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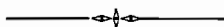
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while he was yet with us as a great and shining light, and wrote these words of the Church of Rome: "We must deal with her with all affectionate, tender thoughts, with tearful regrets and a broken heart, but still with a steady eye and a firm hand. For, in truth, she is a Church beside herself—abounding in noble gifts and rightful titles, but unable to use them religiously." One of her own children, the famous Bishop Ricci, describes the court of Rome in one sufficient sentence as "cette cour qui est toujours la même, et qui ne saurait devenir Chrétienne."¹ The Papacy must become Christian before Christians can find a ground of union with it; it must sacrifice its centuries of cruel legislation before we can open those negotiations for peace which it has most irreligiously inaugurated by denying the Christianity of those whom it invites to reunion. If it fail to do this, union with its Church would be but a union in sin—the recognition of doctrines and principles which stand in diametrical opposition to those of the kingdom of Christ, and to the precepts of the eternal Lawgiver.

ROBERT C. JENKINS.



ART. II.—REUNION, UNIFORMITY, AND UNITY—

(Continued).

II. UNIFORMITY.

UNIFORMITY is not unity; it is frequently the greatest of all hindrances to unity. Uniformity is the characteristic of man's works; unity is the characteristic of the works of God. Uniformity is the sign of weakness; unity is power. Uniformity is the glory of machinery; unity is the glory of organized life. Uniformity is man's weapon, and distinguishes the work of man at all times. "The archæologist, when ransacking ancient mounds and heaps, knows that he has come upon the work of man, and not the work of God, when articles uniformly moulded and constructed are turned up. Man's power of imitation, man's power of producing exact resemblances, is a very valuable faculty, and yet it is a proof of weakness, and not of strength. It is not a God-like power." It is the glory of God that He never imitates; that in all creation there are no two bodies exactly on the same pattern, no two leaves in all the vegetable kingdom exactly alike; and

¹ "Memoires de Ricci," par De Potter, tom. iii., p. 367.

yet we are quite sure that, notwithstanding the entire absence of uniformity from the whole universe of creation, a most perfect unity pervades it all.

What efforts the landscape gardener, the architect, and the artist are ever making to escape from man's bondage to uniformity, and to imitate God's hand in this respect! And we admire their works just in proportion as they are able to imitate nature and to overcome uniformity; but, after all, they are only imitators at the best, and their highest attainments are miserable failures when compared with the works of the Creator.

And yet in the most divine of all the works of God, in the new creation, in the mystical Body of Christ, in that spiritual Being which is the fulness of Him that filleth all in all, we are told that the unity of the body depends upon the uniformity of a human organization, uniformity in rites, ceremonies, and certain forms of prayers. Such things are falsely called organization, for organization belongs to life. They are of the nature of machinery, not of organization.

In the Mosaic economy there was such a machinery appointed by God, out of respect to the infirmity of mankind, till the fulness of times should come, when the law of the spirit of life should free the true Israelite from the law of a carnal commandment.

When the Good Shepherd had come to the close of the first period of His Galilean ministry, and had gathered together His first little flock of sheep—the nucleus of His future Church, composed of a few Galilean peasants, on whose shoulders He was about to lay the burden of a world's salvation—He sat, with them at His feet, on the top of a hill in Galilee, and caused them to look down on a multitude of Jews assembled together, probably, to go up to one of their great feasts in Jerusalem (Matt. ix. 36-38). He opened out His heart to them and us, and showed us a picture of the great heart of His Father in heaven. "He was moved with compassion on the multitude, because they fainted and were scattered as sheep having no shepherd." There were thousands of multitudes of idolaters on earth on that day, but it was on none of them that the Saviour looked. It was on the one flock of God's visible Church on earth. They had shepherds who sat in Moses' seat; they *were gathered together* as no other flock ever was; they had a most perfect outward organization and ritual, and yet to His eyes they resembled a flock of helpless sheep *scattered* over the plain, lying down faint from very weariness because they had no shepherd.

