

giving rise to denominations, Scotland itself is conspicuous among all Churches during half of its history since the separation from Rome. It is not for a moment to be denied that all this rending asunder of the body of Christ has to a lamentable degree disfigured the aspect of Christendom and greatly retarded the progress of the Gospel. Nevertheless, it is only just to observe that it has not happened without some mitigating circumstances. It is no doubt true that many sects have arisen through the vanity and ambition of ecclesiastical leaders; but this sinister purpose cannot possibly apply to the vast majority of cases that have appeared from first to last. As a rule, it is conscience which has been the cause of sectarianism. A strong conviction that the Church had erred in worship or doctrine, and that it would be sinful to remain in communion with her in such circumstances have been the normal motive for separation all through the centuries. Those who have taken the lead in these disruptions have not usually been unconscious of the evils of schism as such; and the act of separation has almost always been accomplished at great loss and inconvenience to themselves—sometimes even with the sacrifice of their lives. Had there been less conscience in the Church, there would not now be so many denominations of Christians. At the same time, no right-thinking man can be indifferent to the disadvantage of disunion, however it may have come about, or cease to long for the unity of the Church. That this consummation will ultimately be reached, it is impossible for a Christian to entertain any doubt. So much is guaranteed by the prayer of Him whom the Father heareth always. In His intercessory supplication on the eve of leaving our world, He thus pleaded, not only for the apostles, "but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." And it was the same Prophet of the Church who declared in another connection that the time should come when there would be one fold (flock) as there is but one shepherd. These are the words of the faithful and true Witness, to doubt which would be an act of disloyalty to Him whom every Christian has vowed to obey. He is the Healer of breaches, and will restore the unity of the Church in His own time, and doubtless in the use of human means. Our knowledge of these, from the experience of the past, is more negative than positive. The fusion of Churches has sometimes been tried by acts of uniformity on the part of the State, but usually to little purpose. No more success is likely to attend any attempt to express the doctrines contained in the creeds in such general, vague and indefinite language as to make them mean anything or nothing, so as to commit those that hold them to no particular belief. Any compact of this nature will be sure, sooner or later, to defeat its own ends. The ripening process which is to eventuate in the union of the Churches will come in virtue of an internal rather than an external force, and the guiding agent must be the Spirit of the living God. When He shall guide believers into *all* truth, there will be no place for error, and then denominationalism must cease to exist. It is on this line that a solution of the difficulty is to be sought with any hope of success. If the true spirit of the Gospel were realized in the heart of every believer according to the intention of its Author, union would follow as a natural and necessary consequence. As has been pointed out by the apostle Paul, the Church contains within itself seven prin-

ciples of union which would thus issue in a sevenfold unity if it could only happen that all hindrances were taken out of the way. In their order they run as follows:—One body. The Church in its manifold constituents is not a heap of sand, but an organized corporation. This is the mystical body, Christ Himself constituting the head, and all believers are the members. They are many, and yet they are but one organism. A second unifying principle is the one Spirit that vitalises all. So it is in the human organism. When the spirit takes its departure the one bond which holds all together is snapped asunder and the carcass hastens to dissolution. A third element of union is an elevating and transforming hope which is fixed on the everlasting inheritance reserved in heaven. This hope for one is the hope for all, and this unity of aim should be helpful to union of effort. A fourth article which makes for the same result centres in the truth that all have one and the same Lord. It is little wonder that the religions of antiquity were a Babel of confusion, seeing that the gods men then worshipped were almost endless in number. Christianity, in this respect, enjoys a peerless advantage; and the natural consequence of having only one object of worship ought to be the welding together of all the worshippers. A fifth bond is supplied in the one faith which is professed; nor does it make any material difference whether the term is restricted to the operation of the mind in appropriating salvation, or extended to the body of doctrines which may be supposed to be included in "the faith once delivered to the saints;" for, in the one case as well as the other, there is a strong tie to bind believers together in one body. The sixth link in this golden chain is found in baptism, of which the two typified ideas are putting away the filth of sin and dedication to God, both of which make strongly for the solidarity of the company of believers. Seven was the sacred number among the Hebrews, and it also suggested the notion of perfection. In comes into the present connection as in many others; and here it finds its fitting complement in the expression "one God and Father of all." The Divine Fatherhood is thus advanced as the last and best principle of unity in the Christian Church either actual or potential, for where else should we look with such confidence for an example of union and concord than to an affectionate and well-regulated family? These seven principles, then, so far as they are realized, make for union, and even unity, in the Christian Church. Even now, in spite of sects and schisms, they impart to it an essential unity, and furnish a prophecy and a promise of better things to come.

**Andrew Murray.** The reception tendered the great African Divine in the Y.M.C.A. rooms on Monday evening, and the spirit of earnestness which prevailed the meeting was a fair index to the deep desire of our people to have the privilege of hearing one who by his writings had cheered, comforted and blessed so many in this and other lands. The Rev. Dr. Maclaren delivered the address of welcome which was heartily responded to by Mr. Murray. The meetings thus far have been most successful and will be described in our next issue.

We often see it stated that Japan has made more advancement during the past twenty five years than any other nation. The world has been surprised at her wonderful achievements in the art of war and the bold position this has enabled her to assume among the nations. The development of internal affairs may be gathered from the following statistics recently published: In 1870 there was not a mile of railway in Japan; to-day there are 1,750 miles in operation and 850 miles more about to be constructed. These railways carried, in 1894, 36,000,000 passengers. There was no post-office in 1870, but in 1893 the Japanese post handled 277,000,000 letters and newspapers. In 1890 there were no Japanese steamships; to-day there are 700.