

THE  
AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN  
REVIEW.

---

THIRD SERIES. No. II.—APRIL, 1869.

---

ART. I.—RECENT DISCOVERIES IN GEOLOGY.

THE AQUEOUS FORMATION OF GRANITE AND CONSEQUENT REVOLUTION IN GEOLOGY.

By Rev. ROBERT PATTERSON, D. D., Chicago, Ill.

It is the custom of a certain class of writers to contrast religion, as a mere collection of speculative opinions, with science, and especially with geological science, as consisting of a body of well-ascertained facts. They argue the necessary conquest of faith by science, and the substitution of Murchison for Moses, and of Lyell for Christ, on the ground of superior authority. But this flippant contrast displays no profound acquaintance with either religion or science. For religion consists, not merely of dogmas, but of a body of facts, well-ascertained, in the very same way as the facts of science are ascertained, by the observation of competent observers, and the experiments of inquirers, and believed on the very same grounds on which all science is believed, namely, on the testimony of the observers. There is not one of our readers who has any other basis of belief for his A, B, C, or for any subsequent acquisition in geography, astronomy, geology, or any other science, than faith in the testimony of his teachers.

On the other hand, science does not consist in the knowledge of a heterogeneous collection of facts, but in an arrangement of facts according to a system or theory. The greater

for they are simultaneous ; at the same moment, I may see the color, smell the odor, taste the savor, and feel the shape and hardness, of the one object which I call an apple. But we find no reason why the other phenomena should be formed into a group at all, since they are not simultaneous, but successive, and often separated from each other by rather long intervals. Why should the phenomena of "knowing, feeling, desiring, etc.," be selected from the countless other manifestations in consciousness, in order to make up the factitious unit called Mind or Self, when they appear in every possible order, sometimes together, sometimes separate, and always more or less jumbled up with external sensations? Some of the modifications of one of them, such as joy, anger, pain, sorrow, love, and the like, may be even of very infrequent occurrence. Why should they be selected as elements of the second group, or of any group, except from a previous or accompanying Intuition, that these alone are States or Modifications of a real unit or entity which I call Myself, and also from an Intuitive apprehension of that difference, which the "Psychological Theory" can not make out or account for,—the difference between *internal* and *external*?

Dic, sapiens Milli, et eris mihi magnus Apollo.

We have not yet half done with Mr. Mill ; but our limits compel us to leave the discussion here for the present, hoping to return to it in the next number of this REVIEW.

#### ART. VIII.—AN "OLD SIDE" PLEA FOR REUNION.

A Sermon by REV. F. ALISON, D. D., 1758.\*

The following discourse was preached before the Synod of Philadelphia, and the Commission of the Synod of New York, on occasion of the reunion of the two bodies in 1758. It is an able and eloquent plea for peace and union among the followers of Christ, and especially among those who accept the Presbyterian standards. The views which it presents, and

\* Preached before the Reverend Synod of Philadelphia, and the Reverend Commission of the Synod of New York, at Philadelphia, May the 24th, 1758, by Francis Alison, D. D., Vice-Provost of the College, and Rector of the Academy in Philadelphia.

the arguments it adduces, are as pertinent and forcible now as they were upon the occasion of its delivery more than a century ago. Indeed, if the learned and pious author could have distinctly foreseen the present circumstances of the Presbyterian church in this country, he could scarcely have used language more appropriate as a Plea for Reunion than that which he here employs. Very few of his expressions would need to be modified, and very little would need to be added. The reader of to-day will find in perusing the discourse, that it takes up successively, and discusses with remarkable ability, many of the very points which are now largely engaging the attention of thoughtful minds. The discourse is valuable, therefore, not only as a memorable production of one of the fathers of the Presbyterian church in this country, which thousands might wish to possess, but as setting forth the grounds on which Christian, and especially Presbyterian, union must rest.

The author, Rev. Francis Alison, D. D., was unquestionably, in some respects, the leading man of the "Old Side." Born in 1705, in Donegal Co., Ireland, subsequently for a time a student of the University of Glasgow, he came to this country in 1735, and after engaging for a short time in teaching, was installed pastor of the New London congregation, Chester Co. Pa. (in May 1737), where he remained for fifteen years.

After the division of 1741, he opened an Academy at the place of his residence. Upon this the Synod's School was grafted in 1744, and he was appointed principal. The institution became justly celebrated, and quite a number of our distinguished statesmen, signers of the Declaration of Independence, as well as clergymen, were educated in it. In 1752, he removed, with his Academy, to Philadelphia; and when, in 1754, a college was added, he was appointed Vice-Provost and Professor of Moral Philosophy. He was also assistant minister of the First Presbyterian Church. Eminent alike as a preacher and a teacher, he received from the University of Glasgow, in 1758, the title of Doctor of Divinity.

