

his wisdom and benevolence required, in reference to things on earth, and things in heaven, that they should be employed. If, then, as is evident, there is a certain way in which christianity can pervade the world, and if the unity of the disciples is an essential constituent of this way, how grievous the schisms, how mischievous the divisions among them!! While they are contending about their orthodox and their heterodoxisms, they are hardening the hearts of the unbelievers at home, and shutting the door of faith against the nations abroad. While the Saviour, in the prospect of all the sorrows that were about to environ him, in the greatness of his philanthropy, forgetful and regardless of them all, was pouring out his earnest desires for the oneness of his followers, many who call themselves his disciples are fomenting new divisions, or strenuously engaged in keeping up the old ones. They in fact prefer their paltry notions, their abstract devices, their petty *shibboleths* to the conversion of the world. Yes, as one of the regenerate divines said, some time since, he would as soon have communion with thieves and robbers, as with those who disputed his notions about eternal generation, or eternal procession, or some such metaphysical nonsense; so, many in appearance, would rather that the world should continue in pagan darkness for a thousand years, than that they should give up with a dogmatic confession, without a life giving truth in it.* From the Roman pontiff down to a licensed beneficiary, each high priest and Levite labors to build up the shibboleths of a party. With every one of them, his cause, that brings him a morsel of bread, is the cause of God. Colleges are founded, acts of incorporation prayed for as sincerely as the Saviour prayed for the union of christians in order to the conversion of the world, theological schools erected, and a thousand contributions levied for keeping up parties and rewarding their leaders.

I have no idea of seeing, nor one wish to see, the sects unite in one grand army. This would be dangerous to our liberties and laws. For this the Saviour did not pray. It is only the disciples of Christ dispersed among them, that reason and benevolence would call out of them. Let them unite who love the Lord, and then we shall soon see the hireling priesthood and their worldly establishments prostrate in the dust.

But creeds of human contrivance keep up those establishments; nay, they are declared by some sects to be their very constitution. These create, and foster, and mature that state of things which operates against the letter and spirit of the Saviour's prayer. The disciples cannot be united while these are recognized; and while these are not one, the world cannot be converted. So far from being the bond of union, or the means of uniting the saints, they are the bones of controversy, the seeds of discord, the cause as well as the effect of division. As reasonably might we expect the articles of confederation that league the "Holy Alliance" to be the constitution of a republic, as that the Westminster or any other creed should become a means of uniting christians. It may for a time hold together a worldly establishment, and be of the same service as an act of incorporation to a Presbyterian congregation,

* The history of the world has not informed me of one sinner brought to repentance or converted to Jesus Christ by any confession of faith in existence.