And is it not so at the present day? Does He not look with compassion on many a congregation and many a Church

boasting of a most perfect ritual and uniformity, and pronounce them to be "faint, scattered, and shepherdless"?

We have tried to prove above that *reunion* with the corrupt Churches of Rome and the East is not what we are primarily to seek for when we pray, as I trust we daily do, for unity. It is not according to the will of Christ; it is not what our Church teaches us. "As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria and Antioch have erred; so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith." Since these words were written these Churches, so far from showing any tendency to forsake these errors, have added to them. We should, indeed, daily pray that these Churches may be reformed by the Holy Spirit, and that they may so renounce their errors that reunion with them may be possible; but the prayer for union is *primarily a prayer for ourselves*, and not for our neighbours, that we may receive grace to *humble ourselves before our God*, so that "He may take away *from us* all hatred, prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord."

Leaving, then, reunion with corrupt Churches in the hands of our God, let us look at the Churches of the Reformation, and especially at our Christian fellow-countrymen who differ from us in matters of outward organization and ceremonies, and inquire whether it is uniformity with them that we are to expect in answer to our prayer, or the unity of the Spirit, while we may still continue to differ from them in these things.

Let History speak.

Let us compare the first three centuries of the Christian era with the last three. The Bishop of London has remarked that there have been three great periods of mission work: the first, in which both the physical and intellectual powers of the world were opposed to the spread of Christianity; the second, that of the Middle Ages, in which the physical powers were on the side of the world and the intellectual powers on that of the Church; and the third, the nineteenth century, in which both the physical and intellectual powers are on the side of Christendom. But his lordship omitted to note the fact that being on the side of Christendom is a very different thing from being on the side of the missionary army of Christ. The truth is, that during the greater part of this century a great part of the physical and intellectual powers of *Christendom* has been rather against mission work than for it.

There is nothing more wonderful in history than the spread and growth of the Christian Church during the first three centuries of the Christian era. All the physical and intel-

lectual powers of the world were marshalled against her. She possessed neither uniformity nor any outward organization. Her strength lay not in uniformity, but in the marvellous unity of the Spirit, which as a whole, despite the efforts of heretical sects to disturb it, permeated all her armies. She not only had no visible head on earth, but no centre of unity at all. For the most of the time she had no metropolis and no metropolitan; she had not even a diocese or a diocesan possessed of any territorial jurisdiction; she had no universally accepted liturgy or Book of Common Prayer. Her missionaries did not even possess a Bible that they could carry about with them on their preaching tours; there were no decrees of any Œcumenical Council to fix and formulate her doctrines; she had not even the Apostles' Creed in its entirety. The short form of creed which she possessed was almost all the dogmatic theology to which her members had access. Christ's witnesses, who were scattered through every part of the known world, had neither cathedrals nor public places of worship, neither high altars nor ceremonial displays. In Rome they met in catacombs or hidden corners; their love-feasts and holy communions were held in similar places known only to the faithful. By the foolishness of preaching alone the world was conquered, and by the unity of the Spirit the members of the Body of Christ were knit together in love and grew up into a holy temple in the Lord, "buildd together for an habitation of God by the Spirit."

The first great attempt to enforce uniformity upon Christendom was made by the so-called Œcumenical Councils of the fourth and fifth centuries, in the first of which, the Council of Nice, the 318 bishops, of whom it was composed, accepted as their President and Bishop of bishops an unbaptized heathen, the Pontifex Maximus of Roman heathendom and emperor of the world-empire power, who brought the members of the Council to an almost unanimous decision by threatening with banishment all those who should presume to differ from him.

