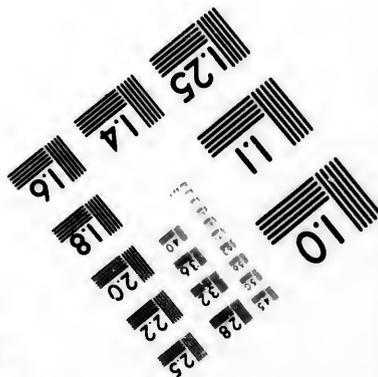
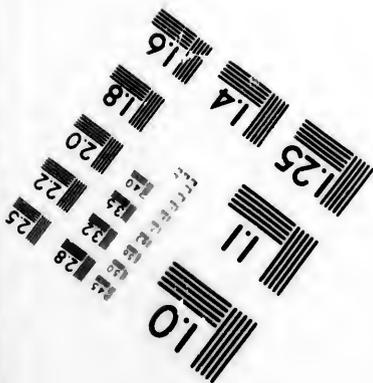
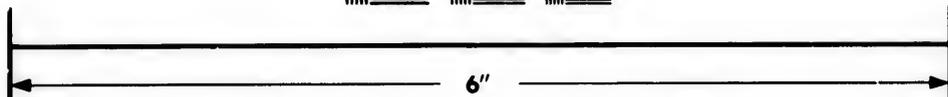
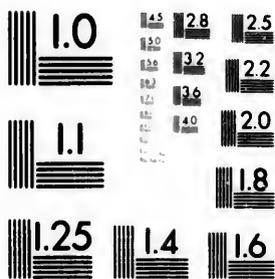


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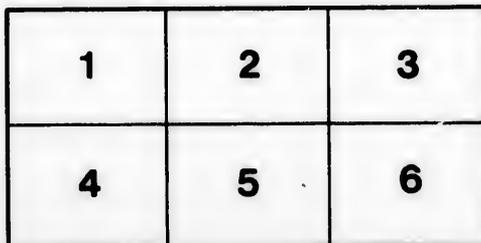
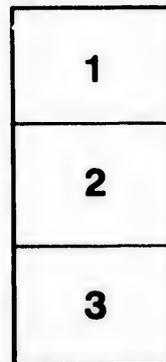
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One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

FIVE LECTURES

PREACHED IN THE

CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

HAMILTON,

—BY THE—

REV. HARTLEY CARMICHAEL, M. A., DUBLIN,

RECTOR.



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1887.

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TO MY CONGREGATION

WITH MY LOVE.



PREFACE.

THESE lectures were delivered in the Church of the Ascension on several successive Sunday evenings. The preacher was anxious to bring the great question of Unity before the Christian people of Hamilton, in the hope of evoking such friendly discussion amongst them as might lead to its practical solution. While thoroughly loyal to the Church of his fathers, he wished also to shew how far he was willing to go in order to bring into one a divided Protestantism. Hoping that these sermons may be useful to some, who may not have heard them from the pulpit, he has published them.

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UNITED PROTESTANTS.

LECTURE I.

“Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one.”—*John xvii, 20.*

THESE words ought to come with touching solemnity to all Christian people. Though couched in the form of a prayer, yet, inasmuch as prayer utters the holy desires of the heart, they may well be looked on as a dying charge. While, then, considering our Lord's utterance as a prayer, we look to God to hasten its fulfilment; considering it in the light of a charge, it is incumbent on us, with all our power, to assist God, as we are allowed to do, in that fulfilment. If our Lord, ere His passing away from amongst men, earnestly desired that all those who believed on His name should stand out before the world as a united whole, then all who profess to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, are found false witnesses of Him, if they do not strive in every lawful way to bring about a “consummation so devoutly to be wished.” God has willed it that His people should bear a great part in the salvation of the world; that all their united efforts should come of their own free will, and should be the

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result of mutual forbearance and sacrifice on the part of individuals. We are not to expect, then, that He will unite the churches by any miraculous interference. We *are* to expect that He will show us the way to unity; that He will arrange circumstances and seasons, so that our endeavours in that direction may be aided by Him, guided by Him; that, if we are only in earnest, out of the darkness and dangers that beset our path, He will bring us into light and peace. And that God is even now guiding us in the direction of unity will appear, I think, to any Christian who thoughtfully considers the signs of our times. The Protestant churches in our own country, and in the United States, are more favorably situated, as regards union, than those in the old world. Look for instance at our own community. The Church of England in the Mother land is hampered in her movements by the bonds by which she is bound to the State of England. She has not the freedom of government which we possess, inasmuch as her Convocations are practically rendered inactive, depending as they do for the legality of their measures upon the consent and ratification of Parliament. Her laity have not that representation in Church matters which you, my lay brethren, are privileged to have. Her bishops are so associated with the aristocracy and peerage, that their ecclesiastical position is confused with their temporal rank and power, and their con-

nection with the state causes them to be rather autocratical than constitutional governors. Thus the Church in England is not at all in a condition, at present, to make any move in the direction of corporate reunion with the Protestant bodies. In speaking, then, of union, we speak only for the church in this Dominion; it is for the Church in this Dominion that we are responsible, and for no other. And we believe that in this Dominion, and in the United states, matters are, by the Providence of God, favorably disposed towards the attainment of Protestant unity. In the eye of the state all religious bodies stand on an equal footing; each has full power to make its own rules and employ what methods of internal government it thinks fit. Alterations and modifications are then possible for the church here and in the States, which would, at present, be impossible in the Old country. Again, our Synods are free and constitutional assemblies, where the laity have as full representation and as great freedom of debate as they have in any of the Protestant bodies. Our bishops are not men removed from us by high rank or wealthy social position, but presbyters, from amongst our rank and file, who have been elected, by the free choice of clergy and laity, to the positions which they hold. Their ecclesiastical duties are, with the help of the presbyters, to ordain candidates for the priesthood; to set apart men to the minor order of the diacon-

ate; and to confirm. As rulers, their power is limited, and dictated by synods over which they preside. Prelacy is dead on this continent, and will never rise again. The rights of congregations are fully allowed amongst us, and, practically, the congregation calls its clergyman. Our whole form of government, Provincial and Diocesan, runs on the same lines as the forms of government adopted by other Protestant churches. Thus, it would seem as if God, by opening up to us a door into unity, intended that this great work should have its beginning with us.

But not only do circumstances seem favorable to such a movement, but the Protestant churches themselves seem to be waking up to the importance of the question, and to be seeking a practical solution of it. Presbyterianism has, in this country, united her scattered ranks. Methodism has laid aside intestine dissensions and become one. Our own Provincial Synod, at its last session, appointed a committee to confer with committees appointed by other Christian bodies, with a view to devising some honorable means of union. In the United States, at the session of General Convention just concluded, the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church published a declaration. In that declaration, it is stated, that in all things of human ordering, relating to modes of worship and discipline, or to traditional customs, the Episcopal Church is ready

in the spirit of love to forego all preferences of her own; that she does not seek to absorb other communions, but rather, co-operating with them on the basis of faith and order, to heal the wounds of the church, and to promote the visible manifestations of Christ to the world; that there are certain inherent parts of the sacred deposit given by Christ and His Apostles to His Church which they deem essential to unity—the Holy Scriptures as the revealed word of God—the Nicene Creed as a sufficient statement of the Christian Faith—the Two Sacraments ministered with un failing use of Christ's words and with the elements ordained by Him—and the Historical Episcopate locally adapted to the methods of its administration. We thank God for such a large minded and liberal declaration as this, and we feel confident that if our own church will follow in the steps of her sister of the United States, and if the various Protestant bodies, there and here, will respond in a like spirit, as we feel sure they will, the next century will see on this great continent a United Protestant Church.

But it may be said that, after all, this question of unity is not such an important matter just now; that God will bring unity about in His own good time; and that, meanwhile, it is perhaps good for Christendom at large, that there should be a certain amount of rivalry amongst its various bodies, which conduces to the activity of the whole. Our text is

a sufficient answer to this objection. Are we so ungrateful that we can disregard—nay, gainsay—that last wish of Him by whom we have been redeemed, of Him who laid down His life for us? Are we so blasphemous as to say, in deed, if not in word—“Lord, we know better than thou dost; Thou indeed didst pray that we might be one; but we are of opinion that it is better for us that we should be divided.” O, surely, unless we have lost all our love for the Lord Jesus Christ, unless we have come so to rationalize away His divine nature as to look at Him as a mere fallible man, we would not dare say that unity is not a prime necessity for the churches, and that it is not our duty to seek it at the expense of every lawful sacrifice.

But Christ Himself gives us a reason for unity, “That they may all be one even as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be in us that the world may believe that Thou didst send me.” A united Protestantism would be a standing witness to the world of the truth and power of the Gospel of Christ. Where then would be the arguments that infidels and Romanists derive from our sectarian differences? United we would stand before the world as One Reformed Church touching the Holy Apostolic past, guiding and enlightening the present, and reaching forward in faith to the future. While we would retain all that the historic churches have, to link us to the Primitive Church of

Christ, we would possess powers of adaptivity and principles of liberality of which those historic churches knew nothing. Conceive the vast impulse given to missionary effort if Protestant Canada were one. The Church could always be on the spot to bless and guide the infant town or growing settlement. We would not, in each town, have the Methodist Church round one corner, and the Presbyterian at the other side of the block, and the Episcopal Church a few streets off; none of them as full as they might be, and each one rivalling the other. If a stranger were to ask, "Where is the Church of God in this town?" he would find one Church of God, which prayed and taught in a tongue "understood of the people." A united Protestant church would be a rival that might stir the Latin church to purification and tolerance.

But what do we mean by unity? Certainly not uniformity. Our Lord, in His sublime prayer, compares the unity of the Christian people to His own unity with His Father. Such a unity as that of the Persons in the blessed Trinity would not suggest to us the idea of uniformity, rather that of a unity which was compatible with variety. In the first place, rigid uniformity is not conducive to the growth of the Church in a new land like ours. The Church must be elastic in her methods, must be able to adapt herself to new conditions. A strict uniformity in non-essentials would so restrict

her efforts and limit her usefulness, as rather to be an incubus than a blessing. She ought to be able to bring the unchangeable doctrines of Christ home to all sorts and conditions of men, in ways that are the best and most effective; provided always, that those ways are neither evil in practice nor degrading to that Name which we are told to hallow. She ought to be always gathering in the nations, not cutting them off. Uniformity has a tendency, by ever increasing its articles, to drive away; whereas, unity with variety will draw men into the fold, and retain them there when drawn in. Again *uniformity* of the Protestant bodies would be an impossibility. Take the case of public worship. Few of us are silly or uncharitable enough to believe that it is not possible to worship God in public without a liturgy; and I am sure that my brethren who use extemporaneous prayer in the service of their churches would acknowledge that there are those to whom our prayer-book is a channel of true devotion. Neither the liturgical nor the extemporaneous method of worship is perfect; both have their merits; both have their defects. To establish either one or the other in a united church would be at once to cause division. To sanction both would be to complete the unity of prayer, and to keep all that was good and beautiful in the two methods. The unity of Protestantism must then be based, not on sameness of outward form, but on mutual sacrifice in matters non-essential.

