

THE RE-UNION OF THE CHURCHES.

The Rev. Dr. Redman delivered a final discourse on the above subject the other evening at St. Francis' Church, Notting Hill. It was a discourse followed with interested and pleased attention. The absolute unity of the followers of Christ was (said the rev. preacher) the absolute will of the Founder of Christianity; hence, that body alone wherein such unity was visible could claim to be the fold. Within that fold all would be at peace, for Jerusalem is built as a city at unity within itself. Outside of it men will be on points of doctrine—as one has written of the Conference at Lucerne—separated as far as the poles asunder. In truth, the condition of England alone since the upheaval of the 16th century could only be described as the Babel of religious dissension. It had been tossed ever since by every wind and doctrine to and fro. The Cardinal at the Oratory on the Thursday reconsecrating England to her ancient patrons, and the counterblast from St. Paul's on the Sunday after—these are but a few samples of the conflicting gales which blew from every quarter of the firmament. Christ foresaw all this, and provided a remedy, adequate though simple. "Simon! Simon!" He exclaimed, addressing Peter, "Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat." The pronoun is plural—plural in the Greek. All are involved. In the faith of Peter shall be seen the accurate and absolutely perfect application of the teaching of Christ, so that, Christ being absent, but Peter present with his living faith and teaching voice, men shall ever have in their midst the accurate copy to copy from. Thus shall they be stable upon a firm foundation which Christ has laid. Each shall copy from the same one pattern sealed, and thus the faith of each shall tarry with the faith of all, and perfect peace and absolute unity shall reign in Peter's flock. Indeed, the Master did not omit to add the result of His infallible faith when he said: "Stablish thou thy brethren"—(Luke xii., 32) But Peter died! and many men suppose that when he died this beautiful order and provision perished, so that, for all time Satan who endures, shall sift, while stablishing Peter is clean renewed. They would have it that the founder of the Church equipped his forces temporarily against a foe whose forces are perpetual. How Satan would laugh if the remedy against his sifting process were to endure but till the year of Christ when Peter dies! Away with the foolish, irreverent thought! So long as Satan seeks to scatter the flock, so long shall Peter establish by his unfailling faith. And even to the consummation of the world shall Peter live and rule in his see of Rome by his never failing line of episcopal successors. And therefore to the end of time the flock which gathers round the See of Peter shall be one in faith and one in concord, a contrast plain and visible to the confusion which reigns beyond the boundaries of that one flock. He the same ever, and the flock ever the same. No change in doctrine, though there must be endless development of a Gospel which contains things new and old—new in definition but old in revelation. As this very doctrine of Peter's unfailling faith was finally promulgated three and twenty years ago, whereas the revelation of it came to the ears of men the night before the passion. This, then, is the immovable rock of Peter, which lends its own stability to the Church of God which rests upon it, the perpetual source of unity, and the provision God has made for unity. This, which men deride as the "idle hope," the Catholic reveres as the grand fulfilment. And men will meet in voice to discuss the subject of their amalgamation on other basis, for until they come to Peter for the gift of oneness, their efforts will but resemble those of the men of Sodom, blinded, when "they weared themselves to find the door."—*London Tablet.*

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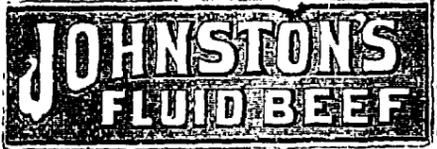
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