

I do dislike to see ends, and ties, and strings, turned toward the Altar in the decorations of the House of God. For 'the gods are everywhere,' and accordingly I would have those who serve in the sanctuary to consider (it should not be beneath them to do so) their appearance *as seen from the point of view of the congregation.*

Now the effect upon the congregation of these bowings and attitudes *may be* simply ludicrous, and the ludicrous is *not* conducive to reverence and heartiness of worship. Every act of the leader of worship should be dignified. The writer is putting himself in the place of the lay-folk to whom the clergy, of course, have to turn the back, and he would have them remember that among the lay-folk there is often a sense of the ridiculous, also an irresistible impulse to association of ideas.

Then, is common-sense nothing? Are we, because of 'Catholic usage,' forsooth, to declare in our hymns on Christmas *Eve* that Christ is born? on Easter *Eve* that 'Christ the Lord is risen to-day?' And is it suitable or fit in the Creed, which is a simple declaration of our common faith, to, as it were, *act* our belief in the incarnation and humiliation of our Lord? Must we, at the '*Et incarnatus est*,' drop on our knees? At any rate, is it conceivably right that at this part of the Creed—the Nicene—the celebrant and the assistant clergy should, with one mind, quit the Altar altogether, and range themselves in the sedilia? Such 'performances' are puerile and unnecessary, nor are they truly Catholic. And the incense. By all means let there be, where it can be used without driving away the people, incense allowed, symbolical of prayer and praise, a sweet savour ascending to God. If there be vestments, and an ornate service, and incense, let the censer be swung *solemnly* and *silently*, and the symbolism be preserved. But the noisy clang of it, which seems to be the fashion, and the censuring of the altar, triply, and again and again, and the censuring of the Gospel book, and the censuring of the people—excess of ceremonial—is this conducive to reverence and heartiness of worship?

It might be said that the mind of the worshipper should be so full of devotion that these disturbing ideas should not find place in the thoughts. But, for this disturbing element, who is it that is responsible?—I. R. V. in *Church Bells*.

#### CHRISTIAN UNITY.

THE resolution of the Provincial Synod on the question of Christian unity was received by several representative religious bodies with much sympathy and gladness. When a copy was sent to the chairman of the Congregational Union, through the Rev. Dr. Stevenson, of Montreal, it elicited the following admirable response from that eloquent divine, addressed to the Rev. John Langtry, M.A.:

CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE OF B. N. A.  
MONTREAL, Sept. 17, 1886.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Your note, inclosing the resolutions of the Synod of the Church of

England in Canada on the subject of Union with other Christian bodies, has just arrived.

I thank God from the bottom of my heart for the resolutions, and for the spirit of the Synod on Wednesday last. Your own trite, courteous and brotherly speech was of itself an inspiration towards courage and hope, as indeed were those of many others, both of clergy and laity. When men of your views and standing can say what you did, and say it as you did, the day is dawning when all the disciples of our blessed Lord shall be made perfect in one, and the world shall know that God has sent Him. I could scarcely articulate the words of the Lord's Prayer from fulness of joy and gratitude.

My father, my grandfather and I, have all been Nonconformist ministers. But if terms of honourable reunion could be devised—or rather if God in His mercy would guide us to them—all my heart and both my hands should go for unity with the grand historic Church of England, the dear and venerable mother of us all. Let me add that I do not expect immediate success. But if the movement now initiated should bear fruit in another generation it will have been well done.

I am, rev. and dear sir,

Very respectfully and truly yours.

J. F. Stevenson.

Mr. Langtry also addressed a letter on this subject to the ministers of the various religious bodies in Toronto, as follows:

In my addresses at Montreal I suggested the holding of an Inter-Ecclesiastical Congress to consider, not how far we disagree, but how far we do and can agree. And that we should address ourselves in the spirit of men who have the truth, and wish only to know the truth, to find some solution of the points on which we disagree, I stated that there were three things on which we would have to insist in any discussion looking towards union:—

First, that the creeds which have expressed the unanimous faith of Christendom since the Council of Nicea should be accepted without discussion.

Second, that an authorized formal liturgy for the celebration of the sacraments should be accepted. I do not mean the Anglican, but that or some other in existence or to be agreed upon.

Third, I said that some means would have to be devised for preserving the historical continuity of the Church. I do not mean the English Church, but the reconstructed Church. I said I was prepared, and thought the great mass of the Anglican churchmen were prepared to concede everything for the sake of being at one with the brethren who believe in and live in the Lord Jesus Christ.

From what I can gather, the two first points would be conceded almost without discussion. The third is the real difficulty. I said that if any man could devise a way by which our conscientious churchmen would not be done violence to, and by which those who are separated from us would not be humiliated, he would be the greatest benefactor of mankind in these latter days.

JOHN LANGTRY.

When this letter was read at a meeting of ministers there was a spirit manifested in sympathy with larger union, indicating that even organic union among the denominations on a liberal basis as to doctrine and polity, is within the range of probability in the near future.

At the Chicago Episcopal Convention the two Houses passed the following resolutions:—Resolved, "The House of Bishops concurring, that the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America send cordial greetings to the Assembly of the Congregational Church now in session in this city, and express to them our devout hope that our deliberations may minister together to the glory of God and the advancement of our common Christianity; and we assure them that we earnestly pray for peace and unity according to God's will through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"The House of Bishops respectfully informs the House of Deputies that, having, from the first day of its session, had before it the momentous subject of Christian unity and the reunion of Christendom, it takes the opportunity presented by the action of the House of Deputies to assure that house of its profound sympathy with the spirit of their resolution. The house declares its hearty respect and affection for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and at this time especially for their fellow-Christians assembled in this city as the National Council of Congregational Churches in the United States. This house also avows its solemn purpose, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to promote, with the concurrence of the House of Deputies, some practical plan for bringing before all our fellow-Christians in this land the duty to our common Lord and Saviour, of terminating the unhappy divisions which dishonour His Blessed name, and hinder the triumph upon earth of His glorious kingdom."

#### ALL SAINT'S DAY.

IS it, then, impossible that 'the memory of the Just should be blessed,' without superstition? May not 'the Righteous be in everlasting remembrance,' without impiety? Is there no legitimate and edifying commemoration of departed Saints possible to their brethren and their posterity, who are yet fighting in mortal combat with their foes of earth and hell, and of their own hearts? Or, if the possibility and the lawfulness of such a commemoration be established, what are the limits of the reverence to be paid to their bright examples and their glorified persons? The reply to these questions is easy; but we shall answer them by deputy of two great names. The following passage from St. Augustine's *De Vera Religione* finds a counterpart in a paragraph of his *De Civitate Dei*. The extract may be regarded as at once a faithful protest against contemporary and budding error, and as the result of a rare prescience of future and full-blown abuses. 'Let not our religion,' he says, 'be the worship of dead men, because if they lived piously they are not so disposed as to seek such honours; but they wish Him to be worshipped by us, by whom being enlight-