We thank God for the Nicene Creed, we thank Him for the unity of the faith which still permeated the Church of Christ, and from which issued the decrees of the first four General Councils, but we lament the manner in which they were brought about; we lament those unchristian anathemas, denounced with all the authority of the world-empire power on all who should have the courage to differ from them. We cannot but say, "All honour to those three or four Bishops who, though we believe them to have been mistaken in their doctrines, went into banishment, and endured a cruel persecution rather than subscribe their names to what they believed to be false." And we must say, "No honour at all to those

who submitted their necks to the yoke of the beast, and accepted an unbaptized Pontifex Maximus of a pagan cult as President of a General Council, and Bishop of bishops of the Church of Christ." The example of Constantine was followed by those who inherited from him and his successors the titles of Pontifex Maximus and Bishop of bishops; and the Popes of Rome for thirteen centuries continued to hurl their anathemas, bulls, and excommunications from the Vatican upon all who did not outwardly conform to the uniformity which they enforced upon Western Christendom by fire and sword, by torture and the stake, and by the unutterable cruelties of the Inquisition. What was the result? In the West the woman sitting upon the scarlet-coloured beast became more drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, than ever Jerusalem had been with all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of the righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias, the son of Barachias; and, in the East, whole communities of Christians *were driven into separation*, because a few of their leaders could not subscribe to formulas of man's invention, and in many cases could not become of one mind in attempts to define that which is indefinable, and to comprehend the incomprehensible.

We cannot do better than quote the words of another: "Details are merely the bristles of uniformity and man's stiff, systematic religion. Details are esteemed to be vital matters when the workers have not the Holy Ghost, His holy liberty, His spiritual power; man's religion sends forth slaves to work details, God's religion sends forth sons to work principles. Man holds the reins of the flesh, bones, and conduct. God holds the reins of the heart, and simply says, 'Go, work in My vineyard.'

"Look at the Reformation in Germany. When it took place in France, under Calvin's spirit, 600,000, it is believed, were bold and true for God's Word. Its opponents boasted they destroyed almost that number before they could rescue France out of Bible hands. It was a grand country ere that—the leader in science, yea, and commerce also. Since that it has first groaned under tyranny, and, secondly, proved to be a turbulent volcano. Look at the Reformation in England, Scotland, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland. No uniformity was possible; no uniformity was attempted; but the unity was complete in doctrine. Every vital point was perfect, and the work was deep and true. In non-vital points there were all the variations you observe when saints differ in age, knowledge, opportunities, and powers. Freedom demands room for variations; the same variations are seen wherever freedom reigns in the world.

“God’s witnesses display more variety and less uniformity than is found in any religion. No other religion whatever could give such Godlike liberty, and yet exist and manifest such wondrous power. The varieties among Gospel preachers are a proof that the Holy Ghost made them and kept them, as a hive of bees is kept, all true to the hive, all working, yet flying here and there, never following each other. Christ is their only centre; His Word their only word.” — *Gordon Forlong.*

While we never cease to pray for foreign Churches, is it not our duty to look at home? have we not a primary duty to our own fellow-countrymen? While it is our duty to love all men, and especially all who are of the household of faith, even though they be corrupt branches of the Vine, is it not our duty to love our neighbour first of all? In vain do we pray for the Greek Christian, whom we have not seen, if we do not pray for the Nonconformist at home whom we have seen. And in vain do we pray for the unity of the Spirit with him, if *we do not carry out in our actions* what we pray for with our lips.

What, then, is the meaning of our Lord’s High Priestly prayer for my Nonconformist fellow-countryman and me (for our great High Priest in heaven is still praying for him and me in the very words which He used on that last night), and with what meaning should I use the prayer in our liturgy that the Father may take away from me all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from Godly union and concord?

Should Churchmen, as we call ourselves in England, seek for uniformity with Nonconformity as the Pope seeks for unity with us, on the ground that we are the only Churchmen in England, as Romanists regard themselves as the only Churchmen in the world? Have we of the Established Church a monopoly of the Spirit; and is the sin of schism entirely the sin of our Nonconformist brethren, and are we quite guiltless of it?

This is not the view taken by the highest authority in our Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury lately, speaking at the Canterbury Diocesan Conference, said: “They, if this aspiration after unity is intelligent, it is a very vast thing indeed. What has it to take in? Let us lift our eyes from the little circle of the seas around us. The aspiration after unity, if it is intelligible, if it means anything real, has to take in those enormous Eastern Churches which contain such a large proportion of the population of the world. It must take into consideration those great non-episcopal, reformed Churches, many of which would have been episcopal if they had the opportunity, if it had been possible for them, but which,

whether they are so or not, are reformed Churches of Christ, which have sought and found truth under great difficulties. We have a real unity with them, and they are becoming every day more and more important, when you think of how they are multiplying among the populations of the new world. Unity has to take in these great Eastern Churches, and it has to take in these great Reformed Churches."