Neither must the unity of the reformed churches be a mere unity of sentiment. To allow all the churches to remain as they are, with their distinctive names, and merely to cultivate a feeling of friendliness amongst them, with an occasional exchange of pulpits, would not be much of an improvement on the present state of affairs. Every one of the churches has something to learn from its neighbours. There are things that we might well adopt from the Presbyterians and Methodists; there are things in which those bodies could learn from us. True union would give us this mutual enlightenment and combined strength; a mere unity of sentiment would teach us nothing, and would have no effect upon the world.

What do we mean, then, by union? We mean a corporate union of Protestantism—a union in which, while the fundamentals of the faith are held in their unchangeableness and entirety, there shall be liberty in all matters of man's devising, and a healthy recognition of congregational individuality. We mean a union that will not lose one atom of that which is good in the various systems of which it is formed, but consecrate them all to the service of Him who is the head of the body, the Church. We mean a union that will combine and concentrate the forces of Protestant Christianity in such a way that there will be a gain in effectiveness and usefulness, so that the world may see in the Church a witness

to the power and truth of the religion of Christ. We mean a unity that will neither divorce us from the Apostolic age, nor yet from the age in which we live; but which will lovingly guard the treasures of a noble antiquity and of a living experience. We mean the very unity that our Lord and His Apostles taught and desired, a unity like the unity of man's body. Each member of that body has a separate office, but all work in subservience to the body and under the direction of the will. All unite to bring about that which the will commands. Hear some great orator addressing an audience on a subject which fires his enthusiasm. The lips move and pour forth a torrent of words; the hands assist the lips with eloquent action; the eye flashes and penetrates as the speaker thunders out some scathing attack or terrible denunciation: lips, eyes, and hands, are all in the service of that directing mind that does with them whatsoever it will. Not otherwise should be the united Church. Its various component parts should preserve, indeed, their individuality; but they should all work, with one mind, and with one heart, in the service of Him who is their Head, and with the inspiration of that Spirit who is their Life.

How, we may ask, are we to attain this unity? It can only come, as it once came before, by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit. On the great day of Pentecost, men of different thoughts and tongues

were so made one by the power of the Holy Ghost, that they heard the word of truth spoken to them, in their own language, by the lips of strangers. In the infancy of the church we see that simple union for which we now so longingly pine. It was only by the power of the Holy Ghost that a man could so bury his selfishness as to cease to count the things he had as his own. It was to the Holy Spirit they owed those blessed times, when they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. It is our duty to pray earnestly to God, both publicly and privately, to give us once more this Apostolic simplicity; to guide us so that we may yet be united, without losing one of the sacred truths that God gave us in the beginning. If we desire unity we must pray, and pray fervently, for it. But if God will do part of this great work, there is another part which in His wisdom he leaves to us. Every Christian body must be prepared to sacrifice something for the sake of the unity of the whole. We have to go back to the spirit of that time in the Church when no man said that "ought of the things which he possessed was his own." We can never give up those treasures which are not our own, inasmuch as they were committed into our charge by God. But everything that in our church is derived from man, everything that is merely of human devising, or traditionally

sanctioned, we must be prepared to count as secondary to the great object of our desires—an united Christendom.

Lastly, we must seek to know more about the history and working methods of the various Protestant bodies. All such knowledge will enlarge our views and draw our hearts closer to our brethren. Ignorance of each other, and want of intercourse, keep nations divided, and widens the breach between the churches. In order to further, amongst my own people, such an acquaintance with the history of our protestant brethren as may help us to form fair and enlightened opinions of them and of their systems, I have determined to give a course of Sunday evening lectures during the month of November, on the various Christian bodies who have embraced the Reformation. I purpose to consider their origin, what it was caused their standing apart from the Church, what are the points on which they are at one with us, and what are the points on which they differ from us. May our enquiries be blessed by the Holy Spirit, to the enlightenment of our faith and the enlargement of our charity.



THE PRESBYTERIANS.

LECTURE II.

“I beseech Enodius and beseech Syntyche that they be of the same mind in the Lord.”—*Philippians iv, 2.*

THE Presbyterian Church in Canada is a united church. The differences and dissensions which have disturbed the church in Scotland have vanished in the daughter who has been reared on American soil. The Kirk, the United Presbyterians, and the Free Church—in the land of their birth enemies, have joined hands and hearts, amidst the new conditions which have become theirs, in this land of youth and liberty. Those who have heard members of these various churches speak of each other far from charitably in the home of their fathers, may well marvel at the change which has united them. That unity has come from the providential guidance of God, working upon the hearts of men, and pointing out, by the changed condition in which the churches found themselves, a way to rest and peace. May the same God of peace have His perfect work in the hearts of all those who in this land of liberty call upon His name in sincerity and truth, and in His good time breathe upon all His

faithful people "that peace which the world cannot give."

I speak to-night of this United Presbyterian Church in Canada. I would trace, as well as time will permit me, the rise of Presbyterianism; would dwell on those points in which it agrees with our own church; on those, also, in which it disagrees. I would humbly point out what hopes of unity between us and them appear to me to exist, and how we should act with a view to obtaining that unity. I speak on my own individual responsibility, using that liberty which the Church of which I am a priest allows me. I pray, that all that I say may be for that Church's welfare, as, in my inmost heart, it is intended to be; inasmuch as I regard and love her above all institutions in this world. If I say things which may seem to my Presbyterian friends to savour of a want of sympathy or comprehension of those views which are distinctly held by them, they will attribute such sayings to the fact that I speak as one who works and thinks in a different system from theirs, and who has a sincere and deep attachment to the Church of his fathers. At any rate, they will give me credit for a sincere desire to judge fairly, and without bias, upon the facts to which our thoughts are directed.

We may fairly look to Scotland as the mother of modern Presbyterianism; for though the first Presbyterian church in America was a reformed

Dutch church, yet so large a part of the members and ministers of after times were of Scotch origin, that we are led to look back in any historical research to Caledonia rather than to Holland. I purpose, then, to give you, briefly, a short sketch of the Presbyterian body, from the Reformation to the present time.

Calvin may be looked upon as the author of Presbyterian government. John Knox brought the first notions of it from Geneva to Scotland. It did not, however, become the established form of church government in Calvin's day. Not until the days of the revolution which placed William the Third on the throne, was Episcopacy dethroned, and the Presbytery permanently established. Between this latter period and that of the Reformation, the Scotch church was in a strange condition. When, at the Reformation, she cast out Romanism, she cast out, too, the Roman episcopate. Nowhere had Rome done more to dishonour the episcopate, and to corrupt the church which she had usurped, than in Scotland. She had admitted laymen to be prelates without any consecration, and countenanced the most frightful abuses of morality amongst priests and people. The Roman prelate was detested by the leaders of the Reformation, as the representative of a foreign tyranny and a flagitious system. Hence the Roman episcopate in Scotland was practically annihilated by the Reformation. Of the

three members of it who became Protestants, only one had ever been consecrated, and was more or less under restraint during his life. The Roman episcopate died in Scotland with Gordon, Bishop of Galloway. Yet Knox and the reformers did not abolish the episcopal office. In the first book of discipline, drawn up by a convention of reforming ministers in 1561, *three* orders of ministers are recognised—Superintendents, Ministers and Readers. The Superintendent was a reformed bishop. He had his diocese; he could depose and induct ministers. He was a constant member of the General Assembly. He tried and examined candidates for the ministry, and had the sole right of "admission," which was the reformed title for "ordination." Except in the fact that he had not received the laying on of hands, the Knoxian superintendent was the representative of the primitive bishop. The presence, however, of the Roman bishops at the court of the queen; the fact that they were requested to baptize the baby prince, and the restoration of the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, still a Papist, to his jurisdiction, tended to increase the national dislike to the historical episcopate. It took time, however, to bring this dislike to a head. Meanwhile, the government of the church proceeded on the lines of modified episcopacy. In the Assembly held at Leith in 1572, a committee was appointed to confer with a committee of the Privy

Council, by which joint committees it was decided that the archbishoprics and bishoprics vacant should be filled by the most qualified ministers, and that these bishops should have diocesan jurisdiction and powers of ordination. Knox preached at the inauguration of Douglas, Archbishop of St. Andrew's. In subsequent assemblies, these bishops sat and voted and were recognized as an integral part of the church polity of the day. That this was not the episcopate we can plainly see; but we can just as plainly see that it was not the presbytery. It was the episcopate modified and made primitive, but dissociated from the past by the want of the link which binds us to the Apostolic age. The death of Knox saw the Church of Scotland ruled by this titular superintendency or episcopacy. Indeed, the great reformer himself, while detesting the name of Roman prelacy, seems not to have been inimical to a reformed episcopacy. For some time he held preferment in England, and was one of the chaplains to Edward the Sixth. He refused the bishopric of Rochester—not, we would judge, from a hatred of episcopacy, but from a belief that the English church still retained too many ceremonies of Popery, as he then held them to be. He introduced into Scotland not the more modern Presbyterianism, but a system of episcopal superintendents. He inaugurated ten of these superintendents himself, and with the assistance of two of them, and

the titular bishop of Orkney, crowned the Duke of Rothsay as King. One of his last acts was to send his sons to Cambridge, of which one of them was a fellow. The other was ordained in the Church of England, and became vicar of Clacton Magna. Knox advised Edward the Sixth to increase the number of his bishops. Thus the great reformer, though the inveterate enemy of corrupted prelacy, was by no means unfavorable to a purified episcopate.

Knox was succeeded by Melville. The latter was a man of great natural powers and earnest determination. He had spent ten years on the continent, where he had felt the influence of the church of Geneva, and had come home desirous to apply the discipline of Geneva to the distracted condition of the church. The titular episcopate was not a satisfactory arrangement. The country was in a bad way as regarded religion, and the bishops did not seem able to tackle to work and improve matters. The second book of discipline, presented to the assembly of 1578, resulted in a petition to the young king, in which he was asked to give to the Kirk a new polity and discipline, which was penned already, to be presented to his Highness and Council. The assembly of 1580, under the influence of Melville, declared the pretended office of a bishop to be unlawful, having "neither foundation nor warrant in the word of God." In 1581 there was drawn up a strictly pres-

byterian policy, contained in the second book of discipline. Presbyterianism was not yet, however, recognized by Parliament, which did not sanction the new book. It was at war with the king. The disputes between the government and the Assembly became more bitter every day. Ministers insulted the king in their sermons, and the king rebuked ministers in church. He had again to sign the Covenant to satisfy the people of his horror of Rome, though afterwards he declared that "it did so amaze simple people that if he had been bound to that form of Craig's it must have been in his table-book and not in his head." At last the king gave in, and in 1592 the Presbyterian government of the Kirk was ratified by Parliament.

