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"Ad profectum sacrosanctæ matris ecclesiæ."

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

ONLY one generation ago, the state of division in Christendom was so bitter and so hard, that few even dared to dream of a restoration of visible Unity between the severed Branches of the one Holy Catholic Apostolic Church; and those few were regarded by all others as visionaries and enthusiasts. Rome and the East had been anathematizing one another most heartily for a thousand years; and Rome anathematizing us as heartily as she did the East, if not more so, and for a greater variety of reasons. The East looked upon the Anglican Church and our own either as under anathema for agreeing with Rome in the matter of the *Filioque* or for agreeing with the Calvinists and Lutherans on the Continent on other points. Anglican Churchmen generally looked upon the East as sunk in ignorance and superstition, and as being quite as bad as Rome in most things, if not worse. As to a visible unity among these three, it entered into no man's head: or, if it did, was considered not desirable; or at most, so impracticable that it was of no use to think, speak, write or labor for any such result.

We all know how wonderfully the face of things has now changed in every quarter. The new life in our own Communion may be traced to the first communication of the Episcopate to the Church of America after the Revolutionary War. Then speedily followed the faint beginnings of the Colonial Episcopate. Then the Evangelical movement in the Church of England, rekindling its zeal, life and fervor—its missionary spirit. Then the Oxford movement, going on to perfect the impulse given by the Evangelical—to perfect it by supplying those elements of Church life and strength in which it was almost totally lacking. With this—felt on our side of the water, too—there has been such a development of earnestness and zeal, of building and founding of churches and Church-schools, of liberality in all good things, of marvellously rapid extension of the Episcopate, and of revival of the depth and strength of Primitive Church doctrine, the like of which all put together has not been equalled in any part of the Church Catholic since the days of Constantine. All this could not but lead to thoughts and efforts looking towards Unity.

Our own Church of America, being the most free to act, first led the way, in the resolution of General Convention looking towards a full communion with the Swedish Church, and the appointment of a standing commission of the House of Bishops on the subject of union with other Churches. Our next step was the appointment, in 1862, of the Committee on Communion with the Russo-Greek Church, which may be spoken of as the first symptom of *real* life; for the other efforts had, as it were, fallen still-born. Our action was immediately responded to by the appointment of a similar committee by the Convocation of Canterbury; and that has been