Dr. Alison's views and sympathies were strongly with the

“Old Side.” He was one of the signers of the memorable Protest of 1741, which led to the division. But larger experience and calmer reflection led him to take the position which he maintains in this discourse.

Few men of that day commanded more respect for character and ability than Dr. Alison. As a man, a Christian, a scholar, and a preacher, he stood deservedly high. Bishop White, who was a student under him, pronounced him “a man of unquestionable ability in his department, of zeal and rational piety, of liberal mind.” Pres. Stiles says of him: “He is the greatest classical scholar in America, especially in Greek—not great in mathematics, philosophy and astronomy, but in ethics, history and general reading, is a great literary character. I have had a long and intimate acquaintance with him.” The funeral sermon by Dr. Ewing, pays the tribute of glowing eulogy to his merits. The reader of the following discourse—the only publication of Dr. Alison—will feel that the eulogy was richly deserved.

---

#### PEACE AND UNION RECOMMENDED.

**EPHESIANS IV, 1-7.** I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called; with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

WHEN our gracious Redeemer first made his appearance among us, the angels of the Lord, with a multitude of the heavenly host, proclaimed “glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good-will toward mankind! God is the God of peace, Christ Jesus is the prince of peace; the gospel is the gospel of peace; and to follow peace, and to love one another, is the distinguishing characteristic of his disciples. How strange it is, then, that so many who are called by his name, have so openly and so notoriously failed in this main point, and have paid so little regard to his new commandment.

No men have more heartily hated and despised one another, no men have fought more bitterly, nor been deeper tainted with envy, wrath and malice, than many of those who proclaim themselves his followers. Even his ministers, under

pretense of promoting his kingdom, have kindled the flames of persecution, and have used cruel revilings, and anathemas or curses, and excommunications, and racks, and prisons, and inquisitions, and all the bloody instruments of destruction, in the name of our compassionate Saviour, to harrass his subjects.

*Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum ?  
Tantæric animis cælestibus iræ ?*

Could the peaceful religion of Jesus inspire men with so much cruelty? Or can heavenly minds breathe out such rage and resentment? No, my friends; Christians are commanded, by the oracles of God, to love one another, to do good to all men, and to have peace among themselves! We have all one Father, and belong all to the same family. We are all enlisted under the same banner; have all the same dangers and the same enemies. We all depend on the same assistances; are all embarked in the same cause; are all travelling to the same country, and all expect a share in the same inheritance, with the saints in light. And, for these reasons, unanimity, peace, love and friendship are our duty. And to fall out by the way, or to bite and devour one another, is indecent and unbecoming. It is to enlist under the banner of the grand destroyer and enemy of mankind. It is to weaken, or to root out of our souls, that charity and good-will that are so essential to the Christian temper.

As I am, on this occasion, called by Providence, in a critical conjuncture, to recommend PEACE and UNITY to a number of Christian ministers and people, I pray that the good Spirit of God may breathe on us, and inspire us with dispositions to peace and love, with the spirit of a sound mind. He can smooth and soften the rigid temper, and open a heaven in our hearts.

I hope and persuade myself, my fathers and brethren, that you are all as much engaged in heart and affection as I can be, to pay the utmost deference to every command of Christ and his apostles, and as much determined to promote peace, harmony and union, in all the churches, to the utmost of your influence. Our Lord "walks among his candlesticks; holds his ministers as stars in his right hand;" and where two or three of his servants are met together, in his name, he is present with them. His piercing eye sees through every disguise, and it is our honor and our interest to be approved and finally rewarded by him.

Under such apprehensions of his presence, I will believe, that as we are all devoted to his service, so every one will wish me success, while I endeavor to heal breaches, and to promote peace: therefore I will speak with freedom, and expect a patient and candid hearing, in a cause which it is so much every one's honor and duty to promote; and, for this reason, I must recommend to your serious consideration the address of Paul in his bonds to the church of Ephesus, which I have read to you already, as the subject of my following discourse.

In these words, this church is warmly pressed, in general, to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called;" or, as it is expressed, Phil. ii, 20, "to walk as becomes the gospel of Christ;" that is, through the grace of God, to endeavor to know and to do their duty. To walk worthy of our vocation, is to live as becomes the children of God, and followers of Jesus Christ. It is to walk according to the precepts and commands of the gospel. It is to walk answerable to the aids and assistances afforded us by the Holy Spirit; answerable to the dignity and obligations of the Christian name, and answerable to the high and glorious expectations of every sincere Christian in a future state of honor and happiness.