But in the year 1600 all was changed. Another assembly had met; the king was in power; Melville was in disgrace. The titular bishops were once more restored. The violent attitude and insolent dictations of the ministers had made the king hate them and their system. Half in revenge, half with the belief in the efficacy of Episcopacy, James began a system of forcing it on the Scotch, which so surrounded it, to them, with hateful associations, that it was doomed to death. In 1603 the King of Scotland received the crown of England. James soon felt his increased power. He determined to model the Scottish church after the English, and restore prelatical Episcopacy. A conference was held at

Hampton Court, and the chief of the Scotch divines, and some of the titular Bishops received orders to be present. The Scottish delegation had to sit and listen to lectures from the English bishops on the disputed points—lectures, which, from their titles, appear to have been somewhat high handed and ill-judged discourses. Melville, on the other hand, displayed considerable warmth of feeling and intemperance of language. He railed at the King's advocate, published a libel in Latin verse on the worship of the Chapel royal, and, on one occasion, in a rage, caught Bancroft by the sleeves of his rochette, and shaking them, stigmatized them as "Popish rags." James was not sorry that his old enemy had given him an excuse for vengeance. The two Melvilles and the other ministers were put in custody—a most shameful course to adopt towards men who were members of a free and independent church, and who were asked to England to take part in a free conference. Andrew was confined to the Tower for several years, and died in exile at Sedan.

The king and the Assembly now began a bitter war on the question of Episcopacy, but in the end the king triumphed. The titular archbishop of Glasgow, with the titular bishops of Brechin and Galloway, were ordered to repair to court. When they got there they were told that they must be consecrated by the English bishops. In vain the archbishop of Glasgow urged that he feared that the Church of

Scotland, on account of former usurpations, would take this as a sort of subjection to the Church of England. The Scotch bishops were consecrated, sent home, and ordered to consecrate their brethren. A valid episcopate was, for the time, established; but who, when they consider the way in which it was done, could hope for a blessing upon it?

We must hurry on. James had come to the conclusion that prelacy was a necessity, if he were to carry out his ideas of monarchy, and, having laid the foundation, he proceeded to build upon it. The articles of Perth, though they do not seem very terrible to the liberal mind of to-day, yet, considering the disturbed condition of the Kirk at the time, were certainly not conducive to peace. Another interference on the part of the Church of England served to aggravate the notion of a foreign usurpation of the rights of the Kirk. The Marquis of Huntley was under excommunication from the Kirk for his adhesion to Rome. Without consulting the archbishop of St. Andrews the archbishop of Canterbury absolved him. Scotland feared that in Canterbury she might find another Rome. The accession of Charles gave further colour to this suspicion. The king, himself, favoured prelacy in its most autocratic form, and the prince of prelates sat in the chair of St. Augustine. We are not amongst those who either canonize, or execrate Archbishop Laud. We believe in his sincerity, and in his earnest

love for his church and his king, however mistaken the methods he used to increase the powers of both. But we believe that Laud's interference in the affairs of the church of Scotland, at this particular time was most disastrous. A liturgy forced upon a people who were completely unprepared for it; a liturgy to the sturdy Scotch Puritan, savouring of Rome, and emanating from Canterbury, was sure to meet with opposition, if it did not incite rebellion. Rebellion it did incite. Jenny Geddes' stool gave the signal for revolt. The "Solemn League and Covenant" gave that revolt form and unity. Never was there such a display of wild and patriotic enthusiasm. There it lay, on a flat grave-stone, in the Greyfriars' churchyard, while crowds of men and women and children came to put their names beneath—some even writing in their own blood. The nation and the Kirk were one. No foreign episcopate, or foreign liturgy, would be accepted by a people that had a life and individuality of its own. On that great day Presbyterianism stood forth as the cause of Scotland; Episcopacy, cankered by prelacy, as the instrument of oppression and tyranny. Jenny Geddes' stool did not only, as Dean Stanley says, "extinguish the liturgy"; it killed a king, and established a Presbyterian Church.

The closing days of Charles saw the triumph of Presbyterianism, to be followed by a sudden fall. It had not only reigned triumphant in Scotland,

but had conquered England. It had become drunk with victory, intolerant and persecuting. For a time the Saints bare rule, and a terrible time it was. Then Cromwell and his Independents became masters. The king was executed, and Scotland proclaimed Charles the Second. The ministers led him a more doleful life than even James the First was forced to endure. They made him sign a declaration, in which he professed himself humbled in the sight of God, for the sins of his father, and the idolatry of his mother. They kept him under such restraints that he ran away, but was caught, brought back, and crowned. Then came Cromwell's "crowning mercy," Charles' flight, and Monk's mission of subjugation, which made Presbyterian Scotland a mere province of England.

The year 1660 saw Cromwell dead two years, and Charles Stuart on the throne of his fathers. The Presbyterians had good hope of his favour; but they did not know the king. His only remembrance of his oath to the Convention, was a remembrance of the miserable times he had spent in Scotland. The Scotch Parliament led the way for him. In a push of loyalty they passed an act sweeping away the legislation of the last twenty years, and forbad the renewal of the Covenant. Charles took courage, and wrote to the Scotch Privy Council, restoring Episcopal government by royal authority. Again four Scotch ministers were

ordered to repair to London; again there was a foreign consecration of the Scotch episcopate. Then followed all the persecutions of the non-conformists, which only increased the popular affection for the down-trodden creed. At last came the Revolution, and the accession of William the Third. Would the new king countenance Episcopacy? William was in favour of having a uniform church government in Scotland and England; but before he supported the Episcopate as against the Presbytery, he had to be convinced of two things—first, that the Episcopalians in Scotland would support his government, and secondly, that they had the confidence of a majority of the people. But the Episcopal clergy were Jacobites and were not of the popular party. As a consequence, the Act of 1690 was passed, which established the Presbytery and made the Westminster Confession the creed of the church.

Our historical sketch closes here. What does it teach us? Plainly this, that what roused the Scotch in favour of Presbyterianism, was not hatred of Episcopacy in the primitive and true sense of the word, but hatred of a prelacy which was always associated with foreign usurpation of the rights of the church. All their memories of bishops were memories of the privileges of the people trampled on, all their memories of the Presbyterian ministers were those of men who had suffered for Scotland's common cause. It was otherwise with England.

She could recall her martyrs, Latimer and Ridley, and repeat the prophetic words, "This day, by God's grace, we shall light up a candle in England which shall never be extinguished." She could number among the champions of her liberty the seven staunch men who gave themselves to bonds for the sake of their country, who passed to their prison amidst the shouts of the multitude, the soldiers kneeling for their blessing, and whose acquittal gave joy to the nation from one end to the other. Scotland had no such memories. She remembered a Beaton, a Laud, a Sharp. Her prelates, were they not thrust upon her from outside? Her presbyters, were they not her own? Do you wonder that she hated the one and loved the other? I do not. Only mark this: Presbyterianism is not antagonistic to a *true* episcopate; such an episcopate as we are told by our Prayer-book we can find by reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors. The primitive bishop is as far removed from the prelate as darkness is from light. He does not act irresponsibly, but with his presbytery; with them he lays on hands; with them he rules. No considerations of the wrongs done to his church by the prelacy of the past ought to make our modern Presbyterian, in this land of liberty, refuse unity with the episcopate of to-day. We acknowledge our transgression. We confess that it is not to be wondered at that the Scotch nation, as a whole,

rejected bishops, and welcomed the rule of presbyters. But we remind our brethren that all these things have passed away. Let us bury the bitterness, the religious narrowness, the savage cruelty of the past. Let us not, through the abuse of that which is good, be blinded to its intrinsic goodness. The episcopate, in its primitive and pure state, is one of God's good gifts; so, too, is the presbytery. Let us bring them together. Let us unite them in a lasting bond of love and brotherhood. Here in this land of peace let all the heart burnings of the days of old be quenched. And after all, it is only this question of government which separates us from our Presbyterian sister. How much have we in common? We believe substantially the same creeds, celebrate the same sacraments. Taken as a whole the Westminster Confession is in harmony with the Thirty-Nine Articles. We are at one in rejecting the errors of the church of Rome. It may be said that we differ essentially as to the use of the liturgy; but I believe that no churchman now-a-days believes a liturgy necessary to salvation, nor do the Presbyterians look on it as a device of the Papacy. We have got past all that sort of bigotry. Holy days, what about them? Well, we will not quarrel over them. Let there be liberty. Let him that esteemeth the day holy, keep it holy. These things will not keep us asunder. To unite our governments is the great aim. A word as to Presbyterian government. It

has its advantages, advantages which we might well make our own. It holds the rights of the presbytery to participate in governing and ordaining—rights which belong to the presbyters of the Church of England, but which have been somewhat forgotten through the influence of time and circumstances upon the church. In the service for the “Ordination of Priests” it is assumed that priests will be present; and it is ordered by the rubric that the priests present shall lay their hands severally upon the heads of those that receive the order of the Priesthood. The bishop has no choice. The priests present have an inalienable right to take part in the ordination. Their share in admitting to the high office of the Priesthood, can be no mere mockery, no mere sign of acquiescence. It must have a real signification; and if the Priesthood has a right to share in the ordaining of its brethren surely it has a right to advise and assist the bishop in the government of the Church. I am willing to confess that the episcopate in the past has too often ignored the rights of the presbytery; but I also believe that the cure for such an evil is not to be found in a separation of the latter from the former, but in a purification and modification of the episcopate, by associating it with a consulting co-ordaining presbytery. Unite the presbytery with the apostolic overseership, and we will have the closest approach, I believe, to the government of the primitive church.

It may be said that our Presbyterian friends look upon their present form of government as of Divine institution, and therefore incapable of change. I suppose there are some high and dry Presbyterians, as there are some high and dry Churchmen, who take extreme and narrow views on the question of Church government. But the main bulk of their ministers and people are not of this type. The Scottish Church, as far as her recognized standards are concerned, does not hold extreme views on the subject. Christianity, not presbytery, is the fundamental principle of her religious polity. The divine right of the Presbytery has never been authoratively accepted by the Church of Scotland. That Church teaches that no policy can be appointed for all ages, times and places. The Westminster Confession states, "that there are some circumstances concerning the government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the world." May the great desire of Protestant communities for Unity constitute "such circumstances" as may be a sufficient reason to alter that policy, for that end which every church has in view—the glory of God and the salvation and enlightenment of man.

