

The Church of Christ

ITS CHARACTER, PURPOSE
AND UNITY

BY THE
REV. T. A. WATSON, B.D.

SECOND EDITION

TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS
1906

BX9

W38

1906

C-2

Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, in
the year one thousand nine hundred and six, by THOMAS A.
WARSON, at the Department of Agriculture.

, in
s A.

To My Mother

•



p
a

d
o

f
a
t
b
s
f
d

t
i
i
t
u
o

t
g
u
e

PREFACE

A TRUE view of the character and purpose of the Church of Christ necessitates a belief in organic unity.

That such unity is practicable is evident, seeing Christ desires it and the need of the world demands it.

In this, the second edition, chapters four, five, eight and nine have been added. The problems discussed in chapters four and five have a very close bearing on Christian unity, for if secret societies and the masses become alienated from the Church, her strength will be diminished.

In chapter eight is given a brief historical sketch of the three denominations in Canada which are seriously considering the uniting of their forces. In chapter nine there is set forth the possible unification, development and achievement of the Church during the present century.

These addresses are sent forth with the prayer that the Holy Spirit may guide to a fuller realization of Christian unity and bless every true effort to that end.

T. A. W.

“The Church’s one foundation
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord ;
She is His new creation
By water and the Word.
From heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy bride ;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

“Though with a scornful wonder
Men see her sore opprest,
By schisms rent asunder,
By heresies distrest,
Yet saints their watch are keeping,
Their cry goes up, ‘How long?’
And soon the night of weeping
Shall be the morn of song.”

—*Samuel John Stone.*

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE CHURCH MILITANT	9
II. PARABLES ON THE CHURCH	21
III. THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH	31
IV. THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES	42
V. THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES	52
VI. UNITY AND DIVERSITY	63
VII. ORGANIC UNION	71
VIII. THE PROPOSED UNION	85
IX. ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW	103

ht her

her,

ng,
?'

Stone.

“
tow
her
ing.
“
was
Jesu

co
an
Ch
an
ro
wa
tal
to
fo
en
al
th
re

CHAPTER I.

THE CHURCH MILITANT.

“Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.”—*Ps.* 48. 12, 13.

“This is the idea of the Church of Christ; men washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God.”—*F. W. Robertson.*

THE fortifications and palaces of a country generally indicate its strength and wealth. So it is with the Church of Christ; if we wish to know her strength and wealth it will be necessary to go round about her, marking well her bulwarks and considering her palaces. It takes longer to walk about Zion, longer to go round about her to-day, than in former years—her borders have greatly enlarged; her citadels are to be found in almost every land, whilst her palaces are the pride of every civilized nation. It requires, therefore, time, as well as con-

THE CHURCH MILITANT

stant and serious meditation, in order to comprehend somewhat of the greatness and beauty of Zion. A casual glance at the Church, or the once going round about her, will not suffice to impress upon the heart her power and magnificence; the mind must dwell upon her, and that not merely in a general way, but on the particular parts, such as the towers, the bulwarks and palaces.

We are exhorted to tell the towers. When we can, then we have become familiar with her majesty and the extent of her conquests. The towers point to heaven's purity, peace, glory and perfection. Let man know in how many ways the Church of Christ directs him to that which is noblest and best. Count the number of the watchmen upon the towers of Zion and know that they are sorely grieved when there are signs of spiritual decline and when sin gains the ascendancy; but know also that they have a joy that is unspeakable when Zion prospers, and when she is mighty in conquest.

THE CHURCH MILITANT

God has raised up from time to time men who have become leaders in the Church; these are to be found in our colleges and in the various religious communities. Such leaders in religious thought and Christian activity, because of their intimate fellowship with God, and because of their eager, constant and broad outlook upon the world, are worthy of confidence and support; for, seeing the dangers to which the Church is exposed, they sound the alarm; seeing the need of the world, they cry: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion"; seeing the Church's great opportunities, they urge with sympathetic appeal: Be up and doing, "While it is called to-day."

A more intelligent and sympathetic interest on the part of Christians, in the Church's wise and unselfish leaders of the past and present, would result in more whole-hearted and courageous service for the Master. Watchman, what of the night?

Mark ye well her bulwarks, so that

THE CHURCH MILITANT

each and every one may be assured of the foundations on which she rests and the strength of her defence.

Christ's presence in the Church is her greatest bulwark, her surest hope. He ever walks amidst "the seven golden candle-sticks" to awaken interest and to give strength and permanency to her every effort. Does not the fact, that the all-conquering Christ dwells in His Church in the person of the Holy Spirit, mean that she must sooner or later subdue the nations of the earth? "All power is given unto me," and "Lo, I am with you alway" were the parting promises of Christ.

His presence in His Church implies that she shall stand fast and be a refuge and strength to all who are truly identified with her. They shall be safe in Zion, for "The gates of hell shall not prevail against her."

Holy lives are also an important bulwark of the Christian Church. Many arguments have been set forth in defence of Christianity; some of them have been

THE CHURCH MILITANT

refuted, but the argument of a consistent and holy life, no one has been able to gainsay. The Church can add name after name to the list of honored and faithful servants, as given in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews; names of those who had the mind of Christ and walked in His footsteps. Every honest confession added to the whole-hearted confession of Peter—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—is so much additional strength to the Church, for has not Christ said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock (your confession) will I build my Church"? The outcome of such confessions has been devotion to Christ and holiness of life; thus the united testimony of Christians by honest confession and holy living has been and is still one of the Church's strongest and surest means of defence.

No less important a bulwark are the "great and precious promises which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus." What God has promised of blessing and prosperity to His Church He will fulfil.

THE CHURCH MILITANT

Does this not then become at once her strength and her encouragement?

When we come to consider her palaces, we find that there is nothing mean or insignificant about Zion. She is grand and gorgeous. No loss or damage has come to her through all these years, nor has her beauty or symmetry been marred by the frequent attacks that have been made upon her. Christ's presence accounts for her unsurpassed beauty and constant glory. He casts the mantle of charity over the inconsistencies, and yet constantly ministers to their sanctification, thus continually increasing the beauty and glory of His Church.

As regards her wealth and resources she can boast of a plentiful supply for the present, and of hidden and sufficient treasures for the days that are to come. She is rich in gifts, in talents, in endowments, in grace and love, in courage and wisdom; for the Church has her scholars and sages, her poets and preachers, her teachers and evangelists, her

once her
nt?
er palaces,
mean or
is grand
mage has
years, nor
en marred
at have
s presence
eauty and
mantle of
s, and yet
sanctifica-
asing the
h.
resources
upply for
sufficient
e to come.
in endow-
a courage
a has her
nd preach-
elists, her

THE CHURCH MILITANT

musicians and martyrs, her pious people and her self-sacrificing workers.

A Church of such a character, and with such endowments, must surely have a great purpose; in fact, Christ could not bring into existence a Church that would have a narrow or insignificant purpose. Nothing short of the subduing of the nations of the earth will suffice as a purpose, and she must steadily pursue it until "Christ shall have dominion from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

How shall she fulfil her great purpose? By truly honoring the Holy Spirit. The children of Israel, under Joshua, were commanded to allow the Ark, the symbol of God's presence, to precede them by two thousand cubits; so the Holy Spirit must be given a place of honor and not be identified with conscience or thought of merely as a religious influence.

This constant and unerring Guide will reveal the purpose of God and will enlighten the Church in her times of doubt

THE CHURCH MILITANT

and perplexity, as well as inspire her with hope and courage when she is about to falter. When she honors the Holy Spirit then she shall "go in and possess the land," for it is "not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

She shall fulfil her purpose also by a faithful setting forth of the Word, the Sword of the Spirit, in precept and by practice. When Gideon and his faithful three hundred marched against the Midianites, they took with them trumpets and lamps; the former symbolical of the preaching of the Word—the declaring of the whole counsel of God—the lifting up of the crucified Saviour. She has sought not only "to keep the faith once delivered to the saints," but to publish it abroad. In so doing she has conquered. The lamps, on the other hand, are symbolical of pure and holy lives—"Let your light so shine" has been the watchword of the Church, with the result that God has been glorified. The proclaiming of the Truth from the sacred desk and

THE CHURCH MILITANT

the practicing of it in daily life will ever be the Church's most effective mode of conquest. To the weapons of truth are added those of meekness and righteousness by the Psalmist, for he says,—“Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness.” These are her weapons for aggressive warfare. The powers of darkness must give way before her, for “she goes forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners.”

The triumphs and conquests of the past have cost much. Many noble lives have been sacrificed in the cause of truth and righteousness. History records that between four and seven million in the early centuries sealed their testimony to Christ's redeeming power with their life blood, and that during the Reformation in Scotland some eighteen thousand died the death of the martyr rather than deny their Lord and Master. Besides,

THE CHURCH MILITANT

we recall with a certain degree of pride such names as Livingstone of Africa, the Gordons of Erromanga, as well as the long list of heroic missionaries and native Christians in China who have been faithful unto death. To what end is all this sacrifice? We have a concise answer in the language of the writer who says, "We see through the tears and the trials the triumphs of the cross."

Zion's strength, triumphs, and glory are to be told to the generation following. Once the mind has comprehended her greatness and her purpose, when the mind is filled with admiration for her and the heart is wholly devoted to her cause, then it will be possible to impress upon the rising generation her importance and the world-wide extent of her mission. Tell it to the generation following that they may do nothing to weaken her, and may not in any sense allow her to be surrendered to the enemy, but that they may espouse her interests. Belittle the Church of Christ and the rising generation will soon be

unv
exa
to s
be
and
"le
stal
N
Bri
wit
of
be
Chu
stro
Pre
con
her
eter
tha
Chu
any
F
fait
love
Jer

THE CHURCH MILITANT

unwilling to be identified with her; exalt her and they will deem it an honor to serve in her ranks. Yea, they will thus be led to devote their best energies and effort to promote her interests—to “lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes.”

No one is ashamed to be called a Briton, because he knows he is identified with a nation of strength, of prestige and of vast resources. Why should anyone be ashamed to be identified with the Church of Christ? She is rich in Grace, strong in Love, fortified by the Divine Presence, with a wonderful history of conquest and victory, as well as before her a future of world-wide blessing and eternal glory, for Christ has assured us that His shall finally be “a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.”

He who has faith in Christ will have faith in His Church, and all who have love for our Lord Jesus will pray “that Jerusalem may have peace and pros-

THE CHURCH MILITANT

perity," and can truly say with Timothy
Dwight:—

" I love Thy Kingdom, Lord,
The house of Thine abode,
The Church our blest Redeemer saves
With His own precious blood.