His Grace might have added how, by the grand missionary work which God is doing among the heathen through their instrumentality, they are multiplying among pagan nations also.

We believe that all parties in our own Church acknowledge that in past centuries Nonconformity arose in England through the want of spiritual vitality and activity in our own Church. "It is truly said that the royal prelates of the English Restoration originated Nonconformity" (Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. iii., p. 137). But we must go farther back in history to discover its origin. The interesting article on "Political Preaching" in *THE CHURCHMAN*, July, 1895, gives a humiliating picture of how the prelates and dignitaries of the Church, by their fulsome flattery of the King, encouraged James I. in his overbearing treatment of the Nonconformists, and how the extreme Episcopalians, by pouring forth the vials of their wrath upon them, drove them into open hostility. To the saying of the Dean of Chester at the Hampton Court Conference, *Rex est mixta persona cum sacerdote*, may be added, *sacerdos est mixta persona cum rege*.

In the last century neither bishops nor clergy fed the flock. God in His mercy raised up a Whitfield and a Wesley and other men of God to awaken the sleeping Church from her lethargy. Though the Evangelical revival within our own Church was one of the blessed results of their work, the Church in its corporate capacity treated both these prophets as Israel of old treated her prophets. The teaching of Whitfield greatly strengthened the hands of the Congregationalists, and increased in their minds the prejudice which they already felt against the Established Church, when they saw how that man of God was treated by her. But the result of the preaching of Wesley was stranger and more to be lamented by us than that of Whitfield. Has there been any stranger phenomenon in Church history than the rise of the Wesleyan Connection, or, as we believe the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury entitle us to call it, the Wesleyan Church? The teaching of one who was regarded in his own days as a High Churchman, and whom all regard as a man of God within our own community, has laid the foundation of one of the greatest schisms that ever took place in the Church of Christ. And upon that foundation has

been built up a Church, outwardly, indeed, separated from us, and yet using our Liturgy, and in full agreement with us in all doctrinal points, differing, we believe, only in outward organization; and God has made that Church the honoured means in His hands of doing a work for the extension of His kingdom in heathen lands second to none.

But, someone says, "This is true as to the past; but now, since the sleep of the last century has passed away, and there is no Church more active in good deeds than ours, the Nonconformists are without excuse for not returning to the mother Church." It is our duty, then, to look at home without prejudice, and examine ourselves whether there are still in us hindrances to their return or not.

Spirituality, and not activity in good works, is the mark of a true Church. The Church of Sardis had a name among men that she lived, but in God's sight she was dead, and none of her works were perfected before God. Laodicea was rich in her own eyes, but in the eyes of God she was the poor, and the miserable, and the blind and naked. The Nonconformists err, it may be, in making too much of preaching and too little of worship in the services of their Churches. "The worship of the Church is designed, in the first instance, to promote the glory of God rather than to procure benefits for His worshippers." These are the words of a "Nonconformist divine." Is this, then, the only design of it? Are there not present in almost all our assemblies unconverted souls to be won for Christ? Are there not lukewarm Christians, of whom God says that He will spue them out of His mouth, who need to be warned of their danger? Are there not saints of God who long earnestly for the undiluted spiritual milk of God's Word? And are there not more advanced children of God who need to be fed with the strong meat of the Word?

Is it not the case that some thirty years ago those churches only, as a rule, were well attended in which the Word of God was faithfully preached? This was the result of the Evangelical revival of the last and of the beginning of the present century. And is it not the case that in the present day those churches, as a rule, are most frequented in which there is the most music and the least preaching? Has not the all-engrossing desire for what is sensuous and æsthetic in religion almost banished from many of our churches all desire for the preaching of God's Word? And is not this the result of what is known as the Oxford revival?