What shall we do to promote this unity, we ministers and members of the Episcopal Church ?

First, let us get into our minds right notions of the office and work of a bishop. Let us remember what our Prayer-book says about it. The bishops are pastors whose duty it is to feed their flock, not only by administering discipline, but by diligently preaching the word. They are to use the authority given them, not to destruction, but to salvation; not to hurt, but to help, 'as wise and faithful servants giving to God's family their portion in due season. They are to be prayerful men, who can convince and exhort by wholesome doctrine, which they can enforce by knowledge obtained by a faithful study of Holy Scripture. They are to be ready to banish all erroneous doctrine; but then they are warned not to teach anything as necessary to salvation but what they are fully persuaded may be fully concluded and proved by Holy Scripture. They are above all to be good men, examples to others, correcting indeed and punishing the unquiet, disobedient and criminous, according to the authority given them in the word of God; but at the same time setting forward, as much as lies in them, quietness, love and peace amongst all men. They are to be charitable, gentle and merciful, for Christ's sake, to all poor and needy people, and to all strangers destitute of help. Have you ever read that solemn charge given to the newly consecrated bishop in the face of the congregation? Listen to it: "Give heed unto reading, exhortation and doctrine.

Think upon the things contained in this book. Be diligent in them that the increase coming thereby may be manifest unto all men. Take heed unto thyself and to doctrine, and be diligent in doing them, for by so doing thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee. Be to the flock of Christ a shepherd, not a wolf; feed them, devour them not. Hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcasts, seek the lost; be so merciful that ye be not too remiss; so minister discipline that ye forget not mercy; that when the chief shepherd shall appear ye may receive the never-fading crown of glory." The man who, with that solemn charge ringing in his ears, attempts to act the prelate is false to his vows. They, who, in the face of that charge, would tell us that our Church is prelatical—does not cleave in her episcopate to primitive and apostolic models—misread her plainest formularies with the eyes of a wilful prejudice.

Let us look to the offices of our presbyters and laity and see that they preserve their rights and fulfil their duties. Our system of synods, provincial and diocesan, has done much to help us in this respect and we have only to see that it is wisely and effectually carried out.

Let us pray earnestly for unity. Let us encourage it by our practice. Let us cultivate the friendliest feeling towards our Protestant brethren; not pretending to ignore the differences which separate

us; not seeking some ignoble compromise where principles are sacrificed for a temporary peace; but desiring a true and holy union in which all that should be preserved will be preserved. Let us unite with our Protestant friends in every good work, letting them know that we do so, not because there is no difference between us, but because we are all looking for an honorable union.

What a witness to the world of the truth of the Gospel would a union of the two churches present! Here is an opportunity for a noble exercise of mutual self-sacrifice. If the Presbyterian, notwithstanding all that he suffered at the hands of the prelacy of the past, would accept the episcopacy of which that prelacy was the cankering disease; if the Church of England, nurtured under prelatical government, and taught to hate a presbytery, would make that presbytery her own, then would the world see a living proof of the power of Christ's Gospel to unite and heal. The grand united armies of the great historic churches of Scotland and England would sweep before them the forces of sin, and carry the standard of the Cross into countries where its story is unknown. The day that sees the Church and Kirk made one (and may that day not be far distant), will see a candle of the Lord lit up in this Canada of ours, which by God's blessing will never be extinguished.



THE METHODISTS.

LECTURE III.

“Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one another?”—*Acts vii, 26.*

THE history of the Methodist body differs in many respects from that of the church whose rise and progress we traced last Sunday evening. We saw that the Presbyterian church was the national church of Scotland, bound up with Scotch interests and Scotch feelings. We pointed out how its cause was the cause of national and ecclesiastical freedom, whereas that of the Scotch Episcopal clergy had been associated with the notions of English interference in church and state. We pointed out that the episcopate in Scotland, being associated in the popular mind with this foreign interference, and ever having appeared there in the diseased and distorted form of prelacy, had naturally become obnoxious to the mind of the majority. We acknowledged the sins of the Episcopal church in its dealings with our Scottish brethren. We acknowledged the valuable protest that they have made for the rights and powers of the *Presbyter*; and concluded that unity could be secured by the two churches gathering together into one fold, under a primitive episcopate and a primi-

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tive presbytery. In dealing with Methodism, our historical enquiry will be by no means so difficult or intricate as that in which we have just engaged. The history of Methodism is a brief one. On March the second, 1791, Wesley breathed his last. As long as he lived Methodism was but a phase of life within the Church of England. In the conference held in 1794, an address was printed in which it was written, "We are determined as a body to remain in the Church of England." So that Methodism, as a separate body, is not 100 years old. Again, the attitude of the Scotch church towards Episcopacy was a militant one; not so that of the Methodists. Had their preachers been offered ordination by the bishops they would have joyfully accepted it. Could Wesley have obtained for Coke and Ashbury episcopal consecration, the Methodists in America would have blessed God for His good gift. There ought not to be in our Methodist brethren of to-day any antagonistic feeling towards the episcopate. The worst that can be said of the English bishops with reference to Methodism, is that they were lukewarm, and slow to see the signs of the times; but that they were not persecutors of the movement history is our witness. Gibson, Bishop of London, we are told by Charles Wesley, showed both him and his brother John great affection. In 1775, when Wesley was an old man, he came to Derry, and here is what he writes

of the bishop: "Being Whit Sunday, the bishop preached a judicious, useful sermon on the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. He is a good writer and a good speaker, and he celebrated the Lord's supper with admirable solemnity." And then he adds, in his quaint way: "The bishop invited me to dinner, and told me, 'I know you do not love our hours, and I will therefore order dinner to be on table between two and three o'clock.' This is true good breeding," remarks Wesley. "The bishop is easy and unaffected in his whole behaviour, exemplary in all parts of public worship, and plenteous in good works." Our Methodist brethren who revere the memory of their spiritual father—and who of them does not?—ought to feel towards the Church and its episcopate love and respect. It was so late as the year 1789, when Wesley was eighty-six years of age and on the brink of the grave, that he uttered in his sermon at Cork the memorable words, "I hold all the doctrines of the Church of England. I love her liturgy. I dare not separate from the church; I believe it would be a sin so to do." The doctrinal authorities in the Wesleyan Methodist body are the works of John Wesley. Surely, with such an instructor, in any movement for Protestant unity, the Methodist body would gladly welcome a modified episcopate, and be once more organically connected with that church of which their founder was a holy, zealous, faithful priest, and an indefatigable

and wonderful evangelist. Our history of Methodism must begin with John Wesley; without him there never would have been, humanly speaking, any Methodist body. Of course we are aware that there are other great names which occur in connection with the movement—such as those of Charles Wesley, Whitefield, and Fletcher of Madely. Charles Wesley by his wonderful hymns, Whitefield by his impassioned preaching, and Fletcher by his saintly life, all contributed to bring about its success. But without Wesley's apostolic journeying and preaching, without his marvellous personal influence, and singular powers of organization, the work would have been an ephemeral one. A look at the life of John Wesley himself, then, is necessary to a clear understanding of the question at issue.

In 1727 a few young men, in the colleges at Oxford, began to meet together with a view to revival of religion in themselves and in those around them. They studied divinity, visited the sick, took the Holy Communion every week, fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays, and sought by prayer, self-examination and meditation, to attain the love of God. The ungodly at Oxford thought them a good subject for joking. They called them "Bible bigots," "Bible moths," "the Godly club," and "the Methodists"—the last name arising from the fact that these young men sought to live by *rule* or *method*.

John Wesley was styled the "father" of this "Holy club," which consisted of some twenty-seven members. Of these, in aftertime, several fell away, but some half-dozen remained true to their agreement amongst whom were the brothers Wesley. An opportunity soon offered itself to John of giving practical proof of the reality of his endeavours after holiness. The Christian congregations of the State of Georgia were in want of a clergyman. Wesley was asked to take the vacant charge and at once accepted. On the voyage out, the future evangelist fell into company with some Moravians, whose piety of life, and whose calm faith in a great storm, commanded his admiration and affection. Wesley's Georgian experience was not a happy one. Though he almost worked himself to death in the service of the Church, he wanted those qualities of wisdom and forbearance that are necessary to a successful pastorate. Two years after his setting out as a missionary saw him back again in England. Here he renewed his acquaintance with the Moravians, in whose society he seems to have found solace for his unquiet state of mind. But it was not the Moravians that converted John Wesley. His own dear Church of England began his spiritual life, as it ended it. It was at a meeting held in connection with a Church of England society, as someone was reading Luther on the Galatians, that a new light dawned upon his soul. It was in St. Paul's Cathe-

dral, on the afternoon of the same day, that the assurance of his peace came to him, not in some powerful sermon, but in the words of the anthem which the choristers sang, with the plaintive accompaniment of the organ—"Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord; Lord hear my voice." Thus was the Church of England the mother of Methodism. It gave it its founder. It was the means of awakening in that founder living faith.

Indeed, Wesley's theology was the theology of the Church of which he was a priest, practically applied by a living faith to the needs of the human heart. The fall of man, redemption, sanctification by the Holy Ghost, man's need of grace preventing and following him, were doctrines to be found in the book of Common Prayer—doctrines clearly taught in the writings of Waterland, Butler, and Warburton, the great Anglican divines of the day. A work which produced a profound impression upon Wesley—an impression which was not effaced to the end of his days—was a work written by a High Church clergyman—the "Serious Call" of William Law. Wesley owns that the seeds of Methodism were sown by this book, and by another of the same author, called "Christian Perfection." Whitefield makes a like acknowledgment. "God," he says, "worked powerfully on my soul by that excellent treatise." How much do our Methodist brethren owe to the old Mother Church!

Wesley was not only to the end of his life a Churchman, but what would be called by those of to-day whose historical knowledge is small, a very High Churchman. About the very time that he was preaching on his father's tombstone in Epworth churchyard, and converting sinners by appeals based on the evangelical texts of Scripture, he made a memorandum in his own handwriting of things which he believed it his duty to observe. Here are some extracts from this note:—

“ To use water, oblation of the elements, invocation, alms, a prothesis in the Eucharist.

“ To pray for the faithful departed.

“ To observe the stations.

“ To observe Lent, especially the Holy Week.

“ To turn to the East at the Creed.”

That his churchmanship remained with him to the end is borne out by the statement of his old age, in which he professes to hold all the doctrines of the Church of England; and by his celebrated sermon of 1790, in which he compared those preachers who dared to celebrate the Sacraments, to the rebellious Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Listen to these words, not the words of some enemy of Methodism, but of John Wesley himself: “Ye yourselves”—that is, the Methodists—“were first called in the Church of England; and though ye have and will have a thousand temptations to leave it and set up for yourselves, regard them not. Be Church of England

men still. Do not cast away the peculiar glory God has put upon you and frustrate the designs of providence." When he had been preaching a quarter of a century, someone asked him by what authority he acted as he did. Mark Wesley's answer:—"By the authority of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by the now Archbishop of Canterbury when he laid hands upon me and said, 'Take thou authority to preach the Gospel.'" Surely, those of our Methodist brethren who revere their founder and reverence his name, ought to desire earnestly to be one with the Church of their fathers.