In the second verse, our apostle, in a more particular manner, recommends peace, unity and concord, therein intimating that to walk worthy of their vocation is to walk in love, and to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, which is the grand and important point I have in view on this occasion. And that I may speak with the greater clearness, I propose, God assisting, to observe the following method:

I. I shall consider and explain the duty which is here commanded, viz., to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

II. I shall briefly consider the state of the church militant, whose imperfect condition renders it impossible to obey this command without charity and mutual forbearance.

III. I shall offer to your serious consideration what the apostle recommends as the best expedient to promote and preserve peace among Christians, viz., lowliness and meekness, long suffering and forbearance in love.

IV. I shall lay before you his arguments to enforce the discharge of this duty. And, lastly, I shall make some remarks by way of application.

1. I am to consider and explain the duty enjoined in the text. Christians are not only commanded, "if it be possible,

as much as lieth in them, to live peaceably with all men, and to give no offense to Jew or Gentile;" but they are obliged, in a more peculiar manner, as members of Christ's visible church, to cultivate peace and harmony among themselves. Our Lord expressly commands us to have peace with one another; and St. Paul exhorts us to "follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith we may edify one another;" for God is the author, not of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. In the text we are to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." We are commanded by the same authority, "to be at peace among ourselves." And again, "be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

Will we, then, call Christ our Lord and Master, and refuse obedience to these plain precepts? The apostle James tells us, "where envying and strife is, there is every evil work." And the apostle Paul makes strifes and divisions the fruits of a carnal, and not of a Christian, temper: "Whereas there is among you envy, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal?" He that has most charity, and is most condescending, (where condescension is necessary) has most of the gospel spirit, and is most acceptable to him who has said, "Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of God."

2. Peace and unity are necessary in all states and governments. Nothing could resist the Roman power, till, crumbled into parties and torn by factions, they fell by their own arms. And the discords of Athens destroyed that seat of liberty, learning and politeness. On the other hand, small states have flourished and grown powerful by peace and concord. Of this, Sparta is a memorable instance. Nor is this duty, so frequently recommended to the church of Christ, impossible or impracticable in itself. It has been, and is daily practiced in many political, as well as religious societies, greatly for their temporal good and emolument. And will not the subjects of the Prince of Peace, from the nobler motives of the gospel, as cordially unite to love one another, and promote the kingdom of Jesus, as the subjects of any earthly potentates, to promote their worldly concerns? Nay, there is an union and concord among the rulers of the kingdom of darkness. Satan's kingdom is not divided against itself, else it could not stand! and is that impracticable by the saints of God and the followers of Jesus Christ, that is daily practiced by wicked men and fallen angels? For shame! that we are

so far outdone in those very points wherein we are commanded to excel.

3. But though we are called as Christians to peace and union, it is not to unite to destroy the civil or religious rights of mankind; nor to promote parties, nor the peculiar shibboleths of any of the contending denominations of Christians, which are often the lesser matters of religion, and without any foundation on the holy Scriptures. No; we are to unite to promote the honor of God; the good of mankind, and the pure and holy religion of our Lord and Master. For this reason all Christians should join to maintain what they judge to be the great truths of the gospel. "We are to hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus." We are to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Now, though the churches have not agreed in fixing every fundamental truth, or article of faith, yet all the churches agree that some truths and articles are fundamental. Undoubtedly, then, to preserve and propagate these, must be one great design of Christian union. Hence that eminent saying of one of the fathers: "We must maintain union in essentials, forbearance in lesser matters, and charity in all things." We must also unite to promote external purity and holiness of life, for, without this, "no man shall see the Lord." 'Tis necessary to the conversion of sinners, and the reformation of mankind. We are to have "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," but must rather reprove them. We should remember that "Christ came to seek and to save lost sinners, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan to serve the living God;" and as his disciples and soldiers, we should all unite under him as our head, to promote the same cause. And though we are not, nor can not be, agreed about all the modes of promoting these great ends, and perhaps never will, in this imperfect state, yet we must consider, that while we have all one aim, or while we rather promote than oppose this grand design, we are to treat one another as friends, though we are not agreed in all things. For those are for us who are not against us, as Christ said of those that cast out devils in his name, though they followed him not.

