

Poetry.

TO A YOUNG CHORISTER.

The bird that hails first breathings of the Spring... Sing on, fair boy! the meaning of thy song...

ON THE ALLEGED PRESBYTERIANISM OF THE ENGLISH REFORMERS.

From "A View of the Organization and Order of the Primitive Church, &c." by the Rev. A. B. Chapin, M.A.

It is said, that the Reformers of the Church of England... and the Church of England herself, gave up, at the time of her Reformation, one of the fundamental principles of Apostolic organization and order...

OF THE MINISTRY.

It is not lawful for any man to take upon himself the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent, to execute the same.

THE MINISTRY DIVINELY INSTITUTED.

Collect at the ordination of a Deacon.—"ALMIGHTY GOD, who by Thy divine Providence hath appointed divers orders of ministers in Thy Church..."

THE MINISTRY CONSISTS OF THREE ORDERS.

"That it may please Thee to illuminate all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, with true knowledge and understanding of Thy word..."

THE MINISTRY CONSISTS OF THREE ORDERS.

"That it may please Thee to bless these Thy servants, now to be admitted to the office of Deacons, [or Priests,]..."

BISHOPS SUPERIOR TO THE OTHER CLERGY.

This follows from the above, for, if God has appointed divers orders of ministers in His Church, the different kinds of ministers divinely constituted and appointed, of necessity belong to the 'divers orders'...

WHO LAWFULLY CALLED AND SENT?

The Book of consecration of Bishops, and ordaining of Priests and Deacons, as set forth by the General Convention of this Church, in 1792, [in the English Prayer Book, lately set forth in the time of King Edward the sixth, with which the American Book agrees in every important particular, except in slight verbal alterations] doth contain all things necessary to such consecration and ordaining...

THE VISIBLE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS A CONGREGATION OF FAITHFUL MEN, IN WHICH THE PURE WORD OF GOD IS PREACHED, AND THE SACRAMENTS BE DULY MINISTERED, ACCORDING TO CHRIST'S ORDINANCE.

That by the ordinance of CHRIST, no man may take upon himself the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments, before he is lawfully called and sent to do the same: that by the same ordinance, the ministry, by which the word is to be preached and the sacraments administered, is made to consist of three distinct orders, called Bishops, Priests, and Deacons...

UNION OF SECTS.

"Il y en a plusieurs qui croient d'autant plus dangereusement, qu'ils prennent une vérité pour le principe de leur erreur. Leur faux n'est pas de suivre une fausseté; mais de suivre une vérité à l'exclusion d'une autre. Il y a un grand nombre de vérités, et de foi, et de morale, qui semblent répugnantes et contraires, et qui subsistent toutes dans un ordre admirable. La source de toutes les hérésies, est l'exclusion de quelques-unes de ces vérités; et la source de toutes les objections que nous font les hérétiques, est l'ignorance de quelques-unes de nos vérités. Et d'ordinaire il arrive que, ne pouvant concevoir le rapport de deux vérités opposées, et croyant que l'une renferme l'exclusion de l'autre, ils s'attachent à l'une, et ils excluent l'autre."

UNION OF SECTS.

At first, this scheme of comprehension between the Scotch Presbyterians and English Dissenters was very remotely and covertly hinted at; it is only very lately that it has taken bodily shape. In a sermon, "Christian and Ecclesiastical Unity, preached at the Scots Church, London-wall, on the 21st of April, 1841, at the opening of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in England in connexion with the [so-called] Moderator of Scotland, by the Rev. James C. Burns, late Moderator of Synod, some vague plan of union was broached, but very obscurely. Throughout the chief part of the sermon, the common topics of mere subjective unity, in affection, practice, and good intentions and sincerity, are urged in a tame, diffusive style; but in the second part, p. 13, the application of this duty to formal, objective, visible union, is very singular and contradictory. Churches in which are reckoned 'Episcopal, Independent, Wesleyan Methodist, Established, Voluntary, &c.' are said to have more points on which they agree than 'those in which they differ.' We hear much of 'minor denominational points of difference' and at length it is settled that they all have 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism,' which is a most startling and unexpected discovery, to say the least of it. However, no nucleus of unity was yet suggested, perhaps not contemplated; any plan for future fellowship and co-operation might arise."

Next, from the same quarter, comes a sermon, or tract, (we believe the latter), with a somewhat fantastic title, "The Dew of Hermon; or, the true Source of Christian Unity." By the Rev. James Hamilton, Minister of the National Scotch Church, Regent-square; and a very wild, dreamy, pseudo-poetical composition it is. And, at the same time, self-complacitiously the main principle, to dignify with such a title phrases of the very vaguest and most conventional character, is Mr. Burns' subjective unity, "unity of believers, without reference to mere denominational distinctions;" (delightful phrase that of "denominational distinctions," and so scriptural too!) Yet, even Mr. Hamilton at times (and this, perhaps, because he is a far abler man, even being the most turgid nonsensical diction that we ever read, than his neighbour of London-wall) suspects that all his fine words mean nothing. The following seems noticeable, and, as far as it sounds, true:—

It is in orthodox union. Any price is too little to pay for such a blessing, except the faith once delivered to the saints. If it be asked, On what platform the Church is likely to last to unite? we answer, On the platform of orthodoxy. The latitudinarian unity which surrenders truth for peace, and purity for quiet, is not the unity for which the Saviour prayed. Far from fancying that creed of the united Church will be that scattering of truth

unreal and distorted proportions. It was like viewing the visible world through a window, one pane of which was a large magnifying glass. Like all other parts of Christian doctrine, unity has its counterpoise; it requires adjustment to the whole body of teaching; it must be viewed in connexion, subordination, order. So that to see unity regarded either singly, or without regard to its antipathetic (Arist. Rhet. i. 1) truth, we must expect to find it very imperfect, maimed, one-sided, individualized, selfish, subjective merely. This is one reflection suggested by certain very popular and extended hankerings after this truth of Christian unity.