" For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given,
Till toils and cares shall end.

" Sure as Thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven."

"
—M
"
anyw
wher
truth

I
are
Chu
to i
I
" T
and
Is i
the
the
hea
trus
the

VT

Timothy

ner saves
od.

given,
l.

yield,
l."

CHAPTER II.

PARABLES ON THE CHURCH.

"And he spake many things unto them in parables."
—*Matt. 13. 3.*

"The Kingdom of God for any soul is that condition, anywhere in the universe, where God is that soul's king, where it seeks and obeys the highest, where it loves truth and duty more than comfort and luxury."

—*Phillips Brooks.*

IN the parables on the Kingdom there are set forth various aspects of the Church of Christ from its establishment to its consummation.

In the parables of "The Sower" and "The Tares" Christ teaches the place and importance of truth in His Church. Is it not when the truth gains access to the heart, when it is heard in faith, that the Kingdom of Christ begins in such a heart? The Church then has a sacred trust, in that she must scatter broadcast the precious seed provided—scatter it in

PARABLES ON THE CHURCH

faith, not knowing where it will take root. Who can estimate the power of the Word of God? "It is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." No words of man's wisdom or effervescent eloquence will suffice, for Christ is honored and the best interests of His Church served when the truth is highly prized and when it is wisely and freely used.

These two parables also sum up the hindrances to the development of the Church. They are of two kinds: those from within, in the hearts of men, and those from without—"An enemy hath done this."

As regards the former, they are very prevalent and powerful. They may be characterized as the hardened heart, the superficial heart and the pre-possessed heart. So strong and so persistent are these hindrances that nothing but the

Ho
pre
be
and
I
Ch
is
Ho
ide
nan
hat
doc
tim
hat
div
ran
dor
che
flue
are
Wh
eve
for
tog
I
See

will take
power of
tick and
ay two-
dividing
e joints
of the
t." No
rvescent
hrist is
of His
s highly
d freely

up the
of the
: those
en, and
ny hath

are very
may be
heart, the
ossessed
tent are
but the

Holy Spirit can make the necessary preparation, in order that the truth may be received into good and honest hearts and bring forth fruit abundantly.

Much of the evil existing in the Church to-day is accounted for when it is said, "An enemy hath done this." How does it come that there are those identified with the Church who have a name to live but are dead? "An enemy hath done this." Whence the erroneous doctrines in the Church from time to time? We answer again, "An enemy hath done this." How account for division, strife and discord within the ranks of the Church? "An enemy hath done this" also. Satan's efforts to check the growth and minimize the influence and fruitfulness of the Church are persistent, subtle and far-reaching. When the mischief is once done, however, patience is the virtue much needed, for both the wheat and tares must grow together until the harvest.

In the parables of "The Mustard Seed" and "The Leaven" we have

PARABLES ON THE CHURCH

clearly set forth the extent and the nature of the development of the Church of Christ.

Christians are not to be discouraged by hindrances from within or from without, for the development of the Kingdom will be rapid and remarkable. Has it not been so? As a result of the preaching of Peter, we are told that three thousand souls were added to the Church in one day. In the middle of the second century we have the following testimony of Justin Martyr to the further rapid development of Christianity, when he wrote: "There is no people, Greek or barbarian, or of any other race, however ignorant of arts or of agriculture, whether they dwell in tents or wander about in covered wagons, among whom prayers and thanksgiving are not offered in the name of the crucified Saviour to the Father and Creator of all things."

About half a century later we have a similar testimony from Tertullian, who says: "We are but of yesterday, and

PARABLES ON THE CHURCH

yet we already fill your cities, islands, camps, your palaces, senate, forum; we have left to you only your temples."

Sufficient data can also be given to show the remarkable development in recent years. For instance, in China fifty years ago, it is estimated that there were only three hundred Christians, in 1890 some forty thousand, whilst in 1900 there were as many as one hundred and thirteen thousand. When we consider that nearly every convert becomes a centre of Christian influence, we may know how quickly the leaven of gospel principles will spread till all shall know Christ.

Whilst the parable of "The Leaven" illustrates the secret but certain working of the Grace of God, the parable of the "Mustard Seed" points to the truth that there are given to the Church unmistakable manifestations of her steady and symmetrical growth.

The Church of to-day is not a weakling that needs to be supported by argument and apology. Instead of requiring

PARABLES ON THE CHURCH

the support of men, it invites them to come under her shelter to enjoy her protection. "Come thou with us," she says, "and we shall do thee good."

In the parables of "The Hidden Treasure" and "The Pearl of Great Price" Christ indicates the different attitude of individuals towards His Grace offered through the Church. She carries the Grace of God to men. In this sense they find it without search, for who would expect the heathen to go on a pilgrimage to a Christian land in search of the Grace they so much need? But when it is taken to them and when by faith they appropriate it to themselves, they truly rejoice in the treasure they possess.

Still it is also true that many, having heard of Christ and His Grace, earnestly and diligently seek the Pearl of Great Price. It is not to them an unexpected and somewhat sudden find, but after careful self-examination, after prayerful study of God's Word, after much conscientious reasoning, and it may be after

a
ob
su
ne
ha
Ch
po
gr
Ch
ho
re
th
th
he
po
gi
m
th
wi
of
in

PARABLES ON THE CHURCH

a long season of doubt, they find the object of their search.

In both instances, however, the treasure is invaluable; so precious that neither hesitates "to sell all that he hath" in order to possess it.

It leads us to ask, what does the Church offer to men? A treasure, a possession, a pearl! Yes, she offers them grace, love and pardon; she offers them Christ, the unspeakable gift; she offers holiness of character; she offers to men restoration to the glorious image which they have lost.

On the other hand, what does she ask them to part with? Their pride of heart; their love of self and worldly possessions; in a word, all they have.

What, then, is the principle Christ has given to His Church? It is this: When men are brought to know the value of the treasure which she offers they will willingly give up the paltry possessions of the world. Such satisfaction is found in the possessing of the "Pearl of Great

PARABLES ON THE CHURCH

Price," that hearts have been constrained to say:

"Jesus, thou Joy of loving hearts!
Thou Fount of life! thou Light of men!
From the best bliss that earth imparts,
We turn unfilled to thee again."

One more parable is required to complete this series on the Kingdom. Whilst the six already referred to naturally group themselves in pairs, this one stands out conspicuously to reveal the final consummation of His Kingdom, for the encouragement of all who are identified with it.

The Church of the future, we are assured, will be wholly free from evil in every form, and shall be composed of those who have been separated unto God. Being wholly purified in herself and free from all contamination from without, she shall be exalted to a place of honor and enter upon her eternal mission. What a Church! Every faculty, every gift, every heart wholly consecrated to

Go
me
oth
gat
No
Ea
dec
doi
of
hol
cha
'
the
kno
Fa
the
is
rec
cor
of
Juc
utt
'
be
sur
cei

CH

trained

of men!
rts,

ed to
gdom.
natur-
is one
al the
n, for
denti-

e are
i evil
ed of
God.
l free
hout,
onor
ssion.
every
d to

PARABLES ON THE CHURCH

God and devoted to His service; every member in perfect unison with every other member; an innumerable company gathered from all quarters—from the North and from the South, from the East and from the West; no seasons of decline or periods of indifference or doubt; she shall dwell in the pure light of Heaven, possessing a constancy and holiness of character that shall know no change.

“When shall these things be?” asked the disciples. “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has kept in His own hands,” is the gentle rebuke of Christ; but, what is more important at present, “Ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.”

The Church of Christ, then, can only be truly established, developed and consummated when the Holy Ghost is received and when the power bestowed is

PARABLES ON THE CHURCH

used in witnessing for Christ in the world. This is her present concern, so we pray:—

“O make thy Church, dear Saviour,
A lamp of burnished gold,
To bear before the nations
Thy true light as of old.”

Thus, as we pray “Thy Kingdom come,” let every one who has named the name of Christ respond to the command, “Go work to-day in my vineyard,” for he who has a share in the planting and the developing shall have a share in the glorious consummation forever and ever.

Z
“
face
upon
Ps. 1
“
it ha
V
two
Ch
an
is 1
for
tau
wo
ful
fac
be
am
C
nan

CH

in the
ern, so

ur,

ngdom
ed the
mand,
l," for
g and
in the
l ever.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH.

"God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations."—*Ps. 67. 1, 2.*

"Whenever any Church has ceased to be missionary, it has ceased to be healthy."—*Bishop Boyd Carpenter.*

WORSHIPPING and witnessing are the two important functions of the Christian Church. Worshipping, however, is not an end in itself; it implies that blessing is received, not for any selfish use, but for a divine and noble purpose, as is taught by the Spirit speaking in the words of the Psalmist: "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations."

God bless us. Why? "That thy name may be known among all nations."

THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH

True waiting upon God has always in view the working amongst men. A people that have God's mercy extended unto them and have God's blessing bestowed are rich and are splendidly equipped for world-wide service. There is then a close connection between waiting upon God and witnessing for Him.

It is true that our spiritual growth depends on the truth and blessing we receive, but exercise is necessary for health of soul. It matters not how nourishing the food may be that is consumed from day to day, if proper exercise is not taken health of body will not be possessed or enjoyed.

Further, we may say that the larger the sphere for exercise the greater is the strength and vitality that will ensue. The child in a densely populated city, confined within narrow limits, has little opportunity for the proper development of the faculties of the body, but must necessarily grow up weak and puny. Not so with the youth in the country—abundance of fresh air, ample liberty

T
to
pri
stre
visi
fac
full
led
gra
are
Rus
wha
thin
are
wan
Chr
Mar
too
life
T
Chr
tian
exte
soul
hond
T
succ

THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH

always in
men. A
extended
blessing
gloriously
There
en wait-
or Him.
growth
sing we
ary for
ot how
is con-
proper
dy will

larger
r is the
ensue.
d city,
s little
pment
: must
puny.
ntry—
liberty

to romp and play. The extent of his privilege and the proper use of it is his strength. Christ has made due provision for the exercise of the Christian faculties. Most Christians receive plentifully of the truth; yea, they have been led into the green pastures of God's grace and promises, but many of them are not strong. Why? Because, like Ruskin's audiences, they come to hear what is said and how it is said, but never think of putting it into practice. They are not strong, then, simply from the want of healthy exercise that comes from Christian activity and zealous endeavor. Many have confined their efforts within too narrow bounds and their spiritual life has developed accordingly.

The field for Christian activity, says Christ, is the world. When the Christian's faith, love, sympathy and effort extends to the end of the world, his own soul becomes strong, and Christ is truly honored.

The greater the task undertaken and successfully accomplished, the greater the

THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH

character and the stronger is the heart that has performed. Has not Christ given His Church the arduous task of evangelizing the world, that in the performance of it she might develop a strong and noble character, and thus be "made meet for the Master's use."? If a smaller task had been assigned her, many of her best and noblest qualities would lie dormant and would soon be useless; the greatness of the work calls for the best she has, and at the same time tends to strengthen her weaker qualities. Is the Church using the wisdom, the sympathy and the power she possesses? Is she directing it into right and proper channels for the salvation of a lost world? We believe, speaking generally, that the Church has taken up her world-wide mission, but here and there may be found portions of the Church—individual congregations—that see little beyond their own requirements. By prejudice and narrow-mindedness the world's spiritual needs have been shut out from their vision and they are con-

T
tent
it c
The
eye
alre
lool
it s
clea
of i
ear
"T
"Y
at
and
cart
S
to
Chu
is n
cha
F
Chu
Chr
all
flou
this

THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH

tent to live in a narrow sphere, if indeed it can be said that such truly live at all. The field is the world; "Lift up your eyes and behold, for the fields are white already to harvest." No narrower outlook will suffice. Christ would not have it so. His teaching in this regard is clear, when He says: "Ye are the light of *the world*"; "Ye are the salt of *the earth*"; "Go ye into *all the world*"; "Teach *all nations*." Further He says: "Ye shall be witnesses of me, beginning at Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and unto *the uttermost parts of the earth*."

Such were the declarations of Christ to His first disciples regarding the Church's sphere of activity, and there is nothing to show that His purpose has changed.

History proves to us that when the Church has earnestly sought to obey Christ's final command, "Go ye into all the world," she has prospered and flourished, but when she lost sight of this end she became weak.

THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH

The one outstanding feature of the Apostolic Church is its missionary zeal; the Church at Antioch may be singled out to indicate the character of the early Church in general. It is said of the Christians at Antioch, that the hand of the Lord was upon them; they clave unto God; many were added to their number, and every man gave according to his ability. These are unmistakable indications of a growing and vigorous Church.

During the Middle Ages the Church, instead of enlarging her borders and extending the hand of Christian sympathy to the nations beyond, spent her time and energy, history informs us, in theological contentions and in the observance of rights and practices which were unscriptural. Her light became dim. The Waldensians and Albigenses remained true and faithful witnesses, but the light that emanated from these portions of the Church was more than counteracted by the prevalence of superstition and idolatry in other parts.

T
Th
she
onc
V
Mc
mis
and
and
the
To
said
use
pos
says
I
stre
goir
It
is be
citie
the
In a
—“
and
ther
Chu

CHURCH

THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH

Thus, as the Church became self-centred, she lost much of the light and life she once possessed.

When it could be said of Murray McCheyne's congregation that it was missionary, then it was rich in blessing and strong for service. Both scripture and history affirm that the more light the Church gives the more she possesses. To this Augustine testifies, when he said: "Whatever is possessed and not used is not possessed as it ought to be possessed." "Freely ye have received," says Christ, "freely give."

Is not much of the Church's spiritual strength, like the power of Niagara, going to waste?

In recent years the power of Niagara is being transmitted to distant towns and cities, thus providing sufficient light in the home and on the public highway. In answer to the prayer of God's people—"God be merciful to us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us"—there has been given power to the Church. Is it not at once her duty and

THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH

privilege to transmit it to distant nations that are sitting in darkness—to transmit it along the wires of faith so that the homes and the public thoroughfares of these great nations might be lighted with the love that is divine, so that they may “walk in the light even as God is in the light”?

The strength of the Church’s missions will be determined by the abundance of life and the strength of Christian sympathy in those centres where gospel privileges have been longest enjoyed and where God’s blessing has been the richest. For even as the beat of the heart determines the health of the finger to its extremity, so the heart-beat of the Christian Church will determine the health of her remotest member.

We are accustomed to speak of “Home” and “Foreign” Missions. These terms are necessary, it is true, as a guide for the wise distribution of the Church’s gifts of liberality, but they are misused when one Christian thinks he can give his whole attention to the work

nations
ransmit
hat the
ares of
ed with
ey may
in the

missions
nce of
sym-
gospel
njoyed
en the
of the
finger
eat of
ne the

lk of
ssions.
ue, as
of the
y are
ks he
work

at home and set wholly aside the claims of the heathen world; whilst another, it may be, is devoted to the converting of the heathen and is out of sympathy with the less romantic, yet necessary, work pertaining to the maintaining of ordinances at home. The work is one; the field is one; both "Home" and "Foreign" Missions claim the sympathy of every Christian heart. In fact it is difficult to understand how any can truly call themselves Christians and not have a share in the Church's specific purpose, viz., "That Christ's way may be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations." When Christ comes to the heart, He brings with Him His missionary zeal and enthusiasm. This He imparts to the believer, so that he in turn comes to have a sympathetic, compassionate and broad outlook upon the world; at the same time he will seek to help the needy and rescue the perishing, whom he finds in the more immediate sphere in which his lot is cast.

The Church will be of the same char-

acter as her individual members. When, as in apostolic times, every one who names the name of Christ is a missionary, then the Church shall truly honor her Head and shall make her influence felt wherever her banner is unfurled.

The "World for Christ" is the only worthy motto for the Church which seeks to do her Master's will.

She has, then, two important functions which, we have seen, are inseparable. In Heber, the hymn-writer, we find these two functions of worshipping and witnessing blending in wondrous harmony, in that he has penned for us the hymn of adoration, "Holy, Holy, Holy," which is accorded a foremost place; as well as the favorite missionary hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains."

All who possess his spirit, which we believe was a counterpart of the mind of Christ—all who possess his spirit will unite with him in the prayer of adoration—"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty"—as well as in the missionary plea:

URCH

When,
e who
ission-
honor
fluence
rled.
e only
i seeks

ctions
rable.
: find
g and
har-
is the
loly,"
e; as
ymn,
"
h we
id of
will
lora-
God
nary

THE CHIEF END OF THE CHURCH

“ Waft, waft, ye winds, the story,
And you, ye waters, roll,
Till like a sea of glory
It spreads from pole to pole ;
Till o'er our ransomed nature,
The Lamb, for sinners slain,
Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss returns to reign.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES.

“The common people heard him gladly.”

—*Mark 12. 37.*

“A man’s work does not fall upon him by chance, but it is *given* him to do; and everything well done belongs to God’s kingdom, and everything ill done to the kingdom of darkness.”—*George Macdonald.*

IT has come to pass that the working men, who form no insignificant part of the population, are largely estranged from the Church. Christ would not have it so. He, by His toil at the carpenter’s bench when in Nazareth, identified himself with the toiler, and in the earlier days of His public ministry gathered around Him a few fishermen who deemed it an honor to leave all and follow Him. It must be a source of displeasure to Christ to see the masses indifferent, and in many cases hostile to the Church. It ought to awaken the

Ch
th
th
att
Er
th
cer
col

ref
a
att

Ch
sho
lea
Lo
wa
not
the
org
clai
ord
the
selv
and

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES

Church to a sense of the seriousness of the situation when she considers that in the United States only thirty per cent. attend regularly divine worship, while in England, according to the statement of the late Canon Farrar, only three per cent. of the working classes are regular communicants.

In Toronto (which may be taken as representative of Canada), according to a recent census, only fifty per cent. attend divine worship.

That a breach exists between the Church and the working men is further shown by the speeches of four labor leaders at a recent public gathering in London, England. A note of hostility was conspicuous in all the speeches, while not one was willing to acknowledge that the people owed the smallest debt to organized Christianity, while one declared they had nothing to do with the order of the ministry, and claimed that the working classes had raised themselves in spite of the sensational press and in spite of the Christian ministry.

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES

What is the cause of this breach?

The Church is partly at fault in that she has catered to the well-to-do and professional classes. She has not in many quarters extended the hand of sympathy to the manual laborer, but has, rather by want of charity, by costly edifices, high-class music and ornate services, put a barrier in the way of such identifying themselves with her.

Let us hear what the working man has to say for himself. What reasons can he give for his indifference and hostility to Christianity?

At the outset he will say that he is very sensitive regarding dress. If he goes to Church he must be respectable, and because he finds his wages will not allow him to keep pace with the wealthier classes, he concludes the only course open for him is to stay away from the service of God's house, settle down to a self-satisfied mood and criticize the Church as opportunity arises.

Besides he thinks the Church does not want him, for he is given little

cp
tai
wo
imp
He
eith
fros
hon
mor
relie
bler
thar
be f
It
and
will
welc
as b
and
It
blen
mer
diffe
worl
the
the

ASSES

h?
in that
o and
not in
nd of
it has,
costly
ornate
f such

n has
an he
ty to

he is
f he
able,
not
thier
urse
the
i to
the

loes
ttle

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES

opportunity of discussing matters pertaining to the congregation or Christian work in general, and finds that little importance is attached to his opinion. He will not put himself forward, so either remains silent or stands aloof from the Church. He feels more at home in a labor union, where there is more of equality and where he finds relief in freely discussing labor problems, which seem to him more practical than Christianity. How can this breach be healed?

If the Church is true to her principles and true to the spirit of her Master, she will set aside all class distinctions, will welcome into her fellowship and treat as brethren all who have faith in Christ and an interest in His Kingdom.

It is the purpose of the Church to blend in one harmonious whole her members who have come from the different social ranks in life. In the world social distinctions may prevail, in the Church these are to be forgotten in the united devotion to Christ to make

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES

Christian fellowship possible and profitable and to set before the world the true standard of life, in that it does not consist in the material, but in the possessing a charity that does not despise the humblest follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. Much mischief has been wrought by the application of the term "working men" to those engaged in manual labor. Work is work, whether done by the hand or by the brain. It is not the kind of work, but the quality of the work and the spirit in which it is performed that differentiates men. In and through Christ man is given to possess the highest motive in service, so that a sympathy that is stronger and broader than any class should exist in the Church, binding together all noble, unselfish and faithful workers, for "One is your Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren."

Ministers of the Gospel are frequently thought of as being far removed from the class usually spoken of as working men. We have but to recall the exhorta-

tion
view
thy
that
divi
T
dro
Inst
pro
tian
mor
in
Chr
their
on c
B
into
for
hand
prea
brair
cann
intell
his c
W
the k

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES

tion to Timothy to prove that such a view is unjustifiable—"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."