In the summer of 1742, John Wesley, standing on his father's tombstone, proclaimed the Gospel to the sinners of Epworth. He was not permitted to preach from that pulpit from which he had often heard, when a boy, that father preach the word of God. It was a trying hour for him, one often repeated for him in his after career. Too frequently was it true that the Church was out of sympathy with her great mission-preacher, and closed her doors against him. This leads us Churchmen to a confession of the sins of our fathers against the founder of Methodism, and against Methodism itself. I will make that confession for the Church, not in my own words, but in the words of a venerable and holy bishop now departed, the late Bishop of Lincoln. "When I visited Epworth in 1869," he says, "I was informed

that there had been no confirmation since 1686. Is it surprising that in such a state of things Wesleyanism should have arisen? When Methodism arose," he continues, "non-residence was almost the rule and clerical residence the exception. Many of the parochial clergy dwelt in the towns, and rode forth on Sunday morning to serve several churches in rapid succession, and saw little of their country parishes during the week. It reflects great credit on the piety, zeal and self-sacrifice of the people of Linconshire, that they could not exist patiently in such a state of spiritual starvation. The Church did not supply them with food, and therefore they sought it for themselves. Wesleyanism is due, in a great measure, to clerical pluralities, clerical non-residence, and the lack of adequate episcopal oversight. Of all unfair things it would be unfair to charge any evil consequences of Wesleyanism upon John Wesley and his followers. 'Physician heal thyself.' We must look at the beam in our own eye and try to cast it out." These are frank and manly words. They teach us that any Churchman who can speak with contempt or arrogance of his Methodist brethren is blinded by self-righteousness and self-conceit. I think, indeed, that the ill condition of the Church in Wesley's day, and its unfeeling treatment of him, has been exaggerated. A knowledge of the history of the time will convince us that, in those days, there were many worthy

clergymen like Wesley's own father, who lived holy lives and were faithful parish priests. If you run through Wesley's diary, you will find that he constantly was asked to preach and administer Communion in parish churches and in cathedrals; and that many of the clergy recognized the blessedness of his work and revered and admired the worker. Still, his was a hard struggle. The State-bound condition of the Church, the fact that episcopacy was still tainted with prelacy, the base way in which the politicians interfered in matters of the Church—all these were against him. If he could have got a bishop to ordain the preachers for America, without demanding authority over them, he would never have laid his hands on Coke. His request to the Bishop of London to ordain one of his preachers for the American work was refused. When we remember the great difficulties with which Wesley had to contend, we sometimes wonder that he remained so faithful to the Church of England. Only a great and good man could do it.

We pass on. The year 1740 saw the beginning of the differences between Wesley and Whitefield on the subject of doctrine. Whitefield was a Predestinarian; Wesley was not. The controversy caused a split in the followers of Methodism; the Calvinists banding themselves under the leadership of Whitefield, the Anti-Calvinists adhering to the founder of the movement.

In 1741 the lay preacher was recognized as part of the Methodist organization. Wesley was, at first, disposed to oppose the innovation, but, in after time, he seems to have become convinced that the office of the preacher was distinct from that of the pastor, and that the modern lay preacher was the representative of the prophet of the Apostolic times. These preachers were of two kinds—itinerants, who were paid, and who went about from place to place; local preachers, who were secularly employed, but who devoted a portion of their time to preaching in the neighbourhood in which they lived. A certain number of preachers formed a circuit. Over each circuit a superintendent was appointed, and these superintendents were called assistants to Wesley, who was the superintendent-in-chief of the London circuit. Within the circuit classes were formed. These classes had their rules clearly laid down for them. There were to receive the Sacrament at every opportunity; they were to go to church; they were not to call their societies churches, nor their preachers ministers. Everything was done to prevent the new order usurping the office of the Clergy.

But, in 1784, Wesley did an act which, however it may have seemed to him a necessity, weakened every word he may have afterwards said to attach his followers to the Church. He ordained Coke and Ashbury superintendents over the congregations in America, with power to administer the Sacraments. He did

so, he said, not of choice, but of necessity. His work in America was likely to come to an end for want of ministers. No bishop would help him, so he determined to help himself. Undoubtedly, the temptation under the circumstances to act irregularly was very great. "Let any one," writes Canon Curteis, "read Wilberforce's History of the American Church, and he will find it absolutely impossible to speak another harsh word of Wesley's irregular proceedings in 1784." At the same time, like every irregularity it propagated its kind. After Wesley's death, his followers took this action as a text from which they preached the sermon of separation.

March the second, 1791, saw the death of this great and holy man. "He was," says Mr. Curteis, "the purest, noblest, most saintly clergyman of the eighteenth century, whose whole life was passed in doing good." He was truly, though far from faultless, an apostolic man. Like St. Paul, he had been in journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils from his own countryman, in perils among false brethren, in watchings often, in fastings often. It was this apostolicity of character that made Bishop Lowth of London say, in words that tell of a true Christian humility, "Mr. Wesley, may I be found sitting at your feet in another world." Those who stood round the deathbed of the father of Methodism, saw the death of one who had indeed fought the good fight, kept the faith, and finished his course.

Wesley gone, the work of separation from the Church, and of the elevation of Methodism into a separate body, was soon completed. The Conference of 1791 pledged itself to follow strictly the plan left by Mr. Wesley before his death. The Conference of 1793 allowed the administration of the Sacrament by preachers, where the Society would not be contented without it. But an address was printed in the same Conference, in which it was declared that the Methodists were determined to remain in connection with the Church of England, and that ordination had no sanction from the Conference. In 1794 the Conference abolished "gowns," and the title of "Reverend," as tending to confuse the preacher with the regularly ordained clergyman. It forbade preaching in church hours. It enacted that the Lord's supper should not be administered, if the society could be preserved without it. The Conference of 1795, however, undid the work of the previous one. It practically gave over the administration of the Lord's supper to the preachers, though it forbade a celebration when there was one in the Parish Church. In 1836 the preachers were ordained by imposition of hands, and the separation of Methodism from its Mother-church was complete.

What are we to think when we consider these things? Surely it ought to make us strive that the breach between us and our Methodist brethren should not become any wider. John Wesley is

theirs, but he is ours too; we never cast him out. We and they are children of the same Mother. Why should we be at variance one with another? The theology of the Methodists is the theology of the Church. The Thirty-nine articles and the Book of Common Prayer are accepted by them. There is nothing in their theology or their practice which is inconsistent with their being in full communion with the Church of England. They have no objection to the episcopate or to the three orders of the ministry. Why should they not, then, receive from their old Church, that which the Church would give them with all joy, love, and humility, that order which will bind us and them in one grand organic unity? We would welcome their enthusiasm in the work of reviving congregations. The class meeting has its decided merits, when not abused. The rules which Wesley laid down for the people "called Methodists," would be a guide that we would only too gladly see followed by people "called Churchmen." The Church should be ready to grant to our Methodist brethren on their reunion with her every freedom and privilege that is consistent with the Catholic faith. May the Lord God bring this reunion to pass! What a glorious memorial it would be, if there could be built in some great city in Canada, a noble House of God, or some mighty Institution for the glory of God and for the good of man, and that after ages could read upon it this inscription: "In

memory of the day when the prayers of Christ and of His servant John Wesley were fulfilled, by the reunion of the Methodist body and the Church of England."

We do not want to let time go by in this great matter. Let the division be healed while it is fresh, ere it has time to fester. The Church lost her opportunity before; let her not lose her opportunity again. Let her be gentie and conciliating, generous, and desirous of repairing any wrong done in the past. Let us have a conference with our Methodist brethren, and that soon. In the meantime, let us remember that they are, notwithstanding divisions, our own flesh and blood.

The land in which we live is favorable to this union. It has seen the various sections of the Methodist body merged into one. The work that seemed impossible across the sea is easily effected here. Is further union beyond our reach? May God give us all the spirit of humility, that we may seek each other, not in any spirit of vain glory or wicked boasting, but in the earnest desire to glorify Him, by endeavouring to fulfil the last wish of our Saviour Christ.

There was an old Latin legend which told the tale, how once upon a time there opened in the city of Rome a gulf which could not be filled up. The people consulted the Augurs and received answer, that when the most precious thing in Rome was cast therein, then, and not till then, would the gulf

be closed. A young and gallant Roman, mounted his horse, rode to the mouth of the abyss and plunged in headlong. Immediately the gulf closed. So, if into the breach which has opened between our brethren and us, we cast all our selfish feelings, our past wrongs and errors, all that separates us, no matter how dear, then will that gulf, that now if we are still selfish, threatens to grow wider day by day, be closed for ever.



THE CONGREGATIONALISTS AND BAPTISTS.

LECTURE IV.

“Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing.”—*Isaiah xliii, 18, 19.*

WE have linked together the Baptists and Congregationalists, inasmuch as though they differ in point of doctrine, as regards the government of the Church they are practically one. They differ in one matter only, by no means, however, an unimportant matter—their views of the Sacrament of Baptism and the inferences to be derived therefrom. In our enquiry, this evening, we will consider the Baptists first, as they hold distinctive doctrines, unlike their brethren the Congregationalists who are not pledged to any one creed. In the second part of our enquiry, we will consider the Church government of both bodies included, as it is, in the one title,—Independency.

Of this very Independency the Baptists were an early off-shoot. In the year 1616, there was gathered together in London an independent congregation, whose pastor was a Mr. Henry Jacob. Several members of this congregation, having been con-

vinced that Baptism should only be administered to such as were of riper years upon a profession of faith in Christ, requested permission to withdraw from the original community, and to form a church where the new doctrine might be taught. From the principles of Independency they had a right to make this request, and in accordance with these principles the request was granted. In 1633 a distinctively Baptist congregation was formed. In 1639 another Baptist congregation was formed in Crutched Friars under a certain Mr. Green. It was a tenet of these congregations, that Baptism should be obtained from some person who had himself been baptised when an adult; and in order to effect this, one Mr. Blunt, who was acquainted with the Dutch language, was sent over to Holland, where, having obtained baptism from the Dutch Mennonites, he returned and administered it to the London congregation.

While this was the origin of our English-speaking Baptists, yet it was not the origin of the Baptists as a body. The Albigenses and the Petrobrusians had denied the validity of infant baptism. At the time of the Reformation, the Anabaptists, a wild, fanatical, and heretical sect, taught, amongst other new doctrines, that "children, being unable to assume the responsibility of the sacrament of Baptism, could not be partakers of it." Between these wild sectarians and the more modern Baptist there

is, however, little historical connection. It was from the Mennonites, or Dutch Baptists, that the English body sought baptism. Menno was a priest who left the ministry and became pastor of the small remnant of the Anabaptists left after the extermination of the great part of that sect. He was a quiet and peaceful man, and under his rule, the fiercer tenets of Anabaptism were obliterated. He was not, however, at-one with our modern Baptists, either in the mode of administering the rite, or in the conditions which he laid down for its valid reception. All Mennonite children having attained the age of twelve were baptised, not by immersion, but by pouring water upon the head. The Mennonites still exist, and it is not long since that Lord Dufferin visited a settlement of them in the North West.

To return to the English Baptists. In 1643, an assembly was held in London, at which a Confession of Faith was drawn up. In those troublous times, they must have become numerous, for they were to be found in the Parliament, the Army, and the Council of State. The Presbyterians tried to blot them out in 1648, by an ordinance of the Lords and Commons, in which it was enacted, that, "Whossoever shall say that the baptism of infants is unlawful, or that such baptism is void, and that such persons ought to be baptised again, and in pursuance thereof shall baptize any person formerly

baptized, or shall say that the Church government by Presbytery is Antichristian or unlawful, shall, on conviction be ordered to renounce his error in the congregation, or, in case of refusal, be committed to prison until he promise not to publish his error any more." Cromwell's accession to power relieved them of this incubus, but with the Restoration came more persecution, in which all the other Nonconformist bodies shared.

Shortly before the Restoration a split had occurred in the main body. The Calvinistic tenets of the original sect were obnoxious to a number of persons. Hence arose the "General Baptists," who held the Arminian doctrine of election,—that Christ died not to save a few only, but the whole world. Owing to the prevalence of Unitarian opinions, in after times, a division came in the body of General Baptists. The Society was broken up into the "New Connection," who remained orthodox, and the General Baptists who retained the old name, but not the old doctrine. The Particular Baptists adhered to the teaching of the original founders of the Baptist body. They inculcated the doctrine of particular redemption, whence their name. A subdivision, however, took place in their church upon the question of communion. The Free Communionists admitted to their communion all who had received baptism at any time. The Close Communionists only admitted those who had been baptised when adults, after a profession of faith.

In the early history of America, Baptists are to be found in Rhode Island, New York, and Virginia. In the present day, they are, in the States, a flourishing community, and are especially distinguished for their missionary labours.

You will see at once the different position which this body holds in relation to Protestant unity, from that held by the Methodists or the Presbyterians. The question between the Episcopal Church and the latter Churches is a question of government; the question between the Baptist and the rest of Protestant Christendom on this continent is a question of doctrine. All the Western Christians, except the Baptists, accept baptism by sprinkling, and the baptism of infants. To the Baptist the great majority of professing christians have never been baptised at all, and are practically outside the Christian Covenant. There is no difficulty as regards the question of *immersion*. Our own Church provides for it in her services, and in the case of an adult demands repentance and faith before the Sacrament is administered. But how to deal with the Baptist doctrine of the necessity of adult baptism is another matter. The way to unity, in this direction, is, I confess, hard to see. To expect Protestant Christendom to give up infant baptism, is (without going into the question controversially) to expect an impossibility. To expect the Baptists, even if they were allowed, in a united Church, to hold to

their peculiar views of the Sacrament, to be members of a body, the greater part of which they believed to be plunged in error, would be to expect them to put themselves in an illogical and false position. But we are not without hope. If the time has come for the union of Protestantism, God will show His people the way thereto, though it be a rough way and a difficult. If the time has come for the One Temple of God in this land to be built, the Lord will provide the men who will raise up the wall thereof.

We have said that the Baptists were an offshoot of Independency. As a result, they have remained Independents in matters of church government. We may pass then from the consideration of their particular doctrines to the general question of church government as it is found in the Congregational churches.

Congregationalism goes back to about the middle of the sixteenth century. A clergyman called Browne, a man of high birth and chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk, having been deprived of his license because of certain seditious utterances, began to publicly preach against the "calling and authorizing of preachers by bishops." To avoid persecution he fled to the Continent, where he published his theory of church government in certain treatises. From the continent he went to Scotland, where he settled with a few families who had embraced his peculiar

opinions. He was, before very long, summoned before the Kirk at Edinburgh and imprisoned. Released after a time, he went to England, only to meet with excommunication and a fresh imprisonment. Prisons seems to have overcome his fiery spirit; for he not only bound himself to abstain from preaching his seditious doctrines, but he promised to live, for the future, as a member of the Church of England. After forty years, passed as the rector of a little country parish, the poor man died insane.

The influence of Browne's opinions raise him up successors. Barrowe, a lawyer, and Greenwood, a clergyman, propounded Congregational ideas for which they were imprisoned. After a long incarceration these unfortunate men were tried. They were convicted on an indictment containing several counts, amongst which were the charges that they had taught that "the State was wholly corrupted so that no God-fearing man could live at peace therein; and that "All the people in the land were infidels." After cruel treatment on the part of the authorities, the unhappy men were hanged. Upon consideration, I think, it will appear that the intention of these men, was not merely to factiously cause division, but to protest against the laxity and corruption of the Church of the day. The charges against them bear this out. It was a feeble attempt at the Reformation of a State-ridden Church, but it bore its fruit.

Persecution scattered the Brownists, but it did not destroy them. Many of them removed to Holland. At Leyden there was a growing church of which a certain John Robinson was pastor. This man, desirous of religious freedom, and anxious to carry the gospel to the heathen, sent one hundred and one members of his flock to America. From time to time, members of the body at home, emigrated to their brethren on this side of the Atlantic. The "glad tidings of a hopeful parliament" brought numbers of the Congregationalists from Holland to England, at the end of the reign of Charles the First. Under Cromwell they flourished. Many of the rectories were held by Congregational ministers, who were paid by the tithes. Then followed the oppression of the Nonconformists under Charles the Second, and their final emancipation at the Revolution. An attempt was made but unsuccessfully to unite the Congregationalist and Presbyterian elements in England, under the title of "United Brethren." Heads of agreement were drawn up in 1691, but were afterwards abandoned. After this Congregationalism in England, assumed the thoroughly independent form in which it is found to-day.

A few words as to the history of the Congregationalists in the United States. After its foundation, the movement grew rapidly in Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Haven. At first the churches demanded of those who desired admission into them

credible evidence of regeneration. To many, these terms seemed too strict. In Massachusetts, church-membership was a necessary qualification for the franchise. Hence there was an effort made by the Colonists, to look for a relaxation in the terms of Church membership. The effort succeeded. The early belief of the Congregationalists was modified, not in a way conducive to the spread of vital religion. Some of the churches adopted Unitarian opinions. Had not a great revival taken place under Edwards and Whitefield, the results might have been more serious. As it was, although this latter movement added largely to the churches and brought them back to the old paths, yet it came too late to prevent many defections to a less positive belief.

So much for history; we now come to Congregational polity. All Independents limit the word church to mean "a number of Christians meeting in one place." We do not hear of the Congregational Church, as we hear of the Scotch Church, or the English Church. Every congregation is independent, and there is no central body to which the individual churches are in any way responsible. The various churches communicate with each other, but they have theoretically no other connection. In certain districts there are Associations of the pastors and delegates of the churches in these districts, for devotion and transaction of business. The business consists in receiving reports of the

spiritual condition of the various congregations and making arrangements for collections for denominational institutions. There is a State Conference which meets annually. There is also a Triennial Council, a meeting of which was held in St. Louis, in 1880. But none of these bodies have in theory any legal power or authority over individual congregations. Every church is at liberty to hold any doctrines, or to adopt any mode of worship. The ultimate authority in all church matters is vested in the members of the church. They elect and dismiss their pastor; admit members; transact business and exercise discipline. All members of the church, rich or poor, are held to be equal in the eyes of the church. Even the pastor is placed on the same level with those to whom he preaches. If deference is paid to his teaching, it is simply because he is supposed to know what he is talking about, inasmuch as he has made a special study of the Word of God. The ordinances of the church are only delegated to him as a matter of order; if necessary, they may be performed by any lay member. On the other hand, he has no one to control him outside his own people. This excessive individualism is already becoming a danger in the Congregational mind. The National Council of 1880, not only appointed a committee to draw up a statement of belief which would be for the instruction and edification of the churches, but also adopted a resolution,

in which they recognised definitely the responsibility of all ministers, not only to their own congregations but to the communion of the churches.

In America then, it would appear, as if Independence was coming to see the need, not only of a central conference, but of a central governing body.

It is not my duty controversially to point out, what might appear to me to be the defects in the Congregational system. Congregationalists themselves are not blind to the fact that they have defects, but are wisely seeing that they may be rectified. They are a body whose wisdom, foresight, and largeness of soul inspire us with hope for the future. We would dwell rather on those points of excellence which we discern in their system, and touch on those elements which seem to suggest the possibility of union between us and them.

We recognise and value the vehement witness they have borne, to the rights and privileges of individual congregations, be they rich or poor, high or low. We believe that a congregation ought to have a very large part, if not the whole part, in the selection of their pastor. This is practically the case in our own Church. Indeed, we are laxer in this respect than our Congregationalist brethren; for while they limit the authority in church matters to the communicants of the church, we allow any one who takes a pew, to vote in vestry for the

election of a clergyman. If the Church were to follow its Congregationalist brethren here, many an unpleasant and turbulent election might be avoided. The communicants of a church are its true members. Their share in the management of affairs ought to be a large one, and their wishes and opinions should not be rendered of no avail by the feelingless interference of some outside power. Those who gather round the Lord's Table are the body of Christ, and as such; they deserve to be treated as a united whole, with respect and love. We thank the Independents for reminding us of this fact—a fact that we have been inclined to forget.

And we see in this very independence of individual congregations, a hope of unity. The Congregationalists have no cumbrous Assembly or Synod that meets once in three years, to move. Any one church could advance of itself to-morrow in the direction of unity, or any association of churches. Each church is at liberty practically to do what it likes. In our present age, and in our present circumstances, that liberty gives the Independents a great advantage. They can act promptly. The great legislative bodies of other churches, may by hastening slowly, act cautiously, but sometimes we believe caution to be absolutely injurious; and we cannot help feeling that our large legislative bodies are somewhat unwieldy, and want a good deal of stirring up. The freedom of the Congregational

churches, and their power of prompt action, makes us hope that they will be in the van of the great army of union.

Another factor in Congregationalism that tends to unity, is its freedom from narrowness. Its great rule is, "let every congregation be fully persuaded in its own mind." Each Church is accountable to God alone. Hence, it is bound to look on the opinions of other churches, with charity and toleration. The mind of every congregation has a right to be expressed, and the expression is worthy of respect. Hence must arise a certain catholicity of sentiment, a readiness in hearing, and a fairness in judging of the religious tenets of other bodies, which must be of immense service to the cause of unity, when that cause comes up for general and practical discussion.

But, I am happy to say, that what I have here propounded as a matter of theory, has already proved true in fact. A remarkable document issued by the General Conference of the Congregational Churches in Connecticut, a short time ago, shows of what a large liberality of sentiment the Congregationalists are capable, and how much they desire a definite creed. It is the response of the Conference of Connecticut, to the Declaration on the question of Unity, issued by the bishops of the Episcopal Church to all the Protestant Churches; and a noble response it is. I cannot do better than give you as closely as time will permit me, that part of the

response in which these liberal people tell us what they are prepared to do.

“In pursuance of what we believe to be the mind of Christ in us, we, the delegates and representatives of the Congregational Churches of the State of Connecticut, in State Conference assembled, do hereby render a grateful and cordial response to the important message issued by reverend and beloved brethren as representing a large and loyal branch of the Catholic Church. And for the sake of simplicity and convenience, we distinguish and separate their *general declaration* from their *four-fold definition of the essential principles of unity*, in the following resolutions :

“(1) That as for the *general declaration* made in the aforesaid message from the bishops of the Episcopal church, we heartily welcome it as conceived and issued in the spirit of our common Lord and as bethinking the approach of a brighter and better day for the whole Church ; we earnestly reciprocate its courteous, kindly, and fraternal spirit, and the desires and sentiments which it expresses ; and we devoutly give thanks to our common Heavenly Father that he has put it into the hearts of our beloved brethren to send forth such a message of peace.

“(2) That as for the four principles defined in said message as essential to the restoration of unity, we are glad in the full belief that all our churches are substantially in agreement with our Episcopal

brethren as touching the first three of the four, to wit: the *Holy Scriptures*, the *Statement of Christian Faith*, and the *Sacraments*; at least we are assured, and do hereby testify joyfully, that as touching these three points there is no bar to complete union between them and us.

“As touching the fourth principle—that of the Historic Episcopate—although we are unable to agree in it with the brethren of the Episcopal church, and are far from a conviction of its Scriptural derivation, yea and are accustomed to regard it as a note of division rather than of unity, yet *we do not despair of some sufficient reconciliation of our diverse opinions on this point, but are greatly increased in hope thereof by the general tenor of this message.* And finally, and particularly, we welcome with great gladness its wise and gracious suggestion of “brotherly conferences” with other Christian bodies seeking the restoration of the unity of the Christian church, among which bodies we declare ourselves to be. And thus we heartily, thankfully, hopefully, and prayerfully make response to our Episcopal brethren, wishing them the fulness of Christ’s blessing in all their service of a common Lord and Saviour.”

Thanks be to God who alone worketh great marvels, for this noble and apostolic response. Thanks be to Him that our brethren have recognised what changes time and circumstances, under His guiding hand, have wrought in us and them. They

have looked on Episcopacy in the past as a sign of disunion, but the action of the American bishops of to-day greatly increases their hope that they may come with their Episcopal brethren to some sufficient reconciliation even on the question of Episcopacy. Surely time, under God, works wonders. In 1593 the bishops caused to be hanged, at Tyburn, Barrow and Greenwood, for preaching Congregationalism. In 1886 the bishops of America addressed the Congregationalists as Christian Churches, with which they desire to enter into brotherly conference. In 1593 Barrow declared his utter dislike of the church government then in force, and inveighed against the falsity of the prelates. In 1886 the spiritual descendants of the same Barrow, salute the bishops as their reverend and beloved brethren who represent "a large and loyal branch of the Church Catholic." He who has brought these things to pass, will do for us more abundantly than either we desire or deserve. May we have wisdom to recognise his guiding hand, and obedience to do His will.



ONE FLOCK AND ONE SHEPHERD.

LECTURE V.

“Behold how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity.”—*Psalm cxxxiii, 1.*

THIS evening we bring to a close our lectures on the unity of Christendom. I purpose to collect the conclusions to which we have been led by our historical enquiries, and to consider a few objections which have come under my notice since I began this course. You will remember that I laid down, in the beginning, the position that the only kind of unity which would fulfill the commands of Christ was an organic unity—such a one as we behold in the case of the Methodists and Presbyterians in this Dominion. To obtain such a unity, I pointed out that great sacrifices must be made by all those who earnestly desire to be one in Christ. Only by such sacrifices can we obtain that large liberty and respect for individual and congregational thought which is necessary to an United Protestant Christendom. In our historical enquiries, I endeavoured to make clear to you what

were the distinct principles of the various Churches, and how those principles might be preserved in a body such as we hoped that the Church of the Future might be. As to the Presbyterians, I pointed out, that while they might accept a modified and carefully guarded Episcopate, they might not only preserve the Presbytery, but give it to us as a form of government, wise, constitutional and beneficial. The distinctive principles of the Methodists, their class meetings, and their use of the emotional in the service of the Gospel, would, I believe, prove factors of great importance to those to whom they joined themselves. The outlook in the direction of the Congregationalists, I held to be especially hopeful, both on account of their peculiar tenets regarding Church government, and from the public utterances of some of their churches on the subject of unity. The inclusion of the Baptist body in the United Church remains a great difficulty; not that there would be no room for them in this general body, but that they themselves, by their very tenets, would not recognize such a body as representing the Church. During our considerations, I am sure, we have all been led to feel how many were the doctrines and practices which all the Protestant Churches have in common; how few our real points of difference; yet that there are real points of difference we plainly see, and until they are reconciled, we cannot hope for true unity.

By true unity we mean organic and corporate unity. Such is St. Paul's teaching. There is for him, indeed, One Spirit, but there is also One Body. The Church, considered as a body, must be, indeed, a unity of diversity, but it must be a unity that men *can see*. No mere sentimental friendliness of the various Protestant Churches, while each of them clings to its points of difference, and its distinctive name, could possibly be dignified with the title of unity. The invisible Church is a thing known in heaven, but the world takes no note of it. That there is an invisible Church, only known to God, the first fruits of salvation, made up of all the great souls that have lived for and loved the truth, we believe; but that such a Church invisible was meant by Christ when he spoke of His disciples as a united body of men, witnessing by their oneness to Him before the world, would be to suppose Him guilty of using words contrary in meaning to that which He intended. Again, when St. Paul speaks of the Church as a body inspired by the Spirit of God, he is not speaking of holy souls scattered here and there through the disordered ranks of Christendom, but of a compact visible army, marching with the strength of union, to the overthrow of a common foe. Wherever, then, in these lectures, I have used the term unity, I mean the bodily unity of Protestant Churches. It is quite plain, then, that I do not think that a feeling of friendliness amongst

the ministers of the various bodies, with an annual exchange of pulpits, can be taken as a sign of unity. You cannot deceive the world by make-believes. Just take a case, which often occurs, which shows the hollowness of this exchange system as a sign of unity. A minister of another Protestant body preaches in a Particular Baptist church; that is—a man professes to teach a congregation in whose eyes he is an uncovenanted alien from the flock of Christ. If the preacher has any doubt as to the light in which his Baptist friends regard him, he has only to present himself at the table where they gather to celebrate the Lord's supper, and he will be immediately told to withdraw. Surely, under such circumstances, no exchange of pulpits would witness to the world of the unity of the two bodies concerned. The world is too quick-sighted, and soon sees through the superficiality of such a union. You will pardon me if I introduce a short fable under this head. "There once was a body all of whose members were at variance one with another. The eye was always saying to the hand, 'I have no need of thee, and the hand was always saying to the foot, 'I have no need of thee.' Notwithstanding this fact, this body professed that its members did not disagree at all. One day, however, its professions shamed its practice, and the members began to ponder what they could do to make the world think that they were one. At last they hit on

a plan. All the warring members agreed that for one hour, every year, they would do some one piece of not very important work together, and then for the rest of the year they would go on disagreeing in the old way. Strange to say the world was not impressed, but spoke ill of the body worse than ever." The world has a right to carp at the Church for its internal dissensions, and the Church is a false-witness of the Lord Jesus Christ to that world as long as she does not seek organic unity. It is a common error heard uttered among the uninstructed, that the only duty of the Church is to save souls. Ignorant people think that their souls are surer of salvation in one body more than another, and come to look on the Churches as so many rival companies propounding various schemes for getting easily to heaven. O ignoble, ungodly, unchristian thought. The Church's supreme duty is to witness to her Lord and Master, so that the world may believe on Him. She is to do this, not only by preaching the Gospel, but by witnessing to Him, by her bodily union, in the bonds of peace and in righteousness of life. Hence the shallowness of that view of the various bodies that looks upon them as so many ways from this world to the next, and upon the plea of the unity of their aim and end, justifies their disunion in system. Even supposing that it were the case (which I do not, however, allow), that a Church's sole duty is to bring people safely and

and easily from earth to Paradise; where are we told that there are *many* ways to heaven? The only *two ways* that I read of in the New Testament are the straight and narrow, the way of life, and the way of death. *They do not go to the same place.* No, the theory that looks on the Churches as so many parallel ways to heaven will not stand examination. Indeed, those who hold this view would be more true to fact if they were to compare the various Churches, in accordance with their theories of them, to a number of rival railways, run by different companies from the same starting place to the same destination, the tracks running side by side. Granted that these companies could carry their passengers to the destination for which they booked them, look at the enormous waste in the support of each individual company. Look at the cumbrous and expensive way in which business would be done. Look at the jealousies, quarrels, business tricks, that would go on between the various rivals. How they would sometimes injure one another, materially, for the sake of getting a few more passengers! How each would struggle to be thought the most flourishing! Yes, if the churches be looked on as mere means of getting easily to heaven, we must not compare them to roads, but to railways, with their complex system and large official staff. But God forbid that I should so degrade the Church of Christ, that I should so dishonour our common Lord

and Master, as to set aside His last solemn charge, on the ground that our modern theory of the various bodies as ways to heaven, is much better than His theory of the United People as a witness to Himself. God forbid that I should prefer to be led by the analogy of our modern selfish, competitive systems, rather than by the command of Christ.

Our modern comparisons are not only odious, but often misleading. Look at the comparison of Christian bodies to the various regiments of an army. The regiments which compose an army, it is said, have different uniforms, are of different kinds, some horse, some foot; yet, notwithstanding, they all unite as one man against the common foe. So the Christian Church is made up of various bodies, differing indeed in many respects, but one in their war against sin. The simile is only true on the surface. Fancy an army with a number of generals who had no unity of plan, but each of whom followed his own method of carrying on the campaign, without consulting the others. Fancy a number of regiments on the battle field, each obeying the orders of its individual commander. Fancy these regiments occasionally pausing in their attacks on the enemy, to pour volleys into each others ranks. Fancy all this, and you will have a picture of confusion worse confounded. Yet, if we use the simile of an army, such is the picture we would have to draw of the Christian bodies of to-day. When all these bodies

become one organically, when they are pervaded with one spirit and one mind, then, and not till then, will the words be true,

“Like a *mighty army* moves the Church of God.”

But in this united Church there should be great breadth and liberality. There should be room for the Episcopate, and room also for the Presbytery; room for the Methodist class meeting and revival; room for Congregational independence and individuality, so far forth as it is compatible with necessary centralization. There should be room for a liturgy, room too for extempore prayer. In fact, in all things non-essential, the Church should allow a large latitude. In such an atmosphere of freedom the Christian religion would flourish healthily and vigorously, and difficulties which once appeared irreconcilable would disappear.

In this course of lectures, I have considered the various bodies in the light of history. I have not considered the *Scriptural* arguments for either Presbyterianism or Independency. In the first place it is pretty well acknowledged that there was no one established form of government in the Churches of New Testament times. Each little Church seems to have gone its own way, subject to the supervision of the Apostles. Philippi had “bishops or presbyters, and deacons.” Ephesus had presbyters, but also (if the so-called Epistle to the Ephesians were addressed to the Ephesian

Church) a number of other ministers, such as prophets, evangelists, and teachers. In the Corinthian Church, we find no mention of either bishops, presbyters, or deacons; while we do find mention of persons called prophets, teachers, and rulers. While the Apostles were alive, the Churches founded by them, seem to have applied to them in all questions that stirred them, for advice and direction. Questions of church government in St. Paul's days seem to have been in a state of solution, and it required time to precipitate and crystallize them. In discussing them the claims of the various forms of church government, appeals to the New Testament are of little value, inasmuch as we cannot find therein proof of the universal existence of any one form. Presbyterianism might be found at Philippi, but there was a bishop at Jerusalem. The fact that every denomination finds some proof for its peculiar form of government, in the New Testament, is enough to shew that no one form of government was to be found every where in Apostolic days. It was not until the close of the Apostolic age that, owing to the gradual dying off of the Apostles, the matter of church government became a serious one. This is my position as an Episcopalian. I do not seek authority for our government in the Acts or Epistles inasmuch as I hold that the churches to which they were written, were of varied forms of rule, under the jurisdiction of Apostles; but I seek to find what

form of government was general at the close of St. John's life, when it was natural to expect some form of government having Apostolic sanction. I find, I hold, the Episcopate established immediately after the decease of St. John. As a simple matter of history I hold that not "*in,*" but "*from* the Apostles' time," as the Prayer Book claims, "there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church,—bishops, priests and deacons." As I do not myself believe that any one who candidly examines the New Testament, will find any one form of government exclusively established therein, and as I do not claim for the government of my own Church, that that government is to be found in all the Churches when St. Paul wrote his Epistles; I do not consider it necessary to enquire whether Congregationalism or Presbyterianism are to be found in the New Testament or not. Everybody claims to have the New Testament on its side, and inasmuch as I think any candid unprejudiced judge would pronounce the New Testament to be the property exclusively of none of us, I did not think it necessary to spend time going at length into these claims.

As everybody claims Scripture I have laid Scripture aside, and considered the various bodies, their rise and growth, as a simple matter of history. This is, under the circumstances, the only way to avoid useless and endless controversy.

A word as to an objection that was brought under

my notice, which deserves an answer, inasmuch as it was the expression of an individual mind, but not for any other reason;—What body will have the uppermost hand in this United Church when it is formed? The question reminds us of an episode that took place at the Last Supper. St. Luke tells us, that at that Sacred Board, there arose a contention among the Disciples as to which of them should be the greatest. And Jesus said unto them “The Kings of the Heathen have lordships over them; and they that have authority over them are called benefactors, but it shall not be so with you.” Such an objector takes a Pagan, not a Christian standpoint. If it would secure the unity of the body of Christ, any true Christian would willingly become as the younger and as one that doth serve.

I now bring these lectures to a close. I undertook them with the design of bringing before you the action of our own Provincial Synod on this great question. It struck me, that if the priests of our Church from their pulpits, were to freely speak of this matter, as it appeared to them, the laity would become interested in the whole subject, and seek, with their pastors, to bring this resolution of our central body to good effect. If these sermons have awakened any interest in this great and solemn subject; if they have led anyone in our Church, or in other Churches, to desire earnestly the fulfilment of our Lord’s command, and to determine, in a

spirit of self-sacrifice, to work for that great end, they have not been undertaken in vain. At the same time, I must remind you, that the opinions uttered in this pulpit, are but the opinions of one minister of your church. *That Church herself, must speak with united voice, before any negotiations for unity between her and her Protestant brethren can be of any effect.* I offer these hastily prepared, and necessarily sketchy lectures, as a contribution to the cause of unity; humbly praying, that they may be in conformity with the mind of the Church. I ask all those who sympathise with this great cause to work heart and soul to rouse up their fellows to the tremendous nature of it, and the duties which it imposes upon all who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lastly, I trust, that nothing that I have said in these lectures, will be taken by our brethren in the other Churches, to have been spoken in any spirit of controversy, but in an honest desire to forward the cause of union between us and them. If I may have said aught that may seem to them to misrepresent their position, as I said in a previous lecture, I hope they will remember that I speak as one who has been brought up in a different system from theirs, and who consequently treats of these matters as they appear to him to be. If I have pointed to what I believe to be blots in their system, I hope that they will remember that I did not spare the sins and mistakes of my own Church. Whatever

has been said from this pulpit during the last few weeks has been said with the sincerest intention, and in no spirit of dogmatism, but in one, I trust, of humble hopefulness. May God give His people the blessing of peace!



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LECTURE I.

NOTE I.—THE TERM “PROTESTANTISM.”

I advisedly adopt the term “Protestantism.” The odium theologum which this word excited in a certain section of the Anglican Church does not injure it in the estimation of all healthy Churchmen who eschew extremes. Just as certainly as the Church of England is at one with the Church of Rome in the maintenance of Episcopacy, is she at one with the chief Protestant bodies in the enunciation of those positive truths which Rome has so obscured and altered that she has practically denied them.

Union with Rome, in her present condition, is a simple impossibility. Union with the Eastern Church may be more feasible, but it is, too, a long way off. If we seek unity we must begin by conferring with our brethren of the Orthodox Protestant Churches, who speak the same tongue, believe the same creeds, accept unmutilated the Word of God, and celebrate the same Sacraments. In Protestantism, not in the Hellenism of the East, or the Pseudo-catholicism of Rome, lies our hope of Unity.

NOTE II.—CHURCH AND EPISCOPACY.

In steadfastly adhering to the Episcopate the American bishops have in view not only the union of Protestant Christendom, but also that further union, for which we all hope in the end, the uniting of the Church East and West. Not only does the Church hold to the Episcopate as a Primitive and Apostolic institution, but also as a necessary link to the Latin and Greek Churches. For the Church of England, in this Dominion, to give up the Episcopate, in order to enter into alliance with the Protestant bodies, would be to cut herself off, once and forever, from the historic Churches of the East and West. That she has a valid Episcopate the East acknowledges, and Romanists of the enlightened kind, such as Du Pin and De Girardin were thoroughly

satisfied as to the validity of the Anglican succession. The Church of England is the bridge between the Protestant Churches and the older branches of the Church of Christ. In the matter of the Episcopate, then, although she may have to modify it to meet emergencies, and to adapt it to new circumstances, she never can forego it.

LECTURE II.

NOTE I.—ROMAN EPISCOPATE IN SCOTLAND AT REFORMATION.

The condition of the Church in Scotland before the Reformation explains to a great extent the violence of the reaction against it. It was horribly corrupt and almost morally dead. Its bishops and archbishops were in a majority of cases the illegitimate sons of great men who were promoted to their sees to provide incomes for them. Concubinage was the rule with these shameless ecclesiastics; they brought their children up and acknowledged them publicly. It was the usual custom for the son of a parish priest to succeed to his father's benefice. One of the reforms proposed by the Roman bishops, when things were becoming too hot for them, was,—“That no kirkman (i. e. parish priest), was to nourish his bairn in his own company, but every one was to hold the children of others; and such bairn was in no case to succeed his father in his benefice.” In some cases the bishoprics were held by laymen who had never had a consecrating hand laid upon them. If Knox had loose notions as to the need of episcopal consecration, he owed it to the Roman Church of which he was a priest, who showed her carelessness about it by letting laymen rule and act as prelates.

LECTURE III.

NOTE I.—WESLEY AS A CHURCHMAN.

The memorandum of Wesley referred to in this lecture is to be found in Mr. Denny Umlin's valuable book. Wesley's action in the case of Coke and Ashbury would, at first, seem as if he had completely thrown over his belief, stated in 1745, that ministers must have a commission from

“Bishops whom we apprehend to be in succession from the Apostles.” But the sermon on Korah, Dathan and Abiram, which he preached but one year before his death, shows that his views on the question were as strong as ever. In the cases of Coke and Ashbury, Wesley believed himself, because of extraordinary circumstances, justified in doing an extraordinary act. He no doubt argued that, as in cases of emergency a layman may baptize, and according to some of the Fathers, where the obtaining of a priest is impossible, celebrate the Eucharist; so when his people in America could not obtain Episcopal supervision from the ordinary source, that he had a right to send them men himself. That Coke never thought himself to be a genuine bishop is evidenced by the following facts:—1. In 1791 he applied to Bishop White that the Methodist Society might be received into the Church, and their preachers reordained. 2. He applied both to Bishop White and Bishop Seabury that he might be admitted to the episcopate. 3. He applied to the Bishop of London to ordain some travelling preachers in England to administer the Sacraments. 4. He tried to be consecrated by the Church in England as a Missionary bishop to India. The fact that Wesley excused his action in the case of Coke on the plea of urgent necessity, and the additional fact that Coke acknowledged that he was no bishop, when taken in conjunction with Wesley’s latest utterances on the subject, shew that to the end Wesley believed in the Apostolic succession and the necessity of Episcopal ordination where it could be obtained. Here are his closing words to his preachers:—“Ye never dreamed of this,” he says, speaking of exercising the functions of the priesthood, “for ten or twenty years after ye began to preach. Ye did not then, like Korah, Dathan and Abiram, seek the priesthood also. Ye knew no man taketh this honour to himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. O contain yourselves within bounds. Be content with preaching the Gospel * * in God’s name stop there.” (Mag. 1790.) The Irish Methodists called the sermon, “The Dying Testimony.” But with the Methodists of the present day Wesley has been thrown overboard; they only use his name.



