

ment, that is the rule of Christ, which He will enable us to obey: that is the measure of the authority which He designs us to exercise in the divine order. And it is a rule for all, a rule of infinite peace and of infinite gladness.

That is the secret of keeping the temporal greatness which may have been given to some of us; of winning the eternal greatness which is designed for all of us by God's love. Its blessings do not depend upon power or opportunity. They are for each one according to the use which he makes of the little or much which is committed to him. *There are last, so it is written, which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.*

### THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN.

The influence of woman can scarcely be overrated. The customs of society, and the popularity of certain habits of life, depend far more on woman than on man, even in spheres which are common to them both. If man does most of life's work, woman creates most of life's atmosphere. What she reprobates is usually avoided, what she smiles on is generally followed, and if only this subtle authority were more devoutly and wisely used, some unblushing vices would hide their heads for shame, and some unpopular graces would blossom into vigorous life. In the education of the young this power is most conspicuously and effectually exercised. The effects of such teaching abound in this Christian land. Men of business whose integrity is unquestioned, teachers whose influence is as good as it is wide, parents whose homes are very sanctuaries, servants of Christ who are ready for every good word and work, became what they are because the grace of God flowed into their hearts through the holy channel of wife, or mother, or sister. While the world hurries on its busy way, and theology stands gazing up into heaven, these have been quietly building the habitation of God through the Spirit. Scarcely less important than home influence is the power wielded by those wise-hearted women who mould the characters of the young who are brought under their influence in the day-school or in the Sunday-school. The impartation of knowledge is but a small part of the work of education, and therefore the value of a teacher's work depends on *character* as much as on *ability*. To teach accuracy in mathematical calculations, while disregarding carelessness about the truth—to prohibit an ungrammatical sentence, and not to suppress the angry, malicious or impure word—to show the wonders of natural phenomena, and to ignore the existence of spiritual truth—to evoke love of study, but never to suggest the blessedness of love to God—this is not *education* in the truest sense. For education is not a memory of facts and dates, it is "*a drawing out*" of all those latent possibilities which are within the child, the loftiest of which are love to God and fellowship with Him. Any one who would fully discharge duties so onerous needs to be inspired, not with "enthusiasm of humanity," but with the love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Presupposing this as a motive, there are three qualities which are essential to a right exercise of womanly influence, viz: tact, authority, and kindness.

Tact is evidently the characteristic of her who "openeth her mouth with wisdom." She is the one whose garrulity proves the truth of the proverb, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin," for she has a sufficient sense of the seriousness of life to avoid utterances which are idle and thoughtless. Her words are the dictates of that wisdom the beginning of which is the fear of the Lord. Nor does she merely speak wise words, but with true wisdom she recognizes that "there is a time to

speak and a time to be silent," so that her reproofs and encouragements live long in grateful memories.

But *authority* is quite as important as tact. Skill in management is of little value unless there be strength behind it. In our Sunday-schools, for example, there are many failures which may be traced to a want of that authority which knowledge of Divine truth, and conviction concerning it, are able to give a Christian teacher. Children, with their half-formed characters and partially developed powers, must learn submission to a higher and wiser will, to obey because obedience is expected, to be under the law because that law is for their good. If we allow our children to follow their animal instincts, or to neglect the simple laws of health, or to disregard rules which we have proved from experience to be good, they would grow up to be a curse to themselves and to those about them. They must be controlled by *others* if hereafter they are to control *themselves*; and first they must learn to submit to the authority of womanhood, which can only be asserted when there is courage, dignity and firmness on the part of those who seek to exercise it. God never meant that women should be always yielding to other people's opinions, or that they should be swayed hither and thither by every passing breeze of emotion. As much as men they need firmness, the royal power of rule, in the kingdom which is peculiarly theirs, for, in the sick room and in the class, they have a veritable kingdom in which to exercise authority for God.