The Church is not the place for drones, but for men who love work. Instead of the varied occupations and professions proving a barrier to Christian fellowship, they should make it more real and helpful, seeing that each in his sphere performs a service for Christ and humanity, and therefore in their united capacity as a Church meet on common ground as workers.

Besides it is not possible to divide men into brain workers and manual laborers, for the two kinds of work go hand-in-hand. The artist, the author and the preacher use the hand as well as the brain, whilst the so-called manual laborer cannot by any means dispense with his intellect if he is to prove successful in his calling in life.

Would that less ado was made about the kind of occupation a man is engaged

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES

in and more stress placed upon the quality of the work and the spirit in which it is performed, even until all workers can say, with Robert Louis Stevenson, "I know what true pleasure is, for I have done good work."

A proper view of the Church on the part of the so-called working classes will do much to mend the existing breach. It is a divine institution and not human; it is on a higher plane than any labor organization can ever be, and therefore has a first and supreme claim upon men. Nor is the Church to be thought of as an institution far removed from the affairs of men, serving no practical end. It was designed to be the most practical institution on earth, and is broad enough to include in her membership peoples from all ranks and stations in life. The services of the sanctuary are not all of the Church. The varied organized efforts and individual service require to be taken into account when estimating her character and worth.

I
mig
Chu
the
abs
the
dire
T
Chu
and
is a
His
the
cust
on t
that
pres
its s
B
bles
servi
of C
was
prea
ever
procl

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES

Besides the so-called working classes might well consider the debt they owe to Christianity, the protection given them, the laws enacted in their interests; the absence of barbarous tyranny that robs the honest toiler as well as all the indirect influence of Christian civilization.

The breach will be mended when the Church more fully manifests the spirit and adopts the method of Christ. His is a charity that never faileth. As to His method it is two-fold. He loved the synagogue, for we read, "As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day." He taught those that gathered there, and by His own presence has honored the sanctuary and its services.

But Christ did not seek to reach and bless men merely by the synagogue services. We find Him by the sea-shore of Galilee, where a cosmopolitan crowd was accustomed to gather, and there He preached the Word unto them. Wherever He found men in need, there He proclaimed the Truth.

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES

Is the Church wiser than her Master, that she should confine her preaching largely to the sanctuary and let the men with undeveloped talent, questionable motive and misdirected zeal air their views at the street corner? The best and most consecrated men the Church has are not too good to preach to the cosmopolitan crowd or to the few upon the public highway.

On one occasion Christ asked Peter to lend Him his ship that He might to better advantage preach to the multitude on the shore. Christ still seeks the co-operation of every true believer. He wants the post of duty, the office, the counter, the workshop for His use. At the post of duty Christ's disciples touch the varied classes of workers. Christ would take His place there and use it as a pulpit for proclaiming the Truth. When the messages from the sacred desks and the messages spoken in life and act from behind the counter, in the workshop and in the office agree and are in accord with the Gospel of Jesus

Ch
ma
Tr
wit
mo
in
Bu
and
hos
cas
as t
was
hon

ASSES

Master,
teaching
the men
tionable
their
the best
Church
to the
upon

eter to
ght to
ltitude
re co-
He
e, the
. At
touch
Christ
ise it
ruth.
acred
life
the
l are
Jesus

THE CHURCH AND THE MASSES

Christ, then we may expect to see the masses brought into sympathy with the Truth and led to identify themselves with the Church.

The Church has been the stronger and more influential, because she has had in her ranks Paul, the tent-maker; Bunyan, the tinker; Carey, the cobbler, and Moody, the merchant, as well as a host of others who were not ashamed to cast in their lot with a people who have as their Master, one who, though divine, was a laborer and a true friend of the honest toiler.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES.

“One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.”—*Matt.* 23. 8.

“Look up and not down; look out and not in; look forward and not back; lend a hand.”

MEN are saved to serve. That service will have unity when a noble Christian purpose possesses the soul. Without such a purpose in all of life's activities there will be discord and conflicting interests.

When all of life's service has reference to Christ and has in view the promoting of His Kingdom, there will be unity in such a life.

All then who are members of the Church of Christ are servants—honored servants. The Church does not consist of idlers, nor merely of the effeminate,

TH

nor
self
vice
yea,
say,
T
that
or e
nece
wor
but
beca
nicel
pers
told,
Man
view
could
comp
resol
secon
said
appro
them
“Ger
of sy

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES

nor of the aged and infirm; she offers self-denying, strenuous and loving service to all who are identified with her; yea, Christ expects or rather, we may say, demands such service.

This is a practical age, and it demands that Christianity be more than a name, or even more than sound doctrine. It is necessary that it manifest itself in good works. Sympathy is an excellent virtue, but often loses its strength and sweetness because it is frequently conveyed in a nicely-worded but formal letter to the person in trouble. A merchant, we are told, failed in the mercantile city of Manchester; his friends gathered to view the situation and see what steps could be taken to assist him. One of the company moved a somewhat lengthy resolution of sympathy, which was duly seconded. One after another arose and said that the resolution met with their approval. Finally, the most practical of them all took the floor and said: "Gentlemen, that's a model resolution of sympathy now before us, but I feel

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES

five pounds for this man in trouble, how much do you feel?"

Thus we are "to love not merely in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

The benevolent work of secret societies has been spoken of as "Applied Christianity." It certainly is when performed in the proper spirit. "Let not your right hand know what your left hand doeth," says the sacred writer. True Christian service does not require to be paraded before the public, but speaks for itself. Christ's miracles proclaim His divinity; His acts of mercy, the love of His heart. So the service performed without ostentation has an eloquence of its own.

The spirit of unselfishness gives proper tone and character to service. Such service has continually in view the good and well-being of others, without expecting an equivalent in return. Rewards are secondary; the service itself is a delight.

These are some of the cardinal principles of Christianity which secret socie-

TH.

ties
ide:
bre.
Ch
up
to t
soci
had
tha
the
clai
tha
hav
of
frot
the
T
as s
V
the
tha
secr
mer
true
upo
ther

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES

ties have adopted as a guide and as an ideal. Is it not true that there is a breach between such societies and the Church? Has there not been the setting up of the societies' interests in opposition to the claims of the Church? Have not society meetings and claims frequently had a first consideration, whilst work that is more directly associated with the Church has been secondary? It is claimed that societies are doing a work that the Church is neglecting. Thus have not societies, with a certain degree of pride, set themselves up as distinct from and in a certain sense superior to the Church of Christ?

The breach is not, we think, as wide as some would have us believe.

What do we mean when we speak of the Church? It is nothing more or less than its members. Many of the leading secret societies have for their officers members of the Church. If these are true to the obligations they have taken upon themselves as Church members, then we say the Church, instead of

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES

being wholly distinct from such societies, actually directs them and her influence permeates them. Thus in so far as societies are made up of members of the Church of Christ, to that extent whatever good is attributed to societies the Church may truly be said to have performed it.

Whence, we ask, came the desire to do good in this particular way? Is it not a result of the Church's teaching and influence? I am convinced the Church has done more to originate and foster such societies than will be readily admitted. The Church, it is true, has not as a body, nor as far as we know, has any portion of it directly in Synod, Council or Assembly deliberated to promote their interests, and yet she has from time to time set the influences at work which have given rise to them. If not as a corporate body, yet in the individual congregations by special services and sermons, she has recognized their existence, promoted their interests and increased their popularity.

TH

the
Ch
for
to l
Ma
acc
mu
hav
can
tog
ain
Ma
ser
wh
cer
soc
the
for
ins
dev
obl
ass
but
sid
Sci

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES

All, no doubt, will readily admit that those who are truly identified with the Church of Christ have a service to perform, but differences of opinion exist as to how that service should be performed. Many individuals go about doing good, according as the need arises, and have much joy in the Master's service; others have thought that more efficient service can be rendered by banding themselves together, having before them definite aims and duties. If the Spirit of the Master is manifest in the individual service as well as in the organized effort, who can find fault? Yet, there are certain tendencies at work in secret societies that do not, we fear, promote the interests of the Church. We find, for instance, that they tend to narrow instead of enlarging the sympathies and devotion of the heart. Each is under obligation, because of secret vows, to assist the members of the same order, but little thought is given to those outside. Is this not man's limitations? Scripture teaches that the helping hand

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES

is to be extended to our neighbor. Who is my neighbor, does any one ask?

“Thy neighbor, it is he whom thou
Hast power to aid and bless.”

The needy at our door or the heathen in his superstition and idolatry has as much a right to the sympathy and assistance of those charitably inclined as the one who is a member of the same order.

How much of the benevolent service rendered is done, even by professing Christians, not first and foremost because of the individual's obligations to Christ, but because *he* is a Mason, a Forester or an Odd-Fellow, as the case may be? Surely Christ and His Church are worthy of the foremost place as the motive in any kind of service rendered. If through secret societies that service can be rendered more efficiently, so much the better. The societies then become the means rather than the incentive for Christian service. The strength and proper spirit for benevolent service must

Who

en in
much
ce of
who

vice
sing
ause
rist,
r or
be?
rthy
e in
ugh
ren-
the
the
for
and
ust

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES

be obtained in Christ's appointed way, viz., through the Church, which is a divine institution as contrasted with mere human organizations.

Another feature of such societies, which cannot be highly commended, is the spirit of pride which is engendered until the society's work and worth is exaggerated and the Church's value minimized and belittled.

No cause, no matter how good in principle and aim, can long prosper and accomplish its desired purpose, which sets itself up in opposition to the Church of Christ.

In theory, it is true, the societies admit the superiority of the Church, but we fear it is not so in practice. We frequently find that pledges of faithfulness in connection with a human organization are more conscientiously kept than those taken when becoming identified with the Christian Church.

As we have already said, when a true and noble purpose runs through all the varied activities and service of life, there

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES

will be no conflicting interests, but a harmony that will accord more or less with the harmony of Heaven. The true brotherhood of man is to be found in the Church of Christ, for "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Brethren in service. What an extended brotherhood! Wherever Christians are found there such fellowship is possible. The service rendered is to have specially in view the brethren, for the Apostle exhorts, saying: "As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men, but especially unto those who are of the household of Faith." The term "brotherhood of man" is used quite freely, but often in a sense that robs it of its true significance. All men are brothers,—yes, because all are of one blood, having one Creator. Are all men brethren? Not in the Christian sense. Wherein, we ask, lies the difference? True brotherhood is only possible in Christ, because He alone can remove that which separates men—even sin. The less of sin, the closer men are

brought together and the higher and nobler is the fellowship and service.

Some societies, at least, do not demand that their members acknowledge the claims of Christ as their Saviour and Master, whereas this is the core of Christianity and the secret of service in the Church.

