

the more noteworthy when we read that at Oxford a bull baiting took place at the Jubilee celebration. Another Jubilee scene is difficult to realise, there were 6,715 French prisoners in Portsmouth at the time, to each of whom three pence was given. The debtors' prisons were relieved of their inmates, and doubtless they and theirs, more than any others, rejoiced at the Jubilee of King George III.—*The Graphic*.

THE PRESBYTERIANS ON CHURCH REUNION.

THE memorial or "overture" (in the Presbyterian dialect), adopted by the New York and New Jersey Presbyteries, which are the chief representatives of Presbyterianism in this country, in response to the declaration of our House of Bishops, are in their spirit and dignity far behind the action of the Congregationalists of Connecticut, and the Baptists of this State, which treated the matter with seriousness and honesty, as realising the evils of divisions among Christians. Proff. Schaff and Proff. Shedd must have chuckled in their sleeves when they put their names to such a document, even if the former did not draw it up. It has exactly the artifice and "smartness" that best preserve the traditions of Presbyterian cleverness in dealing. It reminds one of the modern science of politics, by which laws are passed that *nobody* believes in, only to pacify a faction, catch the votes of a class interest, or to "corner" a Governor or head off a political party. It is the kind of utterance that men never make in their individual, but only a "corporate" capacity, and it is an old saying that corporations have no conscience.

If, however, we are to take them as meaning what they say, one would infer, that, in spite of all the increase of education and learning in these days, and the more Catholic tendencies of modern thought, they prefer to throw themselves back upon the "horrible decrees" of the Westminster Confession, which, like Mahomet and the Koran, they once enforced with fire and sword throughout Old and New England.

In the first place, they affect to accept the Bishops' statement of the Scriptures, but add to it, that "the Holy Spirit teaching in the Scriptures, is the Supreme Judge of all questions of religion, doctrine and morals." Of course this implies that every man is his own judge of truth with such help from Divine Light as he may claim to have—which is Quakerism. It implies what contradicts Scripture itself, that there is no Habitation of God through the Spirit on earth, no Body of Christ, to which the Spirit's abiding is promised, no Pillar or Ground of the Truth, no keeper and witness of God's Word, no authority in the world in controversies of faith; but that if Wesley claims to have it revealed to him that Calvinism is a falsehood and delusion, or Whitfield equally pronounces Arminianism such, both are right in preaching so, and the Supreme Judge "speaking (only) in the Scriptures" reserves the decision to the

next world. This defiance of Christ in His own Kingdom, this unbelief in the reality of the Incarnation, furnishes its first postulate to the popular infidelity to the Ingersoll class.

Their second proposition recognises the Nicene Creed as an "admirable statement," &c., but adds, that "they also regard it as a duty to hold fast to the Westminster Confession as the symbol of their own faith, believing that it contains the system of doctrine taught in Holy Scripture." The Nicene Creed is a symbol, but is any platform or statement by a party among Christians a "symbol?" This is of a piece with Dr. Schaff's studied effort to destroy the distinction between "the faith wherein we stand and whereby we are saved," which we use as an act of worship in the Historical Church, and any mere string of theological definitions and ecclesiastical opinions set forth in such documents as the XXXIX. Articles, Augsburg and Westminster Confessions, Saybrook Platforms, &c. The Synod of Dort, the Lambeth Articles and the Dublin Articles were all predecessors of the Westminster Assembly's concoction, and why not just as good? They all gave the five points of Calvinism just as bitter. But it was because the Church would not admit them into the XXXIX. that the Westminster Assembly was called to enact treason against the Church. And yet it is an everyday declaration of Presbyterian ministers that they want no more Calvinism than there is in the XXXIX. Articles. But these gentlemen here tell the world that they prefer to stick to the good old predestination "without any foresight of faith or good works." It is simply degrading to see the Catholic symbol of all Christendom thus dragged down to a level with some abhorrent local fanaticism.

The third proposition is a mere truism, as to means of grace, but does the Holy Ghost "use them" without "using" any ministry to administer them? The Kingdom is Christ's, the Divine-Human High Priest, and it is the office of the Holy Ghost to take Christ's things and show them to us—to make Christ's sacraments efficacious and give to us what He promised.

The last proposition declares that they believe in the "presbyter bishop" and that they find this "presbyter-bishop in all ages in unbroken succession until the present day." It is hard to see what this means unless it means sublime audacity. If they should claim that the Apostles were elders, we can't contradict, but would that do away with the two distinct orders of Apostles and Elders? All clergy are *ministers*, but does that reduce the higher orders to deacons? Calvin's parody of the Church organizations is itself a witness to the three orders—of the ministry, not the laity. That the word "overseer" was applied to presbyters in single congregations does not disprove the statement of Theodoret, that the same word was used for the successors of the Apostles. Even Mosheim challenges the Presbyterians to show that the Angels of the Seven Churches were presbyters and declares they never can. Besides, the Scripture

Presbyters were never laymen, nor the deacons either.

So it is, we have to go over the whole ground again. People fancied Sectarianism was giving up its original spirit and grounds of separation. The movement for unity is merely to induce us to give up all Catholic and Apostolic claims and come down to their level, and so leave to the Church of Rome the only historical character of Catholicity and Apostolicity. What admirable allies of Rome they are, to be sure!—*The Church Eclectic*.

ON FORMS OF PRAYER IN PUBLIC WORSHIP.

FROM reason alone we might infer the propriety of presenting united petitions and supplications under a common form. When a petition is to be presented to the Queen or Parliament, great pains are taken to draw it up in proper form and to compose it in appropriate terms. And if people are so particular when addressing an earthly tribunal or an earthly sovereign, much more surely should they be careful as to what they say when addressing the Almighty Ruler of both heaven and earth, in accordance with the Scriptural precept, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God, for God is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few."—Eccl. v. 2.

It is evident also on grounds of reason that no one can join in a prayer so as to make it his own unless he knows, if not the very words, at least the subject of the matter before hand.—It is perhaps seldom that a so-called extempore prayer is anything more than a collection of phrases often heard before in slightly different order, but if purely original the worshipper have first to hear, then to understand, to consider, to judge, to approve, or reject; but whilst these intellectual processes are engaging the minds of the worshippers, the prayer is going on and several sentences may be lost before they can overtake the minister. He himself, unless he says a form committed to memory, must, of necessity, be searching in his mind for the fittest words and the best modes of expression—to the hearers his prayer may be a sound and nothing more—to himself it may be a mere mental exercise.

Another point perplexing to many, can only be discussed on grounds of reason.—Those who object to the use of forms taken from a book, when the words employed are in prose order, have no scruples about using the same words taken from a book, if in rhyme or metre. But if the same religious feelings be expressed in the one as in the other; if in our Psalms and Hymns we confess our sins, make supplication for ourselves and others, render thanks, and give praise and glory to God; why may not our worship in prose be taken from a book when it expresses the same feelings? Surely St. Paul thought so when he said—"I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit,