

commandment, that we should believe in the Name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another as He gave us commandment." The NEW commandment (John xiii. 34) of the New Testament is love.

Old Testament saints had signal faith; but Christ's own command enjoins love. And as this love binds together the children of the same Father, so it attracts together the servants of the same Master, and unites them in common cause. It is contrary to reason, and it is repugnant to faith to imagine that ministers actuated by the same motive, using the same means, and pursuing the same end, should consent to be divided in fellowship.

St. John seems to foresee such a false conception and to repel it by a most comprehensive rule, when he says, "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."

Walking in the light causes fellowship; and conversely the broken fellowship of the nominal Church proves that its teachers have not been walking in the light. Men have adopted verbal conditions and pledges of association, instead of walking in the light, and thereby retaining "the fellowship of the Spirit." An *esprit de corps* has been substituted for the Spirit of Christ; and the several denominations have unconsciously set up loyalty to their own society in the place of allegiance to Christ.

Thus, in the eyes of the world, Christianity has degenerated into zealous adhesion to external organizations and to paper creeds—the unity of the Spirit being tacitly set aside if not openly denied.

Christ alone is the "centre of unity" for Christians. In order to return to the "one body and one Spirit" (Eph. iv. 4), believers must be reminded that they have "the same love." (Phil. ii. 2.)

The catholic heart of the church must be roused to healthy pulsation. When ministers imbibe the spirit of St. John's conviction—"This commandment have we from Him that he who loveth God love his brother also"—then every faithful minister of Christ will be doubly dear to his brother minister, dear for his Master's sake and dear for his work's sake. Then shall the church of Christ exult in a catholic ministry; and men shall flock to the light of a God-taught teaching, as the doves fly to their windows.

We can adduce the clearest evidence from the New Testament that any true ministry for Christ must be EVANGELICAL in spirit, and CATHOLIC in heart. But what is to be the criterion of the possession of these essential and God-given qualifications? And who is to judge of the impulses and claims which seek the public ministry?

Is it sufficient that earnest desire to work for Christ should be attested by its own consciousness?

Plainly not. It is plain that silent enjoyment even of the most precious gifts can yield no profit to others. And as soon as utterance takes place there ensues an audience and a judgment as to the value of the communication. At the same time, in every speaker's mind, there instantly arises a craving for acceptance. This demand for the reception of the published matter can only be answered from the outside. It cannot be satisfied by the internal consciousness of purity of intention and devoted zeal. It seeks fruit from its husbandry. Thus even St. Paul, clear about his miraculous call, and assured of his mission, communicated with the other disciples at Jerusalem (applying to them by revelation) and laid the Gospel which he preached "Privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means he should be running or had run *in vain*." (Gal. ii. 2.)

In the case of the message from God to mankind, it seems obvious that there is a reciprocal demand which can only be met by response from the respective parties. For its own future benefit as well as for its security in listening, the audience has a right to require from the messenger that he comes from God; for the verification of his mission the faithful messenger will crave a real effect on his hearers. The congregation has a right to exact with Peter, "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God;" the true messenger exposes his heart when he appeals, "We are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."

For an efficient Christian ministry we have then two requirements—the one *a priori*, the other *a posteriori*. About the latter there is little doubt; for the fruitfulness of a ministry can be tested by experience; and from the nature of the proof we must wait for evidence.

But about the mission from God, there is obscurity. How is it to be ascertained? John