And another thought arising from the same subject, is, what a wonderful testimony to the doctrine itself, as, indeed, to all other christian truths, are those blind stumblings in the dark which all bodies out of the catholic fold are now making after unity. The simple fact, that all men yearn and thirst after a thing, proves its everlasting truth. The human mind cannot ever be deprived of an essential part of itself, which all highest truth is. And thus, when left alone, uncontrolled by the pervading and comprehensive life of the whole body of the Church's teaching, men take up with the catholic faith in detached fragments, labelled and catalogued specimens, as it were, of doctrine, laid by in cabinets, acquired singly, examined, and then put aside. "All the denominations" cannot generalize, either separately, or collectively, their doctrines into any consistent scheme, because they are not partakers of that one life of the one spirit, which animates and circulates throughout the whole living body. And thus, where they maintain this or that truth, their adherence to it is but temporary; it is felt to be only isolated, and formal, and partial; its light soon burns out, and some other expedient, some other false deity, to rely upon, must be found. The life of all sectarian bodies is but a succession of convulsions; such vitality as they have, is, for the most part, only that they have from the one great body, and have retained from it during their separation. But such life is very brief; an amputated limb quivers for a time, even the muscles play, and the nerves may retract—there is a ghastly mockery of life; but this only through a derived, not a self-inherent vitality. Pluck a branch from a tree, to use St. Cyprian's famous figure, and it will look green, and healthy, and deceitful, for a few days. Hence, as in Wesleyan Methodism, the superior energy of a schism in the first days of its existence;—the old life has not yet altogether died out of it. But hence, also, the unsatisfying way in which schismatics take up shreds of truth; successively, as separate detached truths; not simultaneously as but varied developments and phases of the one life of the one Church.

At present, however, we would take the fact of such various, and sometimes conflicting views of unity, not so much as destructive of sectarianism, as constructive of the catholic doctrine. That all men, of all parties, converge, so to say, to the doctrine of unity, as to a common centre; that all men declare this to be the *unum necessarium*; that all men bear such impartial testimony to its need, shows, at least, that christian unity is a truth—a fact which some of us were in a fair way of denying. Shadows, however differently projected, prove the existence of a body somewhere; mock suns demonstrate that the true one is shining. And thus it is, as has been often said, if the Church be silent, men will counterfeit her voice; error is sure to substitute itself when truth is inactive. If we decline to teach, be it but a single unit of christian doctrine, heretics will take it up, appropriate it, and, by living on it, succeed—for a while.

So that, in every way, we must expect a subtle operation, and that its own imitation of the truth; and call upon all men to bow down before the false church. Again, where we are unfaithful, the world will appropriate our neglect, and preach that one forgotten truth—for it is truth still—and yet not saying truth, for it excludes all other truth; it is but solitary. If we circulate good coin, Antichrist will counterfeit it, and pass off his mere base metal forgeries. If we bury the good coin, he will dig it up, and issue it himself, putting his own image and superscription upon it. Some instances of this spurious unity may be useful to our readers. In the Scotch Presbyterian establishment, a very remarkable one in this direction is now in progress. Of course the present miserable discussions in this body have been productive of very singular and opposite results: indeed, to apply our previous reflection, it seems as though its first derived life were already nearly exhausted. And thus minds variously gifted and privileged draw off in different directions; some, like Mr. Marshall, retrace their steps, and seek for peace where alone it is to be found, in communion with the Catholic Church; these of course are characters of the higher and more obedient temper. Some, again, seek for union, experience having proved the hollowness of their own sect, with "other communions." And this is our immediate point.

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Next, from the same quarter, comes a sermon, or tract, (we believe the latter), with a somewhat fantastic title, "The Dew of Hermon; or, the true Source of Christian Unity." By the Rev. James Hamilton, Minister of the National Scotch Church, Regent-square; and a very wild, dreamy, pseudo-poetical composition it is. And, at the same time, self-complacitiously the main principle, to dignify with such a title phrases of the very vaguest and most conventional character, is Mr. Burns' subjective unity, "unity of believers, without reference to mere denominational distinctions;" (delightful phrase that of "denominational distinctions," and so scriptural too!) Yet, even Mr. Hamilton at times (and this, perhaps, because he is a far abler man, even being the most turgid nonsensical diction that we ever read, than his neighbour of London-wall) suspects that all his fine words mean nothing. The following seems noticeable, and, as far as it sounds, true:—

It is in orthodox union. Any price is too little to pay for such a blessing, except the faith once delivered to the saints. If it be asked, On what platform the Church is likely to last to unite? we answer, On the platform of orthodoxy. The latitudinarian unity which surrenders truth for peace, and purity for quiet, is not the unity for which the Saviour prayed. Far from fancying that creed of the united Church will be that scattering of truth

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