

Church and a Creed"—that they are "*all in mind undenominational.*" Personally I am thankful for that testimony, and I believe it is true.

Let us not cease to pray that for Christians in the Church of England, at any rate, there may be an agreement which shall find its realization in this—that the Bible shall be regarded as the bed-rock of our nation's school system (and this is how I understand the Bill), and be taught by teachers in a spirit that is, or ought to be, common to all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. If this were done, I cannot think that the spirit of our trust deeds would be so very far from being carried into effect. Let us trust God and one another.

### III. The Outcome.

BY THE REV. I. GREGORY SMITH, M.A., HON. LL.D.

"I AM sick," said Mr. John Morley lately, "of these endless squabbles between Church and Chapel." The words are hardly an adequate description of the Education Question. But they suggest a momentous thought. Is it, must it be, endless, this conflict? At any rate, must the present tension last, this violent antagonism, which all who care for religion must deplore? Is there reasonable hope that, without any compromise of principle, both sides may find themselves drawn nearer to one another by that subtle alchemy which is for ever extracting ultimate good from what seems at the moment most unpromising?

Anyone who will look below the surface may find an encouraging answer to this question, even in what seems to the outsider so repellent. For beneath what is temporary and transient in the struggle there is *au fond* on both sides, even when due discount is allowed for political partisanship and other disturbing forces, the moral earnestness which English people are very slow to betray any sign of, unless deeply moved. And another hopeful thought is this: The vital question at issue is not "between Church and Chapel," but whether or not our

national system of education shall be that thorough training of character which is the only real basis of national prosperity. Unless enforced by the obligations of religion, the finest ethical precepts are apt to evaporate practically.

This twentieth century has travelled a long way from the medieval uniformity which persisted in England under Tudors and Stuarts. We must face the fact, regret it as we may, of our "unhappy divisions." The corollary is obvious. Every citizen is free to have his children trained in accordance with his own religious convictions. To impose a State creed on the schools of the nation is not only inconsistent with religious freedom, it is inherently a poor substitute for a thorough religious training. For to syncretize creeds, to crush them together into one type, is, of necessity, to reduce them to very small dimensions. The residuum left when everything has been eviscerated which anyone can object to is not much, and tends by its exiguity to become "small by degrees and beautifully less" till it may disappear altogether.<sup>1</sup> Anyhow, it is a very different thing from the full and free training which can develop that dominant sense of duty to God and man which is the essence of a fine character.

The only real neutrality, as things are, is for the civil power to allow each "denomination" to train its own children in its own way. Of course, it is impossible to take account of more minute differences, such as "High Church," "Low Church," "Anti-Pædo-Baptists," etc. But the civil power can recognise in England, as in Canada and India, a variety of schools, each with its own catechism (Anglican, Roman, Free Church, Jewish), so long as the inspector sent by the civil power reports well of the school. There is far more likelihood of a *rapprochement* of the adherents of various creeds thus than by throwing the creeds into a crucible in the hope of something coming out which may be unobjectionable all round, for the attempt to satisfy all often results in satisfying none. The iron bed of

<sup>1</sup> The "facilities" proposed are futile. Religious training must be thorough if it is to form the character.

Procrustes is far less conducive to real unity than a frank acknowledgment of the fact that we are not all of one mind yet.

Here is, indeed, the common ground on which all can meet side by side who do not wish to see religion extruded from our schools. Here we may lay aside the mutual distrust which hinders us from understanding one another. Our schools are not meant for a battlefield of political parties, but for the wholesome training of our children, that they may play their part rightly and happily in the world. If they leave school, not with a mere smattering of religious knowledge, but imbued thoroughly with a sense of faith and duty, they may help in after-life to restore the long-lost unity of Christendom. Any increase of expenditure in increasing the number of our elementary schools is more than cancelled by increased efficiency. A small school is better than a large one for the formation of character, as well as for the individualizing which the intellectual idiosyncrasies of children require. It is a false economy in the end to crowd too many into one class. Training, it can hardly be repeated too often, is far more than teaching, education than instruction. We need a safeguard against the crammings and smatterings which are hateful to all true educationists.

The bitterness which a century ago too often alienated Churchmen and Nonconformists, if it has not ceased altogether becomes year by year more and more a thing of the past. I was largely due to social causes which are at work no longer. To talk of the clergy now as arrogant and domineering, or of the Nonconformist ministers as wanting in culture, is an absurd anachronism. Whatever there may have been in Georgian days of superciliousness on the one hand or of unrefinement on the other, *on a changé tout cela*. Churchpeople are quick nowadays to see learning and devotion outside their own communion. There is a mutual appreciation among Nonconformists of the self-sacrificing efforts of the clergy ; but it takes time to get rid of the baneful inheritance of a long estrangement. Perhaps all that can be done at present is to cultivate the friendly intercourse which is the first step to a better mutual understanding.

When the partition wall of personal aloofness has been broken down, each will be more clear-sighted as to points in dispute, each more ready to own thankfully the truths common to both. Who would not rejoice to see, if not formal reunion, at least cordial co-operation in the service of the same Master?

More and more clearly as time goes on this solution of our entanglements emerges out of the confused din of controversy and recrimination. The nation refuses its consent to a merely secular education in our elementary schools; the nation refuses to coerce people's consciences about differences in creed. What follows then? Clearly that the State must entrust to each "denomination" the religious training of its own children in its own way *and at its own cost*. At this moment there is a remarkable convergence of opinion on this point from various quarters. An influential member of the House of Commons, sitting on the ministerial side of the House, is reported to advocate this settlement of the question as the only practicable course, the only one fair to all parties. And an educationalist who has an almost unique experience of the subject in various directions says, in effect, the same thing: "He would impose upon the denominations<sup>1</sup> enough of the expense of maintaining their schools in full efficiency to test the sincerity of their convictions." He prefers "a fruitful variety of influence on the national character" to a sapless monotony. In no other way than this is there hope of allaying permanently "the endless strife between Church and Chapel."

