

HINDRANCES TO UNITY.

IN these days when the christian world is becoming weary of sectarianism, and Christ's true followers everywhere are longing and praying for the fulfilment of Christ's own prayer, that all His may be one, Satan, who knows well that divisions begin with censoriousness and end with infidelity, is most careful to sow the seeds of censoriousness in the gospel field whilst men sleep, or in other words are unobservant of his work.

Now censoriousness is very nearly akin to spiritual pride, and as Satan's main design is to separate those who ought to be very friends, for example—those who are baptized members of God's Catholic Church—we cannot behold without sore misgivings the bitter spirit of censoriousness which, in these days of desired unity, is so remarkably busy in the christian world, and especially amongst the members of our own Church, which many Romanists and other Dissenters have admitted to be the nearest to the primitive pattern, with its historic episcopate, and freedom from modern accretions.

When we see, as lately in New York, that Baptists are now laying aside their exclusive claim to Christian baptism, so that they admit without reordination a minister ordained by the Congregationalists to the pastorate of one of their churches, whilst amongst us there are many

who would jeopardise the sacred cause of unity for the sake of forcing even their brethren, if possible, to forsake our ancient Church unless they will consent to pronounce exactly as they do some shibboleth as to the rubrics of our Prayer-book. We fear that the charity of the disciples of Christ is sleeping, whilst Satan is busily sowing the seeds of separation in the ancient fold. Here we find a sad sign of illiberality.

Yet, to change the figure, how careful is the infernal Angler to hide his hook with a tempting bait! This bait is false liberality,—a giving away that which is not ours to give.

Irreverence is one of the besetting sins of a waning faith, and a sure accompaniment of growing infidelity. In "Salvationism" or Boothism, we see frightful irreverence, bordering on and often mixed with blasphemy, condoning impurity of life in those who blatantly claim that they are "gloriously saved,"—that they are pure and sure to be admitted to the Beatific Vision. We see them ignoring Christ's two Sacraments, Baptism and the Holy Communion, and substituting therefor admission "under the flag," coupled with the sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal. Here we see irreverence rejecting the grafting and feeding Sacraments of Christ as "empty forms."

Censoriousness is nearly akin to self-righteousness. Men are easily tempted to flout at ancient Christian