

The Christian.

ST JOHN N. B. . . . JULY, 1893.

EDITORIAL.

THE ONENESS OF JESUS' DISCIPLES.

That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. John xvii. 21.

The prayer of Jesus opens up a field for intellectual enjoyment. Each subject He touches in it is to the faithful student a wellspring of life. The little flock He had guarded and fed and kept in His Father's name He was now leaving in a world of temptation, and for them He most anxiously prays to God—prays that they should be kept from the evil in the world and be sanctified or set apart for their great work and be one. He included in this prayer all who should believe in Him through their word. He prays directly, first, for the eleven whom He had chosen to preach His gospel to all mankind; secondly, for all who would believe His gospel; then indirectly, for the world that they might believe in His divine mission through the united efforts of His people. He who died for the world and sent His gospel to all men, prayed for the union of His people that the world might believe on Him. How blessed it is to labor and pray for that oneness so near the Redeemer's heart and so essential to the world's salvation!

But it seems in place here to ask: What is their oneness? and how is it obtained? Says one, "It means to have the same *opinion* on religious matters—to hold the same interpretations—of scriptural passages." But the Bible nowhere says "there is *one opinion*." Nay, it commands Christians to be united to those of a different opinion. This is fully set forth in Rom. xiii. and in I. Cor. viii. So it does not mean oneness of opinion.

Says another, "It means *one faith*." One faith is but one of the seven truths mentioned in this unity, and not even the first of the seven. (Eph. iv. 4.) Faith works and grows, but it must have a congenial element in which to grow—that element is love. So the apostle exhorts those who would "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit, to walk in all lowliness and meekness with long suffering, forbearing one another in love." (Verse 2.) If my brother and I love each other, we are in a proper frame of mind to examine our points of difference and to become of the same mind and of the same judgment. Where love abounds, differences cease. Faith leads to Christian unity, so do hope and love, these three, but the greatest and most effectual of these is love. It is a grand mistake to suppose that sectarianism arose from men's inability to see religious things alike. It is the heart and not the head that leads off into denominationalism, and the heart will lead the van for Christian unity.

The Corinthians started early in their Christian life on the road to denominationalism. One said, "I am of Paul." Another, "I am of Apollos, and I am of Cephas." Why was this? Did Paul preach a different doctrine from Apollos? and Cephas different from both? Certainly not. Would one of them say to the other, "I can't see that passage of scripture as you do?" Not at all, but "I like Paul better than Apollos." Another said, "Apollos is my preacher;" and another says, "There is none of them like Peter," etc., etc.; while another said, "I am of Christ, He is everything to me, He was crucified for me, I was baptized in His name." What was leading to these splits in the Corinthian church? A foolish partiality to men. Paul's manner of presenting the truth reached the minds of one class. Apollos' manner met the condition of other minds, and they contended

each for his favorite preacher. While they admired and contended for their favorite men, they left their first love to Jesus. How well for them and for us that Paul explained the matter, exposed these seeds of schism and taught them that Paul and Apollos were nothing more than servants of God—to whom He had given ability to reach the different minds with the gospel of their salvation, and that they had nothing but what they had received from God, no cause of glorying in themselves, much less for others to glory in. (Read I. Cor. to the close of Chapter 3rd).

When we read the remedy of the Holy Spirit to heal divisions and promote Christian union, it is obvious that these are heart troubles. When Paul writes to a church very near his heart, the nucleus of which he has gathered when he "was shamefully entreated at Philippi," he says: "Fulfill ye my joy that ye be like minded, having the same *love*, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Thus he goes on till he tells them to let this mind be in them which was also in Christ Jesus; tells what Jesus was, what He became till He reaches the death of the cross, and how God has exalted Him, and the glory and honor yet awaiting Him. (Phil. ii.) How encouraging are these remedies to heal the heart trouble and to gain and promote Christian unity. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ." Asking these brethren to accept and hold fast a union with Jesus so that they might be united to each other, sacrificing self to make others happy, loving and doing as Christ has done.

