

the church, inculcated by RYLE and MARSDEN! Then, would the reproach of Episcopacy, occasioned by the arrogance of the past, cease to hedge up the way of her ministers:—

A PLEA FOR MUTUAL SYMPATHY AND PRACTICAL CO-OPERATION.

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THE Christian Church is the family of Jesus Christ. It consists of all those, by whatever name they may be called, who "live by the faith of the Son of God; who "love the Lord Jesus in sincerity," "who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit," for by these tokens the number of Christ's mystical body is known.

If this be so, the unity of the Christian Church is to be sought not in its outward uniformity but in its inward life—the life of God in the soul of its members. Not a corporate life—which to me is unintelligible—but an individual life. The life of Christ manifested in us, by which every member of the Church has been quickened—which unites him to the Church's Head—and by virtue of which he is consequently a true member of the living vine,—and therefore of the Church "which is His body."

The Church of Christ is one and undivided. The bond is this—membership with Christ. If we are united to Him we are one with all His family, because there is but one body with which Christ unites Himself. "Is Christ divided?" If this were the case, then His Churches might be so too. But if Christ be one and His body one, then we being many are one body in Christ, and are all of us members one of another. And thus I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.

The differences which exist among Christians do not interfere with this great, this glorious doctrine, that the Church is one. A family may be dispersed—it may be rent by unseemly quarrels—it cannot dissolve the bonds of nature. It does not cease to be a family. Its members may by their estrangement become unknown to one another. They may even look upon each other with suspicion, with unkindness, with dislike. Still the same blood circles in their veins. They have a common parentage. In spite of themselves—and often to their shame—they are after all one family.

And so are we! we who have been begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Now, whoso hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure. The members of Christ are holy; and here is the true proof of their Church membership. We are members of the great Head, and therefore members of the common household of faith.

And as our life, so too our aim is one. It may be we are too much divided; it may be we stand too far apart; our language, our equipment may be various, still we move under the same great Captain. We aim at the selfsame achievement. We are "one army of the living God." Thus I understand the communion of saints.

The differences of Christians among themselves are much to be deplored. Yet not because they destroy the oneness of the Church. That is a question which they do not reach, which they cannot disturb—just as the differences of a family or its dispersion across the globe does not disturb the question of its common blood. It may even be a matter of doubt in some of our minds, whether a perfect uniformity be possible: if possible, whether it be desirable; if desirable, whether the pursuit of it, under present

circumstances, might not distract our attention, and draw aside our efforts from things of more pressing moment. Be this as it may, we are still one fellowship.

From these principles we set out. This we believe to be the doctrine which the Scriptures teach as to the unity of Christ's Church. But now we shall, I think, agree upon a second point—viz., that in order to glorify God to the utmost, in all our proceedings, there should be at least that degree of open and acknowledged concert and agreement which becomes a band of brethren engaged, though in different ways, in carrying on one grand design. Let us pass by the question whether perfect unanimity be attainable in the Church. Still we feel that all needless reserves and jealousies are wrong. For we are to strive for the "unity of the Spirit;" we are "to mark them that cause divisions;" we are to "speak the same thing," and to have "the same mind" that was in Christ.

To bring about a spirit such as this has long been the fervent desire of thousands of God's children. The desire is apparent here to-day. Now, it seems not unlikely that God is mercifully answering our prayers in a manner least expected. The missions of the Church may, after all, prove to be the instrument which God will employ for creating a spirit (hitherto, since Apostolic times unknown) of love amongst all the brethren. At least, *the missionary field is pre-eminently that on which every endeavour should be tried to accomplish a degree of union and co-operation far beyond what now exists amongst the Churches at home.* And this for their sake not less than ours.

Following the terms of the thesis which has been placed in my hand, I would suggest—

I. THAT THE AIM OF ALL EVANGELICAL MISSIONS IS essentially the same.

It is to preach Christ. An Evangelical mission is established simply for one purpose—to make known amongst the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is a mission to effect spiritual objects. Its aims are high. It may introduce the arts of civilized nations; it may refine the manners of the heathen; it may cultivate the minds of children. But these are not its high, its proper work. They are subsidiary, or at the utmost collateral; for these advantages may be conferred, and the people left after all in darkness and the very shadow of death. An Evangelical mission is sent forth to rescue the souls of men from the dominion of Satan, and to set up the kingdom of Christ in their hearts. The preaching of Christ crucified can alone do this. All missions have the same object. Wherever conducted, amongst scorching sands or eternal snows—however managed, by Episcopalian or Dissenter—by layman or clergyman—the message is all the same—Christ and Him crucified.

And in carrying on this ministry, the missionary has some advantages. For the most part, he is obliged to dwell, to the exclusion of all debatable questions, those on which Evangelical Christians differ, upon the great commanding features of the Gospel—*e. g.*, the sinner's need of Christ, His perfect sufficiency, and the work of the Holy Ghost within us. Upon these points there is no room for difference of opinion; and in preaching to the heathen, these must be the prevailing, if not the exclusive topics. "The essential unity" of the missionary work is more evident, more palpable, if I may so express myself, than it can always be at home; for here, where our hearers, from their youth up have been familiar with the Gospel, difficult points must sometimes be dis-