Whilst we thus write we are conscious that much good has been accomplished through the agency of such societies, and in some respects the various sections of the Church might well imitate them. With what promptness, kindness and sympathy the friends at a distance are notified of the illness or death of a relative who has been a member of the lodge, whereas the congregation is slow to perform this kind of service which lies at her very door. We do not think that the various congregations can be so organized as to dispense with such societies, but we hope the day is not far distant when the lodge shall not encroach upon the home life, nor interfere with the direct claims of the congregation.

THE CHURCH AND SECRET SOCIETIES

When the books of remembrance are opened at the last great day, after this name and that name shall be found written the words: "I was sick and ye visited me, naked and ye clothed me, hungry and ye gave me meat;" "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

m
ar
an

ch
th
Al
of
or

th
T
di
a
or
th
bc
"
ev

ITIES

e are
this
found
nd ye
me,
Inas-
least
ne it

CHAPTER VI.

UNITY AND DIVERSITY.

“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office ; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”—*Rom. 12. 4, 5.*

“An organ is composed of several instruments—the choir, the swell, the pedal, the great ; and many stops—the diapason, the flute, the trumpet ; and yet it is one. And the Church of Christ is one. One spirit, one breath of wind, turned on by the living hand, makes all the organ vocal.”—*J. Morse.*

God metes out His gifts according to the grace each one is given to possess. These gifts are numerous and widely distributed ; so much so that no one has a monopoly, nor is there any reason why one with larger gifts should deprecate the one possessing a lesser gift, seeing both are alike dependent upon God, “The bountiful giver of every good and every perfect gift.”

By means of the apt illustration of the

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

body, the Apostle shows the diversity of gifts possessed by, and the unity existing in, the Church of Christ. Every member has its particular place and its particular office. If any member fails to perform its function it remains unperformed, for the eye cannot hear for the ear, nor the ear see for the eye. How necessary then that each member of Christ's Church be sensible of the particular and definite responsibility that has been assigned him, and be grateful for the honor conferred, in that he has a work to do which he alone can perform. Thus each member has an individuality of his own, which requires to be retained and developed. All can best do the work God has assigned them when they do it in their own way and not in imitation of some one else. It was not intended, then, that all Christians should do the very same work, or that they should do it in the same way. The more truly the individuality is developed and enters into Christian service, the more is Christ honored and His cause advanced. Nor

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

should any Christian expect others to work according to his plan and in his particular way. As well might the eye expect the ear to hear after the fashion in which it sees, as for a member of the Church of Christ to think that no work is properly performed that is not carried out according to his plan of service.

The conspicuousness of any member of the body does not determine its importance. The reeds of the musical instrument, though hidden, are indispensable and are quite as important as the key-board, which is exposed to view. Some members of the body of Christ have been assigned a more conspicuous place than others, but no member need say, "Because I am not continually before the public eye, I need not be diligent and faithful." The being much seen or seldom seen should not determine the faithfulness of any Christian, but rather the fact that the work is assigned him by Christ and that He is honored when it is wisely and diligently performed.

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

Not only is Christ dishonored when any member is remiss, but every other member is affected to a greater or less degree; such is the unity and such the dependence of one upon the other.

Further, the members can only perform their function when they are governed by the head, and respond readily to its bidding. So in the body of Christ. The will of Christ must control every member and their every action. Nothing, then, short of entire self-surrender will suffice in order that Christ's will may be done. Thus diversity of gifts and individuality is compatible with united and harmonious effort. When is one member of Christ's Church out of harmony with one or more members? When he is out of harmony with Christ; asserting his own will instead of doing the Master's. The life of the body is one. The same life animates every part. This is the principle that gives constant and vital unity to the body of Christ. Can we grasp the significance of such a truth? The

lif
the
flo
en
po
wi
wo
to
Ch
pa
be
liv
He
'
uni
nat
in
is
anc
Ch
pos
Ho
His
me
sep

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

life of Christ, rich and strong, possessing the heart of every member, the same life flowing to all members, animating and enriching each and every one, giving power to perform that which Christ's will directs. Besides, the gifts possessed would be of little avail without the life to animate them. The unity of the Church, then, is a vital one. To be a part of the Church, Christ's life must be possessed; then it is that we have a living union, not only with Christ the Head, but with every member.

Time and distance cannot destroy this unity. All Christians of all creeds and nationalities are united by this one life in one harmonious whole. The life that is possessed is the principal thing; gifts and individuality are secondary, so that Christians can rejoice together in the possession of a common spiritual life. How rich is the life Christ imparts to His Church? He truly is her life—not merely in the midst of her, as it were, separate from, guiding and directing her

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

affairs, but the very life and strength of His Church.

By worldliness or indifference on the part of some members, the flow of that life is checked, and not only does the one member suffer from the want of true vitality, but the other members suffer also, seeing all are united, and one member's sin hinders Christ's blessing in its fulness reaching the hearts of others.

On the other hand, when any portion of the Church suffers for the sake of Christ, every other part is in sympathy, showing us that there is an invisible yet real bond that unites Christendom.

We find, then, in the Church of Christ, unity in diversity and diversity in unity.

No mere external difference should be allowed to interfere with the true life and unity of the Church. All denominational preferences are insignificant, compared with the essential life of the Church, and must, we think, sooner or later be adjusted so as to adequately reflect the unity of life within. Diversity points us to the fact that God has a

spe
eac
he
sig
not
inc
tha
sui
] wil
dor
of
tim
In
ma
wit
pla
knc
per
pro
arc
] div
the
pur
for

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

special interest in the development of each Christian, as well as in the service he renders. Though he may seem insignificant in his own eyes, God takes note of and accepts the service of the individual. He expects no more than that each shall fill his place and render suitable and faithful service.

Unity implies that this faithful service will be rendered, that His will will be done. Nor is it necessary that the whole of this will be revealed or known at one time in order that it may be carried out. In the erecting of an edifice, each workman is assigned his particular portion with definite instructions, but the whole plan of the architect need not be made known to him. As each man faithfully performs his task the edifice rises in due proportions and symmetry, so that the architect's plan becomes a reality.

The great body of Christ, with all its diversity, has all its faculties united in the carrying out of a noble and divine purpose, in the performing of the service for which she exists, viz., the evange-

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

lizing of the world. Christ's purpose shall fully be revealed when each has performed the task assigned him, and that in the way Christ has directed. When the task has been completed, Christ and His servants shall rejoice together, for shall He not say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"?

purpose
ch has
n, and
irected.
pleted,
rejoice
" Well
, thou
ings, I
things,
"?

CHAPTER VII.

ORGANIC UNION.

" There shall be one flock and one shepherd."

—*John 10. 16.*

" In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

UNITY is an essential of the Church; the unity that comes from the presence of the one Spirit and the possession of the one life should, we believe, find adequate expression and should be not merely a truth to be meditated on, but a fact to be clearly demonstrated.

It cannot be said at the present time that the spiritual unity of the Church is adequately expressed, seeing that some say " I am of Paul," and others " I am of Apollos." The more real the invisible unity becomes, the more inconsistent are outward differences.

The importance of organic union lies in the fact that it has to do with practical

ORGANIC UNION

issues. In order to solve this problem practical difficulties require to be dealt with. These difficulties, says the late Hugh Price Hughes, cannot be escaped by arguing that the Church is an invisible body. Further he says: "We hold as strongly as any that Christ came into this world, not merely and not mainly to save individual men, but to establish a Church, and the Church He established is obviously a visible Church. Baptism, the Sacrament of initiation, cannot be administered by or to an invisible Church. The Holy Communion, the perpetually renewed Sacrament of membership, is equally inapplicable to an invisible Church. We repudiate the modern dangerous delusion that religion is simply a matter between a man and his Maker. The Christian religion has at every stage relation to our fellow-men as to our God and Saviour. The highest and richest blessings of personal sanctification are offered not to the individual who isolates himself, but to the Christian Church."

g
u
p
d
e
r
w
th
sh
p
th
th
th
sh
T
F
th
w
m
in
ou
wl

is
Fa

ORGANIC UNION

As long as the present differences of government and doctrine exist, organic union, we may safely say, will be impossible. The question is not, how much do denominational differences aid in the effective working of the Church, but, rather, are such differences in keeping with the mind of Christ? He assures us that "there shall be one flock and one shepherd." His mind is clearly expressed in the earnest prayer offered for the disciples: "I pray for them which thou hast given me; neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Does not Christ here refer to the invisible spiritual unity and also to the outward manifestation of it, without which unity would not be perfect?

The nature of the unity prayed for is expressed in the words, "as thou Father art in me and I in thee." An

ORGANIC UNION

invisible bond unites Christ and the Father, so He prays that a similar inner spiritual unity may characterize His followers. But Christ and the Father have manifested their invisible spiritual unity in united co-operation for the salvation of the world. Thus Christ prays that His disciples may not only be united by possessing the one life and one Spirit, but that they may manifest it in united effort for the evangelization of the world.

And note why Christ so earnestly desires this unity—"that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." How much of the unbelief of to-day, we ask, is due to the want of organic union, the want of harmonious co-operation on the part of God's people? The end of true unity is that the world may believe that Christ has been sent to save. The world's conception of Christianity will be formed by the outward manifestation of it. How necessary then that visible unity be strong and as perfect as possible. Unity already prevails to a certain degree. One aspect of it is to be found

ORGANIC UNION

in the hymnody which is common to all evangelical denominations. Each has made a suitable collection of hymns, gleaned from the past and present, from the productions of Latin, Greek, German and English authors, and that without respect of denomination. The hymns have been chosen on their merits, with a result that the majority of hymns used by the different denominations are the same. In looking over the list of authors in the various denominational hymnals, we find such names as Heber, an Episcopalian; Watts, a Congregationalist; Wesley, a Methodist; Bonar, a Presbyterian. No hymn-book would be complete without Heber's "Holy, Holy, Holy," Wesley's "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," and Toplady's "Rock of Ages."

It is interesting as well as encouraging to briefly sum up the recent movements and present-day tendencies in the direction of organic union.

We mention, in the first place, the union of the various branches of the

ORGANIC UNION

Presbyterian Church in Canada, as well as the similar union among the Methodists. The marked and substantial progress which has been made by these denominations since each became a united body is proof that the step was a right one, and that much gain and not loss has come to the Church as a whole.

The recent union of the "U. P." and Free Churches in Scotland is also worthy of notice. It is already bearing fruit and is demonstrating the truth of the familiar adage, "Union is strength."

