, about which men may safely differ, I have already privately remonstrated against the novelties adopted in the Church of the Advent; and have expressed my views, as opportunity offered, to various individuals. But, knowing that this mode of signifying disapprobation, must, of necessity, be limited in the extent to which it reaches, and fearing lest my supposed silence should, in any part of this Diocese, be construed into acquiescence in things which I condemn, and which I regard as pregnant with evil, I embrace the present method of letting my sentiments be more widely known. It is a pleasure to me to feel well assured, that with the usages referred to, and with the unsound and unchurch-like theology to which they belong, a great majority of the Clergy over whom God has given me the oversight have no sympathy. But others are constantly entering our ranks; and may need, especially the younger of them, to be warned against the imitation of such examples. Whether the course adopted in the parish referred to will be continued or not, it is beyond my ability to conjecture; but however this may be, I shall have the satisfaction of feeling that I am clear of the responsibility of being a silent spectator of irregularities, degrading to the character of our Church, and perilous to the souls of our people.

That your heart's desire, my reverend brethren, in your high and holy calling, may be to set forth the unsearchable riches of Christ to a world lying in sin and death, is the prayer of your affectionate Diocesan,

MASTON EASTBURN.

Boston, December 2, 1845.

TESTIMONY TO THE WORK OF CONVERSION IN FRANCE.

Sir.—As the letter of Monsieur le Pastourel to the Committee of the Foreign-Aid Society, which was published in the *Record* of the 30th ult., refers to me as having visited with him, the scene of his labours in the Haute Vienne, I beg leave to state, that during the last month, on my return from the south of France, I met this devoted servant of God at Limoges, and accompanied him, partly on foot to visit the stations of the Haute Vienne; that I saw the church he mentions at Limoges, then nearly finished (and which has since been opened), as also the church at Baudent. On the Sabbath I attended Divine service in the morning at the church of Raucon, where I had the pleasure of hearing M. Rous, I preach to a congregation of about 250 persons, male and female. The service was solemn and impressive, and the attention of the congregation was very marked. From thence we walked some leagues to Ville Favard, where