Ruskin, in "The Stones of Venice," writing on the architecture of the pulpit, says: "If once we begin to regard the preacher, whatever his faults, as a man sent with a message to us, which it is a matter of life or death whether we hear

or refuse; if we look upon him as set in charge over many spirits in danger of ruin, and having allowed to him *but an hour or two in the seven days* to speak to them; if we make some endeavour to conceive how precious those hours ought to be to him, a small vantage on the side of God after his flock have been exposed for six days together to the full weight of the world's temptations, and he has been forced to mark the thorn and thistle springing in their hearts, and to see what wheat had been scattered there snatched from the wayside by this bird and the other; and at last when, breathless and weary with the week's labour, they give him this interval of imperfect and languid hearing, he has *but thirty minutes* to get at the separate hearts of a thousand men, to convince them all of their weaknesses, to shame them for all their sins, to warn them of all their dangers, to try by this way and that to stir the hard fastenings of those doors where the Master Himself has stood and knocked but none opened, and to call at the openings of those dark streets where Wisdom herself has stretched out her hands and no man regarded; *thirty minutes to raise the dead in*—let us but once understand and feel this, and we shall look with changed eyes on that frippery of gay furniture about the place from which the message of judgment must be delivered, which either breathes upon the dry bones that they may live, or, if ineffectual, remains recorded in condemnation, perhaps against the utterer and listener alike, but assuredly against one of them; we shall not so easily bear with the silk and gold upon the seat of judgment, nor with ornament of oratory in the mouth of the messenger; we shall wish that his words may be simple, even when they are sweetest, and the place where he speaks like a marble rock in the desert, about which the people have gathered in their thirst" ("Stones of Venice," vol. ii., p. 29).

Ruskin pictures the minister of the Gospel as having *an hour or two in the seven days to speak to his flock*. We need not say, he has nothing of the kind. Rumour says there are those among us who see members of their flock at the early Communion on Sundays, and dismiss them to spend the rest of the Lord's day in worldly amusements. What a large proportion of our people never give their pastor any opportunity of preaching to or teaching them, except during the Morning or Evening Service, and never receive any religious instruction except what may be contained in a fifteen minutes' sermonette! As long as this is the case, thousands of true Christians, who thirst for the water of life, will go where they think they get it rather than attend such services.

Extempore Prayer.

Another hindrance to the return of Nonconformists to our communion is the entire neglect of extempore prayer in the majority of parishes. We ourselves regard the Book of Common Prayer as the best gift, next to the Bible, that God has given us. We have been privileged to translate it into one heathen language, and we have worshipped God in it in Hindustani, Arabic, Persian, and English. The beautiful and scriptural prayers which it contains seem to us to be suited to all races and to all ages. It is not of its use that we speak, but of its abuse.

The Archdeacon of London lately used the following words in "An Address to Candidates for Orders" (THE CHURCHMAN, 1895, p. 553): "Like the Apostolic Christians, we must exercise ourselves in the constant habit of extempore prayer *both in public and in private*. Anybody can say a collect, and it may mean absolutely nothing at all; but the outpouring of the heart in sincere, unaffected, earnest extemporaneous prayer means a great deal. It means that Christianity is to you not a form, but a reality; it means that you have broken with worldly reserve and academic shyness; it means that you are face to face with God, wrestling as Jacob wrestled with the angel, as all men of faith will have to wrestle till the end of time."

There are many dignitaries and hundreds of clergy in the Church of England who, though they have been accustomed to use the Book of Common Prayer from their childhood, and value it above all other books except the Bible, quite agree with the Archdeacon as to the necessity of using extempore prayer also. And can we condemn those millions of our Nonconformist fellow-Christians, who have not been accustomed to the use of the Liturgy, if they attribute the entire disuse of extempore prayer in most of our parishes to a want of spirituality in the clergy?

