

The Unification of Christendom:

I.

"The Church of Christ is in ruins," said a Plymouth Brother to me one day, as he pointed out the various divisions, sects, denominations, and parties struggling for a hearing and standing. This was his excuse for going off into a corner by himself and making a new separation. "The visible Church is now identical with the world," said he, and anon seeks invisibility. The phrase "Come out and be ye separate," once applied to those living in the midst of idolaters, has done duty for all separatists from "the Church," and the result, in the case of THE Brethren has been 'division among themselves into several parties, socially ostracizing one another because they don't all see alike on such idle questions as "The Peccability of Christ's Nature."

The Church, it is true, has its parties taking different views of a subject, not essential, but they do not socially outrage one another, or in other words excommunicate each other, and one would be sorry to see such a disruption among those whose motives are worthy because seeking progress in the Divine Life: within the pale of Faith in the true Head of the Church there will always be various degrees of knowledge, and some mistakes must be expected, unless we are to claim greater than apostolic attainments, greater than one who said, "Now we know in part, and preach in part." There is the spiritual babe, the elementary Christian, and the full grown

man in Christ. Imagine a youth ostracizing his elder brother because he couldn't understand the Laws of Newton, or the Theory of Atoms, as he propounded it, and yet it is upon questions of knowledge rather than the Question of the Faith that most of the separations in Christendom exist. Then, too, we must expect to find degrees in the practice of the Spiritual Life, partly owing to environment, partly to the need of better instruction. "The Faith" first would enter largely into all discussions as to unification; knowledge must take second place, and practice third place, because it grows out of both. "The Faith" is identical with the Wisdom of God, and anyone weak in that would soon prove the truth of the saying:

"Knowledge, when Wisdom is too weak to guide her,

Is like a headstrong horse that throws its rider."

Thus we arrive at a preliminary conclusion that there is a possibility of unity among all so-called "Churches," that hold the the Head who is The Wisdom of God, the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Faith to us all.

Can there be two Heads, one on earth, one in heaven? St. Paul describes but one for the spiritual body. A two-headed monster staggers us, and we turn our eyes from the Western to the Eastern Church. Is she double headed, too? "God and the Tsar" is the rallying cry of the Eastern orthodox. The church of Russia is the extreme type of a state church, where the monarch is supposed to be absolute, it is true, but practically