4. In promoting and preserving peace and unity among Christians, we are carefully to follow the commands and example of Christ and his apostles; and not the expedients of our own devising. We must not expect that all our Chris-



tian brethren can attain to equal degrees of knowledge, or purity, much less must we set up ourselves for the standard. There was much difference in sentiment in the Jewish church, concerning the great command of the law, the traditions of the elders, and concerning the Messiah, and the nature of his kingdom; yet our Lord kept communion with them, and tried to reclaim them. Nay, he bore patiently with the ignorance and mistakes of his own disciples. In the days of the apostles, what different sentiments prevailed in the Christian churches about circumcision, the law of Moses, the difference of meats, and many other Jewish ceremonies? Thousands of Jews that were converted, as James said, were zealous of the law of Moses, while the Gentile converts made a stand for Christian liberty. Yet so far is the apostle Paul from allowing the churches of Christ to divide for this diversity of opinion, that he earnestly presses them to charity and mutual forbearance in these things. Hereby he informs us, that though church members be under many mistakes, yet they may be honest men, and sincere Christians, who serve God acceptably, and are approved by him.

If we would maintain peace and harmony in the house of Christ, such are to be received, but not to doubtful disputations. And such a forbearance in lesser matters is necessary, since a perfect agreement in all things (as shall be shown under the next head) is impossible in the church militant. And, for this reason, acts of uniformity in religion are of no use, but to fetter the conscience, and to harrass Christ's subjects. In short, to maintain union, we must take heed to our own spirits; must be prudent and patient; must bear with many things that we do not perfectly approve of in our neighbors; and must pray for the spirit of God, "whose fruits are love and peace, to work in us to will and to do according to his good pleasure." And

II. This brings me to the second head, which was to consider the temper, character and circumstances of those persons who compose the visible church of Christ, which will greatly help us to understand the nature of the peace and union here required; and lead us to the most efficacious means to procure and preserve it.

1. In this body, all men have not equal gifts by nature, nor equal opportunities of improving their natural gifts and abilities. There will be some in all ages, and in every church, of more extensive knowledge, "scribes instructed into the kingdom of heaven," who can bring out of their treasures

things new and old: "Apollos mighty in the Scripture." These are stars of the first magnitude, and the eyes of Christ's body, the church, provided their gifts be duly qualified with meekness, humility and condescension, to their weaker though useful brethren. The eye has need of the hand and the foot, for they are the useful and active members of the same body. Now, such men, even though saints, have no small trial to bear with the weakness, narrowness and ignorance of some of their fellow-Christians; who are pleased with their own measure of light and knowledge; are ready to make them the standard of all others; and are apt to condemn and revile all that see things in a light different from themselves. Thousands of zealous Christians were ready to deliver Paul to the secular power, for differing from them about the law of Moses. On the other hand, a mixture of pride, and a self-satisfaction from superior knowledge, are apt to swell men with conceit, and to prompt them to despise and set at nought their weaker brethren. For, as the apostle tells us, "knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." We should remember, that no ten men are agreed in all points; and that where they are agreed, they generally differ in their ways of explaining and defending them. Christ, we are told, has given different gifts to the members and ministers of his church, for their mutual edification and advantage. And men of the most extensive knowledge have not always been more useful than men of smaller attainments, accompanied with zeal and industry. For this reason, then, both should love, and neither should despise, nor set at nought his brother, nor refuse his assistance.

2. Men's natural tempers require great patience and forbearance. Some are naturally proud and imperious; and, in all things like Diotrophes, they love to have the preëminence. Such should learn to abate of their demands, and should know that others in Christ's house have the same rights with themselves. Some view only one side of a question, and draw hasty conclusions, without sufficiently examining the premises. And hence they are impatient of contradiction, tenacious of their mistakes, and have a sovereign contempt for all that differ from them. Some are dull and slow, and require time to consider and examine; and these we are apt to condemn as obstinate bigots, or stupid fools. Some are extremely selfish, and fond of what they call their own, and confine righteousness, and all that is excellent, within the little circle of a particular party. They entertain an overweaning notion of their own tenets, modes of worship, and distinguishing shibboleths;

and consequently are censorious, and uncharitable to all others. Thus the Jews derided the Christians, and the judaizing Christians the Gentile converts ; and the church of Rome confines salvation to her own votaries. The general fault of all is, that they are too much wrapt up in self-attachments, and have narrow and illiberal notions of God and the kingdom of his Son, Jesus Christ, and a strong inclination to promote and aggrandize themselves. Obstinacy is natural to some, while others are easily imposed on and deceived, and tossed to and fro "with every wind of doctrine;" and some so much regard imaginