

he foresaw only a thousandth part of the evils which would spring from schism, well might he endure an agony of solicitude for the peace of the church of Colosse! Would an entreaty less pathetic, or a concern less profound, have been suited to the magnitude of the occasion? Where, then, is the energy of appeal, and the anguish of concern, which would be equal to the divisions of the Church now? Christian, there is not an object in the wide creation, which does not sympathise in solicitude for our peace—there is not a holy intelligence in the universe, which does not join in an entreaty, urging us for Christ's sake, to unite. They are all interested in it:—from Him who sits on the throne “expecting till his enemies are made his footstool,” and waiting for his followers to unite for that end, through all ranks of holy existences round about his throne, and down through every class of this lower creation groaning and waiting to be delivered—all, have a momentous stake in the union of the Church, and entreat us, for Christ's sake, to be one.

Christian, you are not insensible to sights of sorrow and suffering; you could not look on a lacerated, bleeding, human being, without shuddering in sympathy. See, then, that marred but majestic spectacle of suffering? It is the mangled form of Divine Christianity—her garments rent—her sacred person wounded—and life streaming out at every wound; and, as she turns on us a mournful and imploring aspect, a voice from each of those wounds entreats us to unite. Shall we staunch them? or shall our answer to her entreaty be the infliction of yet more wounds? Before she quits our presence, a voice from afar comes pealing on our ear—the cry of the victims of superstition seeking ease of mind in self-inflicted tortures of body—of the conscience-stricken idolator eagerly inquiring if there be a Saviour from despair—of the dying on the shores of eternity asking, but asking in vain, concerning the dark unknown before them—all, combining and beseeching us to unite and hasten to their relief. In aid of their entreaty, comes a voice from the past—not merely from the depths of dungeons which Bigotry has built, from flames which she has kindled, and from the ruins of Christian temples she has laid waste—a sound of more solemn and appalling import—the voice of the myriads who, through the divisions and consequent neglect of the Church, have gone down to final destruction, entreating us to unite and send unto their brethren lest they also come into the place of torment. And shall all these entreaties come to us in vain? But above and beyond them all, a voice may be heard, whose every accent should thrill through the universal Church—the voice of the great Intercessor within the veil, still praying, still pleading, “that they all may be one.” And shall he pray thus alone? Will not his people join him? Shall not church after church unite in the prayer till the entire body of believers have joined him? till the burden of the church above has become the burden of the Church below? Oh! happy day for the earth—the first of the millennium. And happy day for heaven—the first of a millennium there; for the union of Christians on earth would be the glory of the blessed above.

Christian, you can assist to hasten it on. From this day your duty is clear, definite, imperative—you are to become an agent and an element of Christian unity. Is the Church divided? resolve, in the strength of God, that, as far as you are concerned, it shall not remain so—that, if it do; it shall not be your fault.

Is the subject of Christian union very generally misunderstood, disregarded, and unfelt? explain, recommend, and enforce it in every scriptural way; put into circulation every tract, pamphlet, and book likely to advance its claims; show especially that the Bible is full of it from beginning to end. Is an impartial endeavour at union likely to incur, as it ever has done,

the obloquy of the partial and the prejudiced of all parties? welcome the reproach, “count it all honour,” and behold in it an additional incentive to persevere. Are there certain obstructions, the removal of which you deem an indispensable prerequisite to union? Let the spirit and manner in which you seek to remove them, demonstrate that you seek it, not for its own sake, but for the sake of union—and that you aim even at union, not for its own sake but for the sake of that great object with which the divided Church is still trifling—the conversion of the world. Is it true, that there are some to be found in every community of the faithful who long for the visible fellowship of the whole? claim kindred with them, and take them to your heart; co-operate with them in the same society, and for a common object; and see if there be not some scheme of Christian beneficence yet untried around which all may rally, and in which all may unite. Is it true, that the young are less influenced by the spirit of party than those who have long mingled in its strifes? Betake yourself to them; imbue them with the spirit, and claim them for the cause, of Christian union, before schism shall have seized and sworn them into the service of party. Show them the prospect which awaits the earth in the sublime spectacle of a united Church: take them to the mount of vision where they can behold it;—“from the tops of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him; how goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!”—urge them to live—to die, if necessary—in order to turn that vision into reality. Is Christ interceding for the oneness of his body, the Church? Resolve that you will daily join him in the entreaty. Is his Spirit grieved at its dissensions, yet waiting to return? Confess its guilt, deprecate his displeasure, and invoke an effusion of his healing influence.

Are souls ruined, is the world perishing, through its divisions? Yes, and on it will go for a time, trying to save them by its divided efforts—labouring to succeed without uniting. But no, never; the plan is fixed by Him who changeth not—the unity of the Church must precede the salvation of the world. Publish this truth abroad; be assured that those Christians who differ most, are all one on this subject—they all desire to save their fellow-men. So that never can you insist on this ground for union, without touching a chord which vibrates through all their hearts alike. Resolve, therefore, to keep this motive to union in view yourself, and to insist on it with others—that the visible unity of Christians must precede the conversion of the world, and is the appointed, means by which it is to be effected. They are all believers in your blessed Lord, and glory in his image. Resolve, then, that their people shall be your people, since their God is your God. Their eventual union, remember, is absolutely certain, and, oh, the glorious results of that union, what tongue can tell? A triumphant Church—a converted world—a glorified Redeemer—a rejoicing universe. But eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive its blessed effects. Covet to witness it. Pourtray its splendours to your mind; and enjoy it, in anticipation, daily. Let it be the joy set before you; as it was, and is, before your Divine Redeemer; and you will account no labour too great, no sacrifice too costly, that can accelerate its arrival, even by a moment. And remember, also, that a united Church awaits your arrival in heaven. Every element there tends to unite. Act now, as you will wish, ten thousand ages hence, you have acted; and from this day you will seek to heal the divisions of the Church; and myriads of ages hence, you will be still blessing God that you did so.