

animously quarrelled with the devil, we could control the British empire.'

(3.) *Disunion in the Foreign Mission Field.*—'There is one other blessing that would at once arise from union: we should avoid on the mission field that waste of money, time, and strength, and that awful loss of moral power which arises from the fact that the heathen is perplexed beyond measure when he discovers that these Christians, who speak of the same God and worship the same Christ, are divided one from another.'

(4.) *No 'rest and be thankful' policy.*—'If, in our Lord's prayer for unity, He was simply referring to *spiritual* unity, I do not see why He should pray at all—that was an accomplished fact. There was no occasion, no possibility, of prayer in relation to spiritual unity. Spiritual unity exists in spite of us; we can neither create nor destroy it, and it could not be a subject of prayer even on the part of Christ Himself. When He prays, He prays for something that does not exist, and this conclusion seems to imply that the object of it all was that the world might believe that Christ was sent of God.

'I am of opinion that the world, the sceptical world, will never believe in us until we sufficiently believe in Christ and in one another to present a united front to all evil. Our disunion has an awful effect on the outside world [that is implied in the prayer of our Lord], and I cannot imagine anything that would tend more to convince the world of the miraculous power of Jesus Christ than such an exercise of self-suppression and humility as would enable us to restore a divided Christendom to the position which it ought to occupy. Spiritual unity exists in spite of us all, but our business is to build up upon that business such a manifest and visible unity that the world may believe in it.'

THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH.

FROM THE CONVENTION ADDRESS OF THE BISHOP OF NEBRASKA.

Few things are more conspicuous in the religious life of our time than the tendency to reject theology, dogmas, creeds, and catechisms, as unnecessary to religion, and injurious to the freedom and delicacy of devotion. This is not the case only with those who disbelieve the dogmas they are trying to abolish, for that would be natural and inevitable, but we see those who have professed a belief in the articles of the Christian Faith, and who yet lay no stress upon positive doctrine, and in it no help for their spiritual life, and would gladly, if they could, leave it out of sight altogether. They wish to cultivate religious emotions, but they are impatient of the intellectual side of religion. They shrink from the very name of dogma.

When one school of theologians makes the whole of religion to consist in the sense of dependence, and another finds that all Christianity is summed up in the word "love," it is evident that there is serious danger of the Catholic Faith losing its finely proportioned organization, its delicately articulated system of independent truths, and becoming a formless succession of vague emotions, on the ever-changing opinions of individuals. If this dislike of dogma, the impatience of men when the whole counsel of God is declared to them from the pulpit or

elsewhere continues, even as we meet it to-day, to say nothing of its further development, we must understand that it means a complete change in our religious life; for nothing can be more certain than that for more than eighteen centuries Christianity has been a faith in certain truths, the Church has been an organization depending upon that faith and held together by a common belief, worship has been the common relation of believers to the God whom the intellect, as well as the heart, revealed to men.

When men talk of dogma and object to it, that it does not help the religious life of the soul, and profess to leave it on one side, and to cultivate the emotions only, they forget two things. First, they forget that, whatever they may say or think, these doctrines which make up the Faith once for all delivered to the saints, and which formulated in our creeds, have been echoing through the ages as the Church has declared them, are true. God has so revealed. He changeth not, and truth, His truth, cannot be shunned or overlooked without dreadful loss. We are not free to pick and to choose what we shall believe.

The Christian Faith is not a mere casual collection of unconnected truths, some of which we may take and some reject; nor is it a mere feeling of trust which we may indulge in as a comfortable satisfaction while disregarding the awful and solemn truths upon which such trust, if it have any foundation more sure than the shifting sand, must always rest. It is a system, an organic whole in which each truth is connected with the rest, so that to leave out one article of the Faith is to weaken and distort, if it does not absolutely falsify, the others. Moreover, it is a system developed from the fact of God manifest in the flesh, which indeed supplies the emotions, and without which all deep religious feelings would in the end die out like a fire without fuel.

There are those within the Church and out of it who arrogate to themselves the right of setting themselves above truth, not confining themselves to the lawful human task of judging whether a statement be true or not, not willing with the light that the Church offers, as the keeper and the witness of the truth, to search the Scriptures whether these things are so, but choosing from the doctrine of Christ as this Church has received the same, certain dogmas, which they take as their servants, the ministers of their sentimentality. The Faith is to them not master, but a slave. They divide it, and disregard it, not because it is false, but because they do not like it. They presume to say of what God has revealed and of what the Church has taught: "These are the essentials and these are non-essentials."

The faith which the Church has and does hold, and requires us to accept and teach, has no such distinctions. They may be made elsewhere, but not here. The accidents of Christianity are one thing, and may change, as the ritual of the Church with varied pious customs may alter, as the outward circumstances of the Church may vary; at one time it may be rich, at another poor; at one time honored, at another persecuted. But since it is the Body of Christ, in itself it cannot change; its Doctrines, its Orders, its Sacraments, must be as unchangeable as God Himself. If we are loyal to the Church, we

must take upon us the full responsibility of the Faith and Orders which she has set forth, and through all the ages has with undeviating steadfastness proclaimed. We must bow to it as our ruler and our master.

It is because Christian doctrine is the revelation of the character of God, that every part of it is connected with the whole. All those truths that we now call abstract and impractical, the doctrines of the Blessed and Adorable Trinity of the awful mystery of the Incarnation and Atonement, are wonderful manifestations of God's nature. Even the less strictly theological truths of the Christian system, the Catholic teaching of justification by faith, of grace and free will, of the Fall of Man, of final punishment, are all declarations of some aspect of God's character toward us, of His love, His mercy or His justice, descriptions, as far as man can describe, of the Divine Person. Dogmatic religion is a systematic account of God's actions, and in one mysterious truth of His nature as He is in Himself apart from us. The Articles of the Creed, the definitions of the Catechism, are but the various fragments of the infinite reality that man has been allowed to gather, and which the Church has preserved. "Broken lights" it may be, but "broken lights of Thee," and therefore our little systems do not "have their day and cease to be," because being rays of the Eternal and Unchangeable they also like their source, "are same and their years shall not fail." "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away."—*Living Church.*

WHAT IS REQUIRED.

There are some to whom the present looks dark and the future darker, as they observe the drift of things in the world and in the Church. We are not of that number, but hopeful for the coming day and grateful for what the Lord is now giving us richly to enjoy. Still it cannot be concealed and should not be forgotten, that the Church demands to-day an increased loyalty, fidelity, and consistency on the part of the clergy and laity: that peculiar dangers do undoubtedly threaten, and that among the crying needs of this hour are a revival of faith in the character and mission of our Church, a more intelligent knowledge of Church principles, and an uncompromising resolve to hold aloof from ill-judged movements and dubious experiments, and to work only on Church lines and in the Church's ways, for those objects which are included in her divine commission. It is melancholy to see our people wasting time and force for popular schemes and general movements, when they ought to be and might be seeking the same ends under the invocation of the Holy Trinity and with the official approval of Christ as the Head of the Body. The Church, let us always remember, is a religious society, *not* dependent on the creation or will of man, organized in apostolic times, and having a definite relation to the human race and to every great movement of the age. To her, first, is our allegiance due; work done in and through her is sure of its reward; let that be the leading principle of our action, the idea on which we form and carry on our lives; the starting point in our activity, the end to which our best efforts will be directed. So may the Lord prosper and bless His servants to their day.—*Dr. Dix, in Trinity Record.*