

CONTEMPORARY CHURCH OPINION.

The *Southern Churchman*, under the title "Unify," has the following:—

Our *Christian Advocate* neighbor thinks the trouble about unity is in the fact some churches insist upon Episcopal ordination and others upon immersion. As regards this latter, it is a little strange that a custom which did not begin with the earlier Baptists, and which originated less than two hundred years ago, should be considered as essential to baptism.—Episcopal ordination, however, no man can tell its beginning; no man can put his hand upon the time or place where or when it began, until we go back to the Apostles. But suppose both these are on the same footing, the ancient and the modern, and both be given up. Our Methodist brothers have Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Reformed and fifty other churches which insist neither upon episcopacy nor immersion. Are our Methodist brothers living in unity with these? Are they not as much out of unity with those as with us? Manifestly these matters are not the ground of non-unity.—What are the grounds of our divisions? This is the subject which the Bishops in brotherly love ask us all to consider and pray over and then come together to study the subject of the unity of the churches.

The *Church Messenger* takes from the *Biblical Recorder* the following as to the Salvation Army:—

Several times the *Recorder* has pronounced the band of tramp religionists known as the "Salvation Army" as made up of cranks and vagrants. We have watched their history for years. Their methods are not only questionable, they are fanatical. Now, you may see them in one phase now in another, sometimes more or less respectable, at other times decidedly disreputable. But when probed to the heart the system is found to be unhealthy and a great reproach. We noticed their arrival into North Carolina with regret. For, while we were thoroughly aware that most North Carolinians have too much good sense to uphold these erratic stragglers, we also know that nothing was ever started however unreasonable, if possessing some good features, that did not have some sort of following. So it has been with the Salvation Army.

Church Press (N. Y.) says:—

We pray for the conversion of the Jew and others, and it is well.

But do we ever reflect to what we pray they may be converted? To Christ, to be sure; but what, alas, is the body of Christ to which we beg them to come? A sadly divided Christianity is a poor offer to extend and a poor welcome to give the Jew. Beyond a doubt the intelligent Jew realises this, and it is by no means an inducement.

The heathen too, may well pause, confronted with our distracted condition. What stumbling blocks in the way of our chariot-wheels are our sad and needless contentions.

The *Churchman*, N.Y., says:—

It is impossible for the Church to emphasize Easter Day too strongly. It is beyond all measure the greatest day of her history. Christmas and Good Friday are after all but steps that lead up to the unsealed Tomb. The Incarnation and the Crucifixion are vindicated in the Resurrection. The day of birth and the day of death come to all men alike. The day of rising again from the dead has come but to one man among all men. Or if it has come to a Lazarus or to the son of the Galilean widow of Nain, it has come because the resurrection of this one man among men was inevitably to follow. Life for the first time unfolds its true significance when death has done its worst and does not prevail. Life and

immortality are brought to light. A new reading must be put upon the problems of humanity. Out of its struggles, its sorrows, its seeming defeat, its very death, emerges not merely the faint hope of a future gain, but the assured pledge of an eternal victory. It is but the natural, the inevitable instinct of the Church, therefore, to surround the giving of this glorious pledge with all her resources of color, of song, and of joy. She gives no room this day for speculations on immortality, however curious. She even admits no plea for possible hopes. She proclaims with every power of speech and faith that hope has become sight, that "Jesus Christ has risen to-day." She offers her truth and begins her message to mankind precisely as St. Paul declared it eighteen centuries since: "Now is Christ risen from the dead." Her one mighty answer to doubts or ignorance of death and life is that one mighty fact.

It may be that it is impossible that the freshness of that mighty Resurrection shall now be felt. The force that lies in the awful novelty of the first Easter Morn has long since ceased. But the power of it is forever growing. Men and women are the world over, this day, looking the grave in the very face with the calm assurance of faith which they have caught from the crucified and risen Saviour. It may make no startling cry of joy as when Mary fell at her Saviour's feet in the garden of the Tomb. But the deep, strong faith of Mary is here. Duty is accepted, sorrows are endured, death is conquered, and life is gained by thousands, who, without that first great mystery, would lack the strength to do or to be what now they are. The joy of the Church is not, then, alone for the risen Christ, but, indeed; as much for the present Spirit "who dwelleth in our hearts by faith."

