

the part of Northern Churchmen towards their Southern brethren, with whom they had been so recently engaged in a deadly struggle; and of the largeness of heart with which they desired to pass over all grounds of offence, and welcome them back into full communion.

One of these occurred in this very opening service. Some difficulty had existed in the minds of those Southern Churchmen, who were warmly desirous of returning into communion with their Northern brethren, as to the reception they should meet with if they returned; and, I suppose, in consequence of this feeling, Bishop Atkinson, of Virginia, although he came to the opening service, appeared simply as a private individual in a pew. After sermon a movement began to appear amongst the Bishops in the chancel, and soon a clergyman in his surplice was seen to come down from amongst them, and to proceed to the pew in which Bishop Atkinson was, to invite him, just as he was, at the desire of the Northern Bishops, to come up amongst them, and occupy his old station amongst the senior Bishops.

At this first public step towards a full reconciliation, a general surge of grateful emotion seemed to pervade the congregation, and I could observe the silent tears passing down the cheeks of grave, staid, elderly men around me.

This was the first demonstration of this feeling, but it was not the last. The next morning, when the names of the deputies were called, and there seemed to be some little irregularity in the papers of the deputies from one of the Southern Dioceses, there was evidently a desire not to press this irregularity, as would have been done in an ordinary case, but to accept any real evidence that they were really the representatives of the Diocese from which they came, though that evidence was confessedly deficient in canonical form.

The same feeling again was shewn in regard to a Bishop who had been consecrated by the Southern Bishops during the war, Bishop Wilmer, of Alabama; concerning whom a message was received from the House of Bishops, informing the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies that they had unanimously agreed to accept him as Bishop of the Church, validly consecrated, as soon as he should have complied with an essential form. This message was received with delight by the assembly generally. It was commented upon with the same delight in private circles. Some members of the Lower House indeed brought forward difficulties which they thought they could not in conscience pass over; several of the speakers expressed their disapprobation at the course the South had taken; but the general feeling expressed was the desire to give up every thing, excepting what ought to be required according to the laws of their Church, in order to be able to receive with open arms, and an oblivion of all differences, one who had been so lately divided from them, and consecrated by an apparently hostile Church.

Another and most convincing evidence was given of the soul-constraining power of Christian love and forgiveness, in a later period of the session, but of which I heard during the few days I remained there.

The negroes in the Southern States were now made free, and this placed them in a new relation to the Church. Formerly many proprietors of estates had conscientiously endeavoured that their *servants* (for so they called them) should be brought into the Church, and instructed in the things needful to salvation. Accordingly the minister and schoolmaster had free access to such estates, and