

should find the reflection of his smiles, and an additional channel in which his love might flow." Oh, what cheerfulness, strength, and pleasure, did the primitive Christians reap from the unity of their hearts in the way and worship of God! Next to the delight of immediate communion with God himself, none like that which arises from the harmonious exercise of the graces of the saints in their mutual duties and communion one with another. How are their spirits dilated and refreshed by it! What a lively emblem is there of heaven! the court of princes afford no such delights.* To the joys of eternal communion would be added those of external triumph. Our joy would be the joy of harvest—a harvest of immortal souls gathered in to Christ; the joys of angels over one repenting sinner, multiplied by the numbers which would then be added unto the Lord daily: the joy of Christ himself, for which he endured the cross, despising the shame—for in his satisfaction and glory we should find our own. Of such a Church God himself would not be ashamed. Answering, as it would, his Divine intention, he would pronounce it good. He would rejoice over it with singing. In the light of his countenance would begin its millennial day. Nothing that could add to its prosperity would be withheld. No gift that could enrich it, no honour that could distinguish it in the eyes of the world, would be deemed too costly to confer. "A great voice out of heaven would be heard, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell among them."

XXIV. And is it of all this that our divisions are depriving us? They are depriving us of more—of all that happiness which the fruits of our union would produce in the final judgment and in eternity. According to St. Paul, in the fourteenth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, the subject of our present divisions is to come under examination at the judgment-seat of Christ. *Now* we are presuming to judge each other *then* he will sit in judgment on us all. We shall find ourselves associated then with many of those whom we now condemn. And will it detract nothing from our bliss to remember that on earth we refused them our communion, avoided them, contributed nothing whatever towards the acquisition of that spiritual excellence in which they will then eclipse the sun? We are to suppose, not only that believers individually, but that entire churches will reap the result of their collective usefulness, in an award of collective happiness. And will it detract nothing from our felicity to remember that we knew little of collective usefulness? to see that the additional crown which we should have won as co-workers, as party-workers we have lost? According to the same apostle, when writing to the Thessalonians, in the passage we have before cited, the union of Christians now will be a great augmentation of their happiness then. He prayed for that union, "to the end their hearts may be established in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." Now when he shall so "come to be glorified in his saints," one of the facts relating to them which will redound to his glory will be, that he should have made them all one in himself. But if their union then will add lustre to his glory, will it add nothing to the happiness of those among them who shall be able to remember that they honoured him in the same way here upon earth? That they here presented to the world the heavenly spectacle of a united Church? On the other hand, will it detract nothing from our joy to remember that we had to die before we would unite with more than a party? that we left the Church as divided as we found it? and that our departure was actually the departure of an obstacle to union?

And are our divisions thus casting their shadows

* Flavel.

forwards into eternity? Are the not only impairing our happiness and usefulness now, but even threatening to dim the lustre of the crown which shall be assigned us then? And for what? Who is to be the gainer? What is the compensation? When is it to accrue, Assemble the Church, and inquire. Surely, if an advantage is ever to result, it must by this time have appeared. Fifteen hundred years have been allowed the Church to try the merits of division. Summon the various parties, and learn what these merits are. Alas! some of them are embroiled too deeply to heed the call. And of those that do, some refuse to approach lest they should be contaminated by the touch of another denomination; while the rest, estranged from each other, exhibit signs of mutual jealousy and distrust. And is this the religion of love, in praise of whose fraternal and sympathetic spirit inspiration prepared its loftiest strains? How has its gracious spirit evaporated! and whether has it fled? Are these the descendants and representatives of the men who were so rich in their affections, and lavish of their all for Christ, that hostility itself was often disarmed, and their enemies turned into admiring friends; Is this the Church which was to be made transparent by the enshrined glory, to repel the presumptuous approach to invite admiration, and to find in its unearthly excellence its lustre and defence? Alas, its divisions have made it the scorn of the world; have often proceeded to such extremities that the world itself, after looking on awhile in desertion, has at length interfered in pity to part the combatants. Is this the Church which was to advance like a bannered host, carrying with her the sympathies of the groaning creation, gathering up trophies at every step, and returning at length from the circuit and conquest of the world, laden with many crowns for him who had caused her to triumph in every place? Alas, how often, and to what a wide extent has she herself been worsted—worsted and disgraced, till imposture has dared to threaten her with extinction—Popery has caricatured her likeness and successfully passes in her stead—Infidelity points at her "the slow unmoving finger" of scorn—and no form of error, no system of deception, deems it is too impotent to contend with her, too mean to vie with her, or too insignificant to be accepted in her stead! Is this the body which was to be made one by the inhabiting and all-pervading Spirit; and of whose unity the most intimate and compacted objects in creation were considered the most appropriate emblems? Alas, the body is so dislocated, dismembered, and mangled, and the *disjecta membra* so scattered, that it has become another vision of dry bones; and another resurrection which shall bring bone to his bone is alone adequate to its condition! And was it for this that Divinity and humanity met in the person of the Son of God? Was it for this he bowed his head upon the cross, and died to show that God is Love? Was it for this he instituted a Church prayed for its unity, endowed it with his Spirit, and gave to it the field of the world for the scene of its triumphs? Our hearts feel that it was not. The sighs of numbers mourning in secret over the blighted peace, the prostrate energy, the humbled honour of the Church assure us that it was not. All the unreclaimed, neglected, perishing portions of the world, protest that it was not. Shame—equal shame—on the Jews who crucified the Son of God, and on Christians who, in the person of his members, have for ages been crucifying him afresh, and are still putting him to an open shame. Blessed Saviour, we need that thou shouldst add to the prayer for the unity of thy disciples the prayer for thy murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Well might the apostles so passionately beseech the members of the Corinthian church, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to heal their divisions. Supposing