"Fratres,  
Ne patriæ fortes in viscera vertite vires!"

The acuteness of the present controversy is in great measure a legacy from the past. We are reaping as we sowed. There would not be the bitter hostility to the Church which is only too obvious in some quarters had not Churchpeople in the last century—let us own the truth—sometimes, to say the least, provoked it by want of sympathetic courtesy. As the

<sup>1</sup> These are the words of a thoughtful writer in the *Morning Post*, commenting on Mr. Sadler's essay in a recent number of the *Independent Review*.

When the partition wall of personal aloofness has been broken down, each will be more clear-sighted as to points in dispute, each more ready to own thankfully the truths common to both. Who would not rejoice to see, if not formal reunion, at least cordial co-operation in the service of the same Master?

More and more clearly as time goes on this solution of our entanglements emerges out of the confused din of controversy and recrimination. The nation refuses its consent to a merely secular education in our elementary schools; the nation refuses to coerce people's consciences about differences in creed. What follows then? Clearly that the State must entrust to each "denomination" the religious training of its own children in its own way *and at its own cost*. At this moment there is a remarkable convergence of opinion on this point from various quarters. An influential member of the House of Commons, sitting on the ministerial side of the House, is reported to advocate this settlement of the question as the only practicable course, the only one fair to all parties. And an educationalist who has an almost unique experience of the subject in various directions says, in effect, the same thing: "He would impose upon the denominations<sup>1</sup> enough of the expense of maintaining their schools in full efficiency to test the sincerity of their convictions." He prefers "a fruitful variety of influence on the national character" to a sapless monotony. In no other way than this is there hope of allaying permanently "the endless strife between Church and Chapel."

"Fratres,

Ne patriæ fortes in viscera vertite vires!"

The acuteness of the present controversy is in great measure a legacy from the past. We are reaping as we sowed. There would not be the bitter hostility to the Church which is only too obvious in some quarters had not Churchpeople in the last century—let us own the truth—sometimes, to say the least, provoked it by want of sympathetic courtesy. As the

<sup>1</sup> These are the words of a thoughtful writer in the *Morning Post*, commenting on Mr. Sadler's essay in a recent number of the *Independent Review*.

cause dies out—may we not say is dying fast, if not dead already?—so we may hope to see the consequence disappear. These internecine strifes are an affront to Him whose almost dying prayer was for the unity of His people. Surely, when in our churches lately, on the anniversary of the great Pentecostal Feast, devout worshippers were on their knees to God the Holy Spirit for peace and unity, they had with them the sympathy of devout Nonconformists throughout the land?

Christians of all sorts at home may learn, if they will, from the far-off mission-field. Bishop Selwyn, "the apostle of the Antipodes," used to say that out there all work with one will against the common foe, the kingdom of Satan. The miserable jealousies which too often impede and harass Christian efforts at home are unknown in the stress of the conflict with heathenism. There is no abandonment of cherished convictions, no pretence of an unreal conformity; each religious community follows its own methods; none seek to interfere with what others are honestly endeavouring to do to the best of their ability; all vie one with another in loyal devotion to the great "Captain of our salvation." Is there not a call from heaven to us at home to do likewise—the same warfare here to be waged against vice and ignorance? Is not a subtle Paganism of self-worship creeping over all classes, as if the Son of God had never come to save? The surest and only way to the actual reunion Christendom is in mutual respect for the conscientious convictions of others and in cordial co-operation, so far as possible, in all things that make for good.

There is a good deal of haziness on the subject of "un-denominationalism." Two things have to be remembered. On the one hand there is, thank God, a common ground on which all Christians stand together—all who really believe in Christ are, so far, on one side. On the other hand it is equally true that this faith in Christ expresses itself in various ways, owing to diversities of character and circumstance, and that this diversity of expression must not be stunted nor cramped, but must be allowed to have free play if the spiritual life is to be

healthy and spontaneous. Ideally a more perfect concord, a more complete assent and consent are to be desired. But, if this in this world is unattainable, Christians should, at any rate, be thankful that there is a fundamental unity, while each Christian community is striving and praying for what it believes to be the "most excellent way."



## What is Christianity?

BY THE REV. BARTON R. V. MILLS, M.A.

### IV. THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE LATER APOSTOLIC AGE.

#### I.

THE death of St. Paul marks an epoch in the history of the Apostolic age. It not only removed the most commanding personality of the period, the man to whom more than to any other the Church owes her constitution and her creeds—it nearly coincided in time with three things, each of which exercised the greatest influence on the course of Christian history.

1. The first of these was the adoption by the Roman Government of an attitude of avowed hostility to the Christian religion. During the Pentecostal and Pauline periods this hostility does not appear. The persecutions to which the Apostles were subjected were almost always instigated by the Jews. The attitude of the Roman authorities was always impartial, and not unfrequently friendly. On the whole, the Apostles had more protection than punishment from the officials of the empire. But in A.D. 64 this attitude was altered. In that year Nero tried to throw on to the Christians the responsibility for the fire at Rome, of which he was himself probably the author. This was the signal for an outburst of violence against the Christian religion, which is generally known as the Neronian persecution. It used to be supposed that this