The Federation of the Free Churches in England, including over eight million Nonconformists, has exercised a great influence, having brought together into more intimate fellowship and for a more united effort the somewhat isolated and scattered denominations. This Federation has accomplished much through the catechism which it has issued, some 350,000 copies of which are in use; also by an aggressive evangelism; by social reform in South London; by the establishing of Girls' Guilds; as well as by

ORGANIC UNION

endeavoring to secure equal rights in education.

The world-wide Christian Endeavor movement has shown us that Christians of all denominations can work side by side in a common cause. It has at least lowered the walls of separation that have kept God's people apart. By emphasizing the purpose which should predominate in Christian service, viz., "For Christ and the Church," this organization has led us to centre our minds on the great essentials, and to some extent has shown how insignificant are some of the denominational contentions.

Added to this we have the united effort in Bible Society work, indicating that there is a common faith in the Word of God, in its teaching regarding sin and salvation, and also a common desire that men everywhere should possess the Scriptures in their own language, and through them be brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The "International Course of Sabbath School Lessons" has played no small

ORGANIC UNION

part in creating a desire for closer union and a more united co-operation. Besides, S. S. Conventions have brought out into bold relief the essentials of Christian activity and have minimized denominational distinctions.

Not less important is the influence which has been exerted by the Y.M.C.A. Little did the late Sir George Williams think, when he gathered together a few young men in a room in the warehouse in St. Paul's churchyard, London, in 1844, that he was inaugurating a movement that would bring together the various denominations in a common effort to strengthen physically, intellectually and spiritually the young men of the land.

Amongst other forces and tendencies at work may be noticed the reciprocal interchange of good-will in Church courts; the work of the Evangelical Alliance; the recent "Missionary Conference" in New York; the work of the "Lord's Day Alliance" and Ministerial Associations; the movement to combine,

ORGANIC UNION

if possible, the Methodist and Presbyterian missionary effort in the great West of Canada; the proposed practical federation of Protestant Churches in Australia; the union of several branches of the Presbyterian Church, about to be effected, in the United States; the "Canadian Society of Christian Unity," and many kindred societies, as well as the "Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral," which outlines a basis of union.

These are but signs of the times, indicating the strength of the desire for more extended union, at the same time proving that such union is practical.

The fact that a strong desire is manifest is not in itself sufficient to justify the removing of old landmarks and the establishing of a new order of things. But two considerations at least make organic union a necessity—Christ desires it and the need of the world demands it. That Christ desires it is clear, as we have already pointed out, when He prayed "That they all might be one." That the need of the world demands it is

ORGANIC UNION

evident. The Church cannot afford to waste any of her time or energy in weakening her fortresses, seeing a lost world is to be reclaimed, and that speedily. It is the greatness of her mission that must lead her to unite her forces. The more earnest and zealous the Church has been in seeking after the lost, the less ado has she made about denominational rights and preferences.

But, we ask, is it possible? If it is an absolute necessity, it must be possible. The Holy Spirit will guide to the proper solution, and we venture to say the basis of union will be simple rather than elaborate; including belief in the Bible as the revealed Word; in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, as well as in the fundamental doctrines regarding God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, man's sin, and the salvation provided.

As regards belief in the "Historical Episcopacy," which the "Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral" sets forth as an essential for union, we can see no reason

ORGANIC UNION

why it should have a place in the basis of union. Professor Symonds, in his treatise on "Christian Unity," points out that Episcopacy was introduced in the early centuries under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, being the necessary development for the proper government of the Church. If this be admitted, then, that which is distinctive in each denomination can be accounted for in the same way, and the basis of union would require to include the outstanding feature of each division of the Church of Christ. That would make union impossible and impracticable. Should not the basis of union include the principles inculcated by Christ and the Apostles, rather than the varied historical developments?

Within the precincts of one denomination we find a great variety of opinions and beliefs, so there seems to be no reason why a union based on the great essentials of Christianity could not allow sufficient liberty on matters of secondary importance, thus putting into practice the ancient but familiar rule: "In essentials,

ORGANIC UNION

unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

In prophetic vision, Isaiah, seeing the many that shall be gathered in, some in the near future, others in the ages to come, urges God's people "to lengthen their cords and strengthen their stakes"—a message equally suitable for our own time. The cords of sympathy require to be lengthened until we can extend the hand of welcome and helpfulness to all of Christ's disciples and to all whom He desires to be gathered in. To strengthen the stakes of principle, to have clearer and firmer convictions is also essential if the Church is to be prepared for the large ingathering and the greater obligations which are near at hand. These two must go hand-in-hand; a union in which sympathy is the chief factor will be weak; a union in which conviction predominates will be more or less mechanical. But where there is strong and tender sympathy combined with clear and deep convictions, there will be a

ORGANIC UNION

union worthy of the name and one that will be honoring to Christ.

As Christ looks down upon His Church to-day and sees the somewhat narrow sympathies and small expectations, He might well say, "The place is too strait for me."

The advantages of such a union are obvious. There would be the bringing together the best in each denomination—the dignity of the Episcopalians, the stability of the Presbyterians, the zeal of the Methodists, the liberty of the Congregationalists, as well as the distinct features of other Protestant bodies.

A wider and more comprehensive policy would be possible. At present one denomination plans to a great extent independent of the others, with the result that the same ground is covered twice over, while new territory is unbroken and neglected. There would also result a more exalted conception of the Church. A large and united body gives impetus and heart to the several parts. To many the Church is nothing more than their

ORGANIC UNION

particular denomination, whereas the Church as it exists on the earth to-day comprises an extensive brotherhood, including all isms that are truly evangelical.

In John's vision he sees the New Jerusalem—the City of God—a perfect society of believers, united in true fellowship and in exalted service. Should not the Church on earth reflect somewhat more of Heaven's harmony and unity? Many earnest hearts pray that she may, and cherish the hope that ere long she will.

l
t
h
F
h
e
a
a
F
b
F
to
si
o
C
ir

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PROPOSED UNION.

“One Lord, one faith, one baptism.”—*Eph.* 4. 5.

“A three-fold cord is not easily broken.”

IN view of the proposed union of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational denominations in Canada, it may be interesting to trace their origin and point out a few facts regarding their historical development, with special reference to their introduction into Canada, and the progress which each has made as the years have come and gone.

(1) Of these three denominations, Presbyterianism is the oldest, dating back to 1536. It thus had its origin in Reformation times, and was an attempt to throw off the yoke of Episcopal supremacy and oppose the evil tendencies of Roman Catholicism. Previous to Calvin some little effort had been made in this direction, but he was the first

THE PROPOSED UNION

to formulate Presbyterian doctrine and form of church government. The work of this great reformer was not merely negative, but positive, in that he endeavored to establish a new order of things. He loved order, but contended that the form of church government drawn up and adopted should not be allowed to separate them from Christians of other persuasions. In 1557, John Knox was waging his warfare in Scotland for religious liberty and truth. He was unique as a preacher, and has proved to the Church that her triumphs must be gained by an intelligent, sympathetic and courageous declaration of the truth. He was a master builder. Every effort counted. His lifework cost him much; his is the honor, ours the heritage. His work of reformation was in harmony with Calvin's, for the Book of Discipline drawn up by him was based on the theology and discipline of Calvin.

Some forty years after the Reformation work of Knox in Scotland, Presbyterianism was introduced into Canada by

THE PROPOSED UNION

the Huguenots. Though persecution was their lot, they remained true to their faith, strengthening themselves by banding together into colonies.

For over a century they were the only representatives of Presbyterianism in Canada. In 1755, the expulsion of the Acadians, because of their refusing to submit to British rule, left room for the large number of Protestants who were brought out from the Old Land and other parts. Many of these were Presbyterians. They requested that a minister be sent them, so, in 1764, the Rev. Jas. Lyons was placed over them, being the first Presbyterian minister settled in Canada. During the next fifty years there was gradual growth, and instead of one minister there were twenty-six, while the membership had increased to 42,000.

The Church was for a long time dependent on the parent Church for her supply of ministers. It was not till 1838, that an attempt was made to train men for the ministry, and even then in a

THE PROPOSED UNION

very limited way, by the Rev. Thomas McCullough, D.D., who established the Pictou Academy, and later gave lectures in Dalhousie College, Halifax, of which he was elected President. Shortly after this the other educational centres were established in Toronto and Kingston, and in more recent years in Montreal and Winnipeg.

The Church grew rapidly, and with the growth new activities were demanded and new responsibilities assumed. In 1846, the Presbyterian Church in Canada sent out her first foreign missionary, Dr. Geddes, to the New Hebrides. He was soon followed by the Gordons, who were stationed in Erromanga, and later by Dr. MacKay, who cast in his lot with the people of Formosa. To-day this denomination has seventy-six foreign missionaries and ninety-four foreign mission stations.

Previous to 1875 there had been consummated six unions. As a result of these unions ten different branches of Presbyterianism were consolidated into

THE PROPOSED UNION

four Synods, viz.: The Synod of the Lower Provinces; the Synod of the Maritime Provinces in connection with the Church of Scotland; the Synod of the Canada Presbyterian Church, and the Synod of the Canada Presbyterian Church in connection with the Church of Scotland.*

In 1875, these were united into one body, called the "Presbyterian Church in Canada." At that time there were 672 ministers and 88,228 members, while to-day her ministers number 1,421, and her members and adherents number 842,301.

In addition to all her Foreign Mission activities, this branch of the Church of Christ has always endeavored to establish her members in the Faith, and in recent years has sought to keep pace with the rapid development of the West, while in Quebec she is doing much to replace Roman Catholicism by Protestant principles.

* See Dr. Gregg's "Short History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada."

THE PROPOSED UNION

After a history of three hundred years, and after an honorable record of thirty years as a united body, she now extends the hand of fellowship to the sister Churches, indicating her willingness to co-operate with them if a basis of union can be formulated which will conserve the vital principles of each, and unite their forces for the establishing of Christ's Kingdom in the world.

(2) Congregationalism dates back to 1567. Those who identified themselves with this particular form of church government were formerly known as Independents, because of their particular belief regarding the independence of each congregation. The more modern designation of Congregationalist, however, combines the principle of independence and that of brotherhood, for Congregational unions are now common, but, as is well known, they have no judicial or legislative authority.

As to the origin of this denomination, we find it recorded that a company of Separatists or Independents were im-

THE PROPOSED UNION

prisoned by the Lord Mayor of London because of their opposition to Episcopacy. In prison they organized the first Independent Church in England. The pastor, deacons and some others of the flock died in prison. Some years later a congregation was organized in the North of England. On account of persecutions they were transported to Holland, and afterwards emigrated (102 in number) to New England.