The thought of this day must turn chiefly to the risen Christ. The secret of nature, can only be found beyond the fact of death. The dead must be made to live again before science shall pronounce the truth. The laboratory, the anatomist's bench, the chemist's retort can but trace the channels of life in things that have ceased to live, because life flees before their methods. It is only as the student, in faith at least, can make a living synthesis of those lifeless analyses, that he shall lay true hold of a living power. He cannot study a world of dying men and get the truth. He is lost in a maze and puzzle of doubt at once. There is no grasp upon a beneficent theory with nothing before us but countless tombs. A dead world revolving in an eternal void is the inevitable suicide of thought. But this risen Christ reopens the countless graves. He unravels the hopeless maze. He gives truth an eternal progress. In Him alone can man think man and find a living thought.

The *Standard of the Cross* says of Easter:—

I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord. His word itself is invaluable to us. No man's guess, no man's doubt, can give or take away the hope of immortality; but the word of Jesus makes this hope sure. We come back to it from all analogies, and probabilities, and aspirations of men, and it stands alone as the rock of our faith. We believe His word because we trust Him. It corresponds with all His teaching. All the rewards of righteousness which He promised; all the blessings upon character which He pronounced; all the relations with God which He declared, have their enlargement and verification in the rising again from the dead. How else could such words as these be reconciled, spoken as they were in one breath? "Some of you shall they caused to be put to death." "But there shall not a hair of your head perish." Wherein were we of more value than the sparrows if a Heavenly Father did not value us enough to keep us, after rearing and

educating us by the discipline of life here in this world?

But the word of Jesus Christ does not stand alone. His own resurrection was the proof of the reality of His doctrine. The disciples questioned among themselves what the rising from the dead should mean. Even when two of them, Peter and John, saw the grave linen laid in order in the vacant tomb, "they believed," yet "knew not the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead." Even when they heard rumors that one and another had seen Him, they must have lacked a full apprehension of what it was to them, until He stood in the midst of their assembled company, and said, "Peace be unto you." "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."

EASTER SERVICES.

MONTREAL.

Christ Church Cathedral.—There were three celebrations of Holy Communion at the Parish Church [Cathedral] on Easter Day, viz.: at 8, 9:30, and after the 11 o'clock service; there being in all 521 Communicants. The congregations at all the services were large. The musical portion of the mid-day service is said to have been grand and well rendered. Sermons were preached in the morning, by Rev. H. Kittson; Litany service in the afternoon by the Rector, Rev. J. G. Norton, and in the evening by the Rev. Canon Norman. The altar, pulpit and lectern were tastefully decorated with flowers.

St. George's Church.—The services at this Church were truly appropriate to the nature of the day. The first service was Holy Communion at 9:30, which was attended by such a large number of Communicants that the service lasted until within a quarter of an hour or so of the time fixed for Morning Prayer, giving somewhat the appearance of haste. It would seem that an earlier celebration on the Greater Festivals is necessary to meet the wants of this large Church with its immense body of Communicants. At eleven o'clock the Church was crowded to the doors, and a large choir of men and boys rendered the service with spirit and artistic taste. The *Te Deum* was Smart in F, and the Hymns were appropriate to the day and were joined in heartily by the congregation, who also responded in the same way. The offertory voluntary was the *cantabile* movement from the Sonata "Oh! Filii," "Lemmings," and was finely played by Mrs. Fairclough, the organist and choirmaster. At the evening service the *magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* were Woodward in E flat; and the anthem "Why seek ye the living among the dead," Hopkins. The Church was crowded and the service hearty and congregational, which is caused by the marked enunciation of the boys and their sharpness of attack, carrying the congregation with them. The font was covered with flowers, but such a small quantity was scarcely seen. This Church decorates lavishly for Christmas why not the same for Easter if the principle is at all admitted, which it evidently is.—*Com.*

St. James the Apostle.—As usual this Church was beautifully decorated with flowers, all the special designs being in good taste, except in one particular: the cross above the altar, which, though filled with chosen flowers, was unfortunately too striking through the massing of a large quantity of red or crimson flowers; the points and centre of the cross alone carrying the symbolic white lilies. The effect was not good. There were three celebrations of the Holy Communion, besides morning and evening services. At the latter the musical portions were well rendered under the able supervision of Mr. Harriss and his well trained choir.

St. Stephen's.—The services here were reverent, bright and joyful, as becometh the celebration of the Queen of Church festivals.