At the 22nd verse Jesus tells what he had given His disciples to unite them, as the Father and He were one. "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them that they may be one, even as we are one." This glory which the Father had given evidently is the union of the human with the divine nature. When the word was made flesh His disciples beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John i. 14 tells when His Father gave Jesus that glory—when the word was made flesh; and the 12th and 13th verses tell when Christ gives His disciples the same glory. He gives them power to become the sons of God when they believe in His name. He took with His own nature the human and gives them power to take with their nature the divine. In that glory, peculiar to Jesus and His redeemed followers, they will shine forever. Jesus gives His disciples a divine nature to unite them as He and His Father are united. The more they have of the divine nature the more they will love each other, and the more anxious they will be to come together. It has often been observed that good men near their end desire the society of the pious in other churches. Although they have not publicly worshipped together in the past, they love to read the Bible and talk and pray together then. They seem to regret, and often they do deplore, the human barriers that have separated them, and to love one another as they are passing on to take their place in the "glorious church."

If it be asked: What are the prospects now of the union of God's people? Are they more favorable than in the past? We think they decidedly are. 1st. There is a very large, if not a general, pleading for such union. In the past it was not so, but a determined contention for division on the plea that more good would be accomplished by it than by union. There is more hope when union is desired. 2nd. There is a kinder feeling among religious parties for each other than in the past. This fact cannot be denied, and it is an important step in the right direction. This leads to a third fact. Men are more willing to talk kindly

together on their points of difference and examine the best grounds of union.

What is our duty in regard to this union? This is a question that requires much time and much prayer to God for divine aid to answer. How blessed to know that He is willing to guide us by His counsel and afterward to receive us to glory! If Jesus gives His disciples a divine nature that they may be united, it is our duty above all things to seek that nature and labor and strive to be like him. This should be our first and great concern. Then we would know how to walk, then we would have power with others and know how to answer every man. Truth is always beautiful, especially when it is spoken in love. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, let us try to get the people to understand and believe it. The ground on which Christians can unite is clearly marked out in the book. Let us hold it and plead for it.

Correspondence.

Dear Christian—After a long silence I propose sending you a few lines. I will not enter into explanations of the causes of my having been so long without sending you a word, it would be too personal to be of general interest. However, I have always hailed with pleasure your monthly advent, and enjoyed reading what others have written. I hope they will find as much pleasure and profit reading what I write.

Viewed in any light New Zealand is a country abounding in interest, its snow capped mountain ranges, its volcanoes, its fertile valleys, its noble aboriginal inhabitants, and its history, growth, and position as a colony all combine to make it a region worthy the attention of the most indifferent. Its religious history, when it comes to be written, will contain chapters of thrilling interest to every follower of Jesus. The noble Maori, when the first missionary came to Maoriland, was a cannibal of a ferocious type, yet at the same time possessing many qualities both of the head and heart above those of the average aboriginal inhabitants of other countries. He is now a tolerably civilized, intelligent and God-fearing mortal. Some of their ancient legends are remarkable. Here is one of the deluge: "The most consecutive and valuable account of a deluge relates that evil being everywhere triumphant in the world, Parawhenuamea and Tapunuianta preached to wicked mortals in vain, and the holy doctrines of Tano and the teachings as to the separation of Rauhi (Heaven) and Papa (Earth) were derided. The evil men cursed Para and Tuper, so these two with their disciples took their stone-axes and felled trees which they dragged to the source of the Tohinga River. They then bound the logs together with ropes of vines and supplejacks, making a very wide raft, on which they built a house and stored it with provisions. They repeated their incantations and prayed for such abundance of rain as to prove the power of Tano and the necessity for ceremonial worship. Para, Tuper, Tui, Reti, a woman named Waipunaban, and some other women embarked upon the raft. The staff for rain was set up and Tui, the priest, uttered an incantation. It rained in floods for five days and nights until the mountains were covered and then ceased. The raft had floated down the River Tohinga and entered the waste of waters wherein all had perished who denied the worship of Tano. They floated about on the raft during seven moons, and on the eighth were told by Tui that the flood was about to subside, he knowing by the signs of the staff, and by the altar which he erected on one side of the deck. The rescued mortals landed on dry earth at Hawaiki. They thought at first to find some human beings, but none remained, the earth was changed, it had cracked in parts, and had been turned upside