They landed on Plymouth Rock on December 21st, 1620; these were known as the "Pilgrim Fathers." They were men of faith, men who took the step they did for conscience' sake. Thus their influence was felt in the New England States, where Congregationalism has thriven and where it at present predominates.*

Previous to the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, a number of Independents (also known as Brownists) set sail for the St. Lawrence on board two ships, the

* See "Canada Encyclopedia."

THE PROPOSED UNION

Hopewell and *Chancewell*. The latter was totally wrecked, while the *Hopewell*, having captured a Spanish ship off Cape Breton, thought it best to turn back to England with the prize.

It was not till 1758 that Congregationalism was introduced into Canada. In that year Governor Lawrence caused a proclamation to be made in New England, inviting settlers to come and make their home in Nova Scotia. Many accepted this invitation on condition that full religious liberty should be granted.

Not a few of those who responded to this invitation were Congregationalists, who became the nucleus in Canada of the present influential denomination that bears that name.

The first Congregational work in the Province of Quebec was begun in the city of Quebec in 1801. The first pastor was the Rev. Mr. Benton, who was sent out by the London Missionary Society. After some two or three years' labor he was deprived of the full rights and privileges of a clergyman. He protested in a

THE PROPOSED UNION

pamphlet, was arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a fine of £50. Not only was this actually carried out, but Congregational ministers generally were deprived of their ecclesiastical rights, and this injustice was not removed till thirty years afterwards.

The work in Montreal, after 1836, had for its leader the Rev. Henry Wilkes, who was "an Englishman by birth, a Scotchman by education, and a thorough Canadian in his sympathies and labors."

The Rev. Jno. Wood tells the following incident in the student experiences of Dr. Wilkes, who had gone from Canada to Glasgow to pursue his theological studies: "A shrewd, intelligent man, residing at that time in Hamilton, near to Glasgow, was walking aimlessly in the street on a Sabbath morning in deep distress of soul. He knew not what to do, when a friend, directed doubtless by the Good Spirit, accosted him and invited him to the Independent Chapel, where a young man from America was to officiate that day. He accepted the

THE PROPOSED UNION

invitation, and the word preached was blessed to his salvation. He found rest through faith in the crucified and risen Saviour, and in due time connected himself with the Church, bringing with him his youthful family. In that family was the world-renowned David Livingstone, then a boy of thirteen, for his father was the man who on the Sabbath day had received a blessing, and Henry Wilkes was the young preacher whom the Lord honored as the instrument of bringing salvation to that house."

This incident shows the character and consecration of the man entrusted with the work in Montreal.

The first Church in Ontario, of which we have any record, is that founded at Frome, near St. Thomas, by the Rev. Joseph Silcox. It was originally known by the peculiar title of the "Congregational Presbyterian Prince of Peace Society," and continues as a useful Church up to the present day.

Little was done west of Ontario till 1879, when a congregation was formed

THE PROPOSED UNION

in Winnipeg. Since then the work has been extended to Brandon, Vancouver and Victoria.

This denomination has but one college in the Dominion, known as the Congregational College of Canada, which is situated in Montreal, in close proximity to McGill University, with which it is affiliated. It was established in 1842.

In recent years Foreign Mission work has been successfully carried on, the effort being concentrated on the West Central Africa Mission, where important evangelistic and educational work is being undertaken.

At the present time there are 28,283 under Congregational oversight. Although Congregationalism has not flourished greatly on Canadian soil, yet it has done good work, and one of its leading ministers has said that the principle for which they have all along contended has been recognized, and to some extent adopted by the Methodist and Presbyterian bodies, so that as a denomination they are willing to enter into a union

THE PROPOSED UNION

that will preserve this principle of independence and bring it into harmony with the legislative and governmental authority of these other denominations.

(3) Methodism originated in 1729 at Oxford. A religious society was then formed, Charles and John Wesley being members. This society observed the communion weekly, fasted regularly, and met frequently for the common study of the Greek Testament. Much of their time was employed in visiting the sick and the prisons, and they gave away what they could spare for charity.

Because they had a regular system of prayer, meditation and self-examination and method in all matters pertaining to religion, they were called "Methodists."

Shortly after this movement began, Charles and John Wesley sailed for America to preach to the Indians in Georgia. In all, John Wesley visited the United States seven times, and on one of his return visits to England he received priest's orders. He had a growing conviction that there was need of less

fo
w
w
St
th
ge
m

17
m
vi
in
fr
so
th
U
in
to
sy

Pr
iat
mi
ad

—

THE PROPOSED UNION

formality and more power in his religious work. He claims to have been converted while engaged in work in the United States. Amongst other things he adopted the plan of travelling preachers or evangelists, so that as many places as possible might be reached.

Methodism in Canada dates from 1781, when the Rev. William Black commenced his labors in the Eastern Provinces, being the first Methodist preacher in Canada. He travelled all the way from Nova Scotia to Windsor. He was soon joined by two others appointed by the United States Conference. The United Empire Loyalists who had settled in the East did not take kindly at first to the Methodist movement, but later the sympathy of many of them was enlisted.*

In 1855, the missions of the Eastern Provinces were organized into an affiliated conference, which comprised 88 ministers, 13,136 members, and 60,000 adherents.

* See "Century of Canadian Methodism."

THE PROPOSED UNION

In Upper and Lower Canada the work began in 1790. At that time Wm. Losee came to visit some of his U. E. Loyalist relatives and friends. He was persuaded to remain and do the work of an evangelist. He was very successful, many being converted under his ministry.

In 1831, the college at Cobourg (recently moved to Toronto) was initiated, the ministers pledging their marriage fees to promote this project. In this connection it may be noted that as recent as 1820, a Methodist minister was not permitted to officiate at the marriage of members of his flock, the Episcopal clergy claiming this right. Colleges have been recently established in Winnipeg, Brandon and Victoria.

An important step was taken in 1874 when the Conference of Eastern British America, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Ontario and Quebec, and the New Connexion Conference were united under the name of "The Methodist Church of Canada." Some ten years later there was consummated a general

un
to
gr
as

Jo

be
do
sh
gl
on
wo
loy
Di
ce

Ja
ca
eff
ad
mi
fo
Fr
is
be

THE PROPOSED UNION

union of Methodism from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and this united and progressive body has since then been known as "The Methodist Church."

Regarding this union, the Rev. Dr. John Lathern writes:

"Union is strength; we all feel it to be so now. All one body we; one in doctrine and discipline; one in fellowship and spiritual enterprise; one in a glorious hymnody and blessed charity; one in testimony as to the worth of the work our fathers wrought; one in loyalty to all the crown rights of our Divine Redeemer, and one in the magnificent unity of our Canadian Methodism."

Foreign Mission work was begun in Japan in 1873, and has been successfully carried on. In more recent years the effort has been extended to China. In addition to Foreign Mission work, the missions of this denomination embrace four departments, viz., Domestic, Indian, French and Chinese. Educational work is carried on among the French, a school being established for this purpose in a

THE PROPOSED UNION

suburb of Montreal. In all there are 447 missionaries—362 home missionaries, 5 engaged in French evangelization work, 43 foreign missionaries, and 37 who are ministering to the Indians.

This branch of the Christian Church has by its world-wide evangelism been true to the spirit and purpose of the noble and large-hearted founder of Methodism, who took for his motto, "The world is my parish." Methodism has so greatly flourished that to-day it is numerically (members and adherents, 916,862) the strongest denomination in Canada.

With a warmth of soul that cannot conceal itself, she entertains the proposed union with the other two denominations, and is willing to enter heart and soul into such a union if it will preserve her heritage of zeal and enterprise, and leave room for the maintaining her distinctive principles, believing that union is strength and that a threefold cord will not be easily broken.

Why do three rivers that wend their way through different valleys, past ham-

BEGH
CA

1st N
SET

1st
MISS

are
ries,
tion
37
rch
een
oble
ism,
d is
atly
ally
the
not
sed
ons,
oul
her
ave
nc-
is
vill
eir
m-



THE PROPOSED UNION

lets, and towns, unite to form a larger river, instead of continuing on in their diverse courses until they reach the ocean?

The Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational denominations, having each pursued its own conscientious course, will greatly gain by uniting. There will result a deeper depth of conviction, greater breadth of sympathy, and larger capacity for service. Their past record of struggle and of triumph will not be obliterated, but enhanced when viewed a hundred years from now, in the light of the progress and prestige of the united body. Such a union is needed to preserve our national and educational liberties, and to more speedily evangelize the world. We stand near the meeting of these streams. Let us look back with gratitude and forward with faith and hope.

CHAPTER IX.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW.

“The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

—*Hab. 2. 14.*

“The idea of the evangelization of the world in this generation is reasonable. The plan is perfectly feasible. There are men enough and there is money enough in the Protestant churches of Europe and America to do the work. It can be done, and it ought to be done.”

—*Dr. A. P. Parker.*

IN these latter days it is not given to men to prophesy regarding the future, but they are permitted to dream dreams and see visions.

A vision of the “Church of Christ” and the marvellous work that shall be accomplished by her during the next one hundred years, is what the writer attempts to record. This vision is based on facts, but it is not expected that it will be limited by mathematical calculations, but have as its essential element

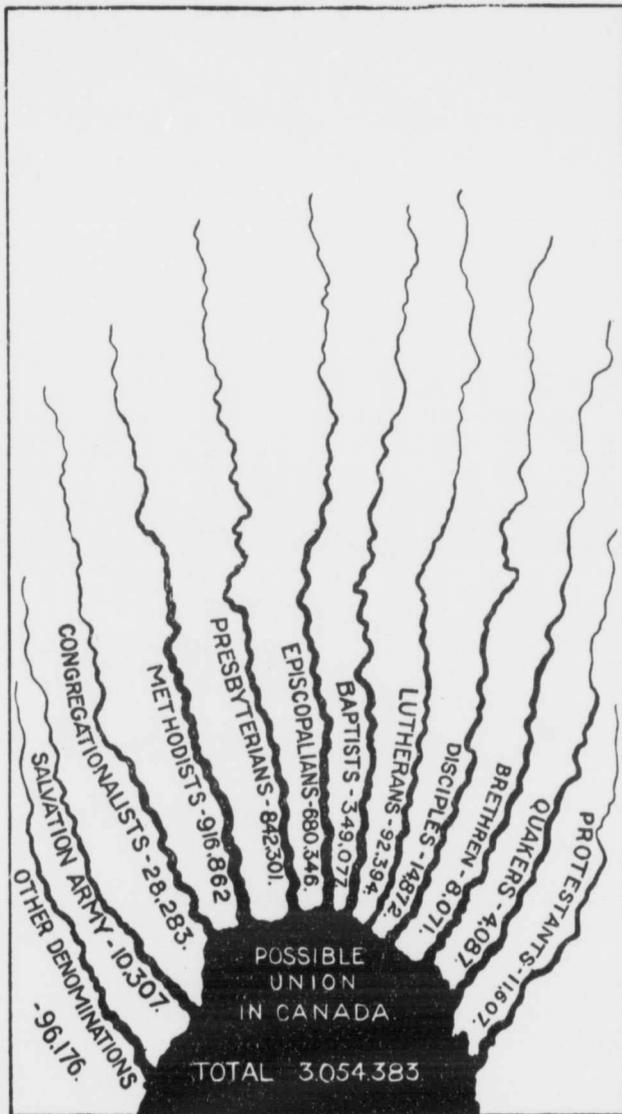
ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW

the spirit of life and liberty which is the outcome of faith and hope.

