

# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—TRUE CHURCH UNITY: WHAT IT IS.

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THERE seems to be everywhere rising throughout the churches a newly aroused, or, at least, renewedly quickened, ardor in seeking to realize that oneness of the Church for which our Master prayed as He was about to be offered up. Certainly the heart of every Christian should burn within him as he addresses himself to do what in him lies to fulfil his Redeemer's dying wish. It would be sad were false steps made in so sacred a cause. Yet it would not be strange, if in the natural haste of even holy zeal, somewhat confused, if not erroneous notions should mingle with our aspirations, which we need to correct by bringing them searchingly to the test of the New Testament teaching.

Nothing can be clearer, of course, than that the conception of its unity enters fundamentally into the New Testament doctrine of the Church. It is involved in the very proclamation of the kingdom of God, for there cannot be two kingdoms any more than two gods. As God is one, the King and the Mediator is one, and the Spirit one who unites to the one Christ; so those who heard the great commission and went forth in its faith to conquer the world could entertain no conception of the Church they were to found which did not include its unity. Accordingly not only is its unity implied in all the figures used by our Lord to describe the Church—the vine, the spreading mustard tree, the leaven hidden in the mass until it leavens the whole; but the same is true of the whole warp of the Apostolic teaching. The Church is the body of which Christ is the head, the building, of the foundation of which He is the corner-stone, the Bride, the Lamb's wife. The unity of the Church is even fundamental to the Gospel itself, as the unity of the race is to the doctrine of sin: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It was for His people that Christ laid down His life; neither was any crucified for any man save Christ Jesus, in whom alone can there be salvation.

It is equally obvious that this unity is in the New Testament, a vis-