It must not be forgotten, however, that the authority here spoken of is the law of *kindness*, which is obeyed because it evidently springs from love, and is enforced by love. When there is forgetfulness of the true secret of power, when an unnatural harshness of tone is assumed in an unwise attempt to imitate man, then womanly authority is resented. But the wife who quietly talks over a question with her husband, the sister who, pleading with her brother, can tacitly do so on the ground of many a past kindness and sacrifice, the mother to whom her boy's heart turns with yearning even in his wildest moods—these have an influence which is deep and lasting. Gentlest influences are by no means the feeblest.—*Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette.*

### A PRESBYTERIAN ON CHURCH UNITY

One of the most encouraging signs of the times is the craving for Christian union, which is manifest in the several denominations of Christians. The "Declaration of the House of Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in council assembled, October 10th, 1886," should find a cordial response from the Presbyterian Church. The four terms that are set forth therein as "essential to the restoration of unity among the divided branches of Christendom," are in my judgment entirely satisfactory, provided nothing more is meant by their authors than their language expressly conveys. There is room for some difference of the interpretation but these terms ought to be received in the same generous manner in which they are offered, in the hope that these differences will be removed by conference and discussion.

No Presbyterian can consistently object to (1) "The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the revealed Word of God," or (3) the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, administered with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by Him."

It might be objected that (2) "the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith," is too narrow a plank for a summary of Christian doctrine, and that it ignores the subsequent history of doctrine in Christen-

dom. But Presbyterians can hardly exact from other religious bodies the maximum of the Westminster standards. If Episcopalians are willing to waive their own doctrinal standards in order to unite upon the fundamental creed of Christendom, I do not see with what propriety other denominations can refuse to meet them on this common platform. It is not proposed that the denominations should abandon their own symbol of faith, but that they should find a common ground for unity.

The fourth term, "the historic episcopate locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of the Church," gives more room for differences of opinion. But it is certain that if the English Bishops had offered these terms to the Westminster divines, there would have been no separation. The English Presbyterians offered to unite on the basis of "the reduction of Episcopacy under the form of synodical government," proposed by Archbishop Usher, but the English Bishops declined. Presbyterians are bound by their own history to meet the Episcopalians on this platform. If the House of Bishops mean to advance thus far, they have taken a great step toward the reunion of Christendom. The delicate and difficult questions involved in the adaptation of the "historic episcopate," might be removed by friendly conference in the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

The House of Bishops say nothing of the Book of Common Prayer or the Canons of the Church. We understand that the following clause refers to them: "That in all the things of human ordering or human choice relating to modes of worship and discipline, or to traditional customs, this Church is ready, in spirit of love and humility, to forego all preferences of her own." If this reference be correct, this proposal is all that could be reasonably required. It is our intention to discuss this matter in subsequent numbers of this paper.—*Prof. Briggs of the Union Theological Seminary in the Independent.*

THE inadequacy of the training for the ministry received in most theological schools by candidates for Holy Orders, is a subject that not only is worthy of consideration, but is at present receiving much consideration at home and abroad. It is a matter of common observation that the common theological curriculum is far too theoretical, perhaps we may say too scholastic, at the expense of the practical aspect of a clergyman's calling. There is a tendency also to spend time too exclusively on a study of the past, rather than of that present, against which every active worker in Church or general society is bound ere long to rub so roughly. A knowledge of ancient heresies of the Nicene age is doubtless useful, but the clergyman who has studied modern theories of evolution and the physiological materialism of the present day and knows the Christian answer thereto, is the man who, other things equal, can do the best aggressive work for Christ. Yet how seldom are theological school apologetics devoted to these burning questions of the day. Political economy in its relation to Christian ethics is a practical issue: for the clergyman who is going to work among the laboring classes, and meet at every turn sophistical theories on economic subjects, a thorough knowledge in this sphere is indispensable. Yet if a man attains such knowledge it must have resulted entirely from individual interest and application; it is questionable if the regular theological course to which he was subjected ever touched upon these themes. Especially in this country where the newly-ordained deacon seldom serves an apprenticeship with an experienced priest, but is commonly launched in *all his crudeness* into the thick of parish work without guidance. There is, moreover need of training in such *simple matters* as the conduct of public service, catechizing, Sunday