Compared with one hundred years from now, this is the day of small things. The Church of the twenty-first century, if I read the vision aright, will be a united corporate body, comprising all evangelical denominations, with the exception of a few small sections that will require some special grace in order to fit them for fellowship in Heaven with the multitude of saints with which they could not agree on earth.

In Canada, for instance, instead of there being fifteen or twenty different denominations, we see them all united and heartily co-operating under the name of "The Church of Christ in Canada." The youths, and even theological students, one hundred years from now will come across names and phrases which will be foreign to them, and will be led to inquire the meaning of Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopalian, etc. If teachers and professors in that advanced age find it difficult to enter

SALVATION
OTHER U
-96-



ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW

into the spirit of our age and give an adequate explanation of the different sects, they may probably be able to satisfy the curiosity of the students by replying that "there were giants in the land in those days."

Turning to see what change has taken place in other lands, we find the same progress is apparent. Instead of the confusing sects and denominations in the United States, the simple title of "The Church of Christ in the United States" embraces as one corporate body the majority of Christians. So we read further, "The Church of Christ in Japan," "The Church of Christ in China," "The Church of Christ in England," "The Church of Christ in Australia," etc., a somewhat similar basis of union having been adopted in each land, but leaving room for individual freedom in thought and action, and allowing liberties in non-essentials.

Further, it is seen that the leaders and representatives from "The Church of Christ" in the various countries meet in

ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW

conference once every four years that they may co-operate in the interests of Christ's Kingdom, and serve as a means to unite more closely the various sections of "The Church of Christ," which are one in spirit and one in the establishing of righteousness, separated only by geographical boundaries. But what progress, you ask, has been made along other lines? I almost questioned the reality of my vision on reading the following report of the "United Conference of the Church of Christ":

"The year of our Lord two thousand and six. With gratitude to the King and Head of the Church, we record the fact that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been proclaimed in every land, and in every part of every land. In the Islands of the Seas and throughout the continents the heralds of the King have gone proclaiming peace, pardon, liberty and salvation in Jesus Christ. In the remotest part of the world, inhabited by man, Christ has been lifted up, and the blood-stained banner of the Cross has

ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW

been unfurled. We rejoice that it is our privilege to live in the days of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Habakkuk, 'The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.'"

At first, I say, I doubted the truthfulness of this statement, but after considering the progress which Christianity is likely to make in the twentieth century, one is forced to believe that it is more than true.

In 1500, it is estimated, there were 100,000,000 people under Christian government; in 1800 there were 200,000,000—doubled in 300 years; in 1880 there were 400,000,000—doubled in 80 years. In 1905, according to the same proportion in increase there were 800,000,000 people under Christian government, which accords with the statistics given from reliable sources. That is, about one-half of the population of the world has a knowledge of Christ at the present time. Supposing the number to be doubled during the next fifty years,

ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW

there would still be fifty years left to more thoroughly evangelize the peoples of the earth.

Native Churches have been firmly established and have become self-supporting. The term "Foreign Missions" is a thing of the past, for the Church has decided to call no people "Foreigners" for whom Christ died. Such has been the ingathering from the ranks of those now called "Foreigners" that the "United Conference of the Church of Christ" writes under date of June, 2006, to the peoples who have somewhat recently accepted the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

"Greetings: Peace be unto you. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God."

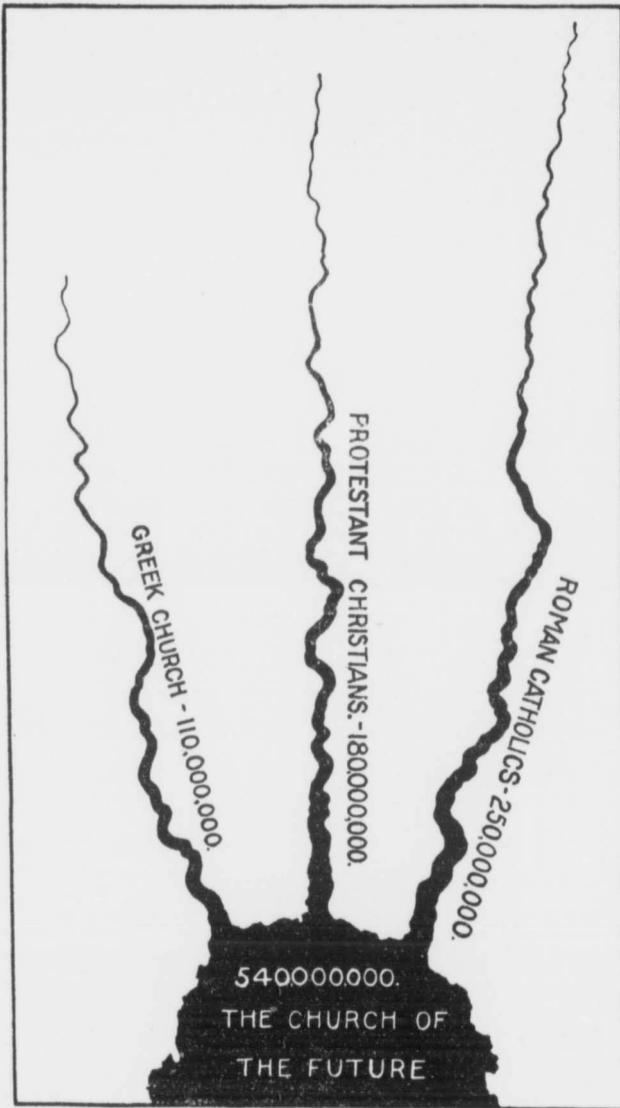
During all these years the Roman Catholic Church has been gradually throwing off her yoke of bondage, emerging from the darkness of superstition, strengthening the good she possesses, setting herself to the task of dis-

ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW

tributing the Word of God, and at the time with which our vision has to do, she is negotiating with the United Conference of the Church of Christ with a view to organic union for the purpose of more speedily and effectively making disciples of all nations and opposing the powers of evil. For this the vision makes clear that during the passing of a century the evil forces have concentrated and intensified to check in all possible ways the onward progress of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

A small portion of the Roman Catholic Church is not in favor of such procedure, but instead by a definite declaration place themselves on the side of the enemy, stating that they retain their love of ignorance, superstition and the traditions of men; declaring that the Bible is a bad book and not to be read by their adherents under penalty of excommunication.

To this conference the Greek Church also sends her representatives, signifying their desire to unite their forces with the



ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW

great Christian Church. As a result of the freedom of thought and greater liberty in religion accorded the Russians, the century has seen the Greek Church break from her narrow dogmatism and enlarge her sympathies until she is willing to join her forces with the worldwide, progressive and powerful body of Christians known as "The Church of Christ."

Again, we read in the minutes of the General Conference of the year 2006: "We, the representatives of 'The Church of Christ' assembled, do hereby gladly welcome representatives from the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches, and having carefully considered the various elements which they believe should enter into the basis of union, find ourselves in accord with nearly every suggestion made, and will do all in our power to bring to a speedy and successful consummation so desirable a union, and thus hasten the fulfilment of the prayer of our Lord and Saviour, 'that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee.'"

ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW

As the vision lingers, let this further be put in writing, that the Church through all the various stages of development and unification has not trusted to numbers nor in her unity, but in Christ, her living Head, whose she is and whom she serves. She looks to Christ for the redemption of the souls that have heard of Him. While she humbly and unitedly serves, she looks with earnest expectation for the time when Christ shall come in glorious majesty to gather the redeemed to himself—an innumerable company which no man can number—from all kindreds and tribes and tongues, who shall ascribe all honor, glory and majesty unto Him that sitteth upon the throne for ever and ever.

The Church of Christ

BY

REV. T. A. WATSON, B.D.

What Eminent Men Say About It.

Rev. T. B. Hyde, Northern Congregational Church, Toronto.—"I have read the book with interest, and believe it contributes to the present interesting and valuable movement toward Church Union, which is so much to be desired."

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., F.R.S.C., Toronto.—"Mr. Watson's book is very well written, and discusses very important aspects of religious truth. I was specially impressed by the chapters on those very practical subjects, Christian Missions and Church Union."

Rev. H. Symonds, D.D., Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal.—"The writer has very clearly and succinctly set forth many valuable truths. I am in accord with all he says about Christian Unity."

Rev. James Ross, D.D., London.—"I have read with much interest the new edition of 'The Church of Christ,' by the Rev. T. A. Watson, B.D. The book discusses a number of living topics in a fresh, fair and forcible manner. It cannot fail, among other things, to promote a better understanding of the proposed Church Union, in which many are now deeply interested."

Rev. D. McTavish, Sc.D., Toronto.—"I have read the additional chapters in Mr. Watson's useful work, and believe they will be a real contribution toward the problems discussed in the book. The reading of these chapters is sure to awaken thought and deepen the interest in the important subjects of which they treat."

Press Notices.

Onward.—"This is a book for the times."

Canadian Churchman, Toronto.—"A clear and emphatic appeal for Organic Union."

The Christian Guardian, Toronto.—"The treatment is thoughtful, and the whole tone is edifying and helpful."

The Canadian Congregationalist, Toronto.—"Mr. Watson has contributed a very helpful volume to the discussion of Church Union."

The Presbyterian, Toronto.—"There is a timeliness in the appearance of the work at this juncture, and it will be read with interest."

Ingersoll Sun.—"A valuable addition to the current religious literature. This book has the sterling virtue of conciseness; the reader is sure to be interested and led to think."

The Globe, Toronto.—"An honest plea for 'Organic Union of the churches.' The style is readable, the argument well sustained, the tone conciliatory, and the purpose commendable."

Sentinel-Review, Woodstock.—"This book contains evidence of clear thinking and ready writing; its perusal has given both pleasure and profit."