St. Peter speaks of "them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven"; and St. Paul says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26). Wherever the Gospel is not preached, and simple, childlike prayer is not offered in the power of the Holy Spirit, not only are the Nonconformists not won to the Church, but many of our own members—weak ones, it may be—are driven into Nonconformity. Let us remember Him who said, "Beware how ye offend one of these little ones who believe in Me."

Sacerdotalism.

Another great hindrance to the return of Nonconformists to the Church is the reality of sacerdotal teaching and practice in many of our churches, and the outward appearance of it in a far greater number of them.

We cannot believe that the eastward position has in itself any doctrinal significance. What is absolutely essential to all who conscientiously hold sacerdotal doctrines is that the priest, especially in celebrating the sacrifice of the Mass, should face the altar and turn his back upon the people. No one can deny that at the Reformation the use of the word "altar," the sacrifice of the Mass, and the custom of the priest turning his back upon the congregation in any part of Divine worship were given up in the reformed Church of England, and that this was done deliberately because our Reformers renounced as false the doctrines contained in and symbolized by them. The Church of Rome never taught that the eastern position was of any importance. At the great altar in St. Peter's in Rome, and at a very great number of altars in Romish churches, the eastward position is not taken. The Churches of the East do universally, we believe, adopt it. What all sacerdotal Churches do agree in is, *that the priest should offer prayer to God for the people with his back turned to them and with his face to the altar.* Turning one's back to the people in prayer, and speaking in accents hardly audible to them, "like wizards that chirp and that mutter" (Isa. viii. 51, R.V.), is apparently essential to priestcraft. I lately attended Divine service in a London church, and though I got a good seat, I did not hear more than two or three sentences of the prayers and not one word of the anthem.

That a large number of priests turn their backs on the people from conscientious motives, because they consider it essential to the sacerdotal doctrines which they hold and teach, is true. Whatever we may think of the inconsistency of such men continuing in our Church, we must respect them for acting according to their convictions. This article is not intended for them. They must and do pray for reunion with Rome and other sacerdotal systems. We feel no respect whatever for those who do not hold these doctrines, and yet imitate the Romanizers in that which gives more offence, we believe, than any other of the Romish practices so lately brought back into our churches—viz., *in the priest turning his back upon the people when leading them in prayer to God.* Why do they do it? They must surely know that they give offence to millions of their fellow-Christians by doing so. There are many minor differences of opinion, most of them in things not

essential to salvation, which separate Christians from one another; but sacerdotalism cuts at the very root of the Melchizedikian priesthood of our great High Priest, and at the root of the priesthood of all the members of His mystical body. There is no form of pride so insidious and so hateful to God as ecclesiastical pride. The priest turning his back upon the people when praying to God with them has been brought back into our Church *for doctrinal reasons, because it is essential to priestcraft*, after it had been almost unknown in her for three hundred years. Why, then, should those of us who do not hold sacerdotal doctrines adopt it, and offend the lambs of the flock by doing so? "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must need be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Whoso shall offend one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

ROBERT BRUCE.

(To be continued.)



ART. III.—PREACHING: IN REFERENCE TO HABITS OF THOUGHT AND LIFE.

PREACHING is an order in our Church, and, from the first establishment of Christianity it was a rule and custom. Christ Himself preached, and it is important to observe the method that He used in such ministration. The burden of His preaching was an earnest call to holiness, purity, and goodness, to conformity in spirit with Himself, and so with God. He adapted His teaching to the requirements, socially and spiritually, of those who heard Him. He denounced obvious, unquestionable sin; He was suggestive in His instruction as to ignorance and error, seeking to lead up, by the marvellous light of His parables, to a true spiritual discernment, and to conviction through confirmation from the conscience; He noted the existing conditions and tendencies of society where He lived and taught, and He touched the paralytic, leprous social life there with the hand that could heal if faith responded; He planted the roots of Divine principles, out of which true life may grow in every form and direction and association in which the life of man can be called on to manifest itself in this world. His Apostles afterwards preached on the same lines. True, their earliest teaching was chiefly a testimony to facts; but when the Christian Church was founded, and in some degree organized and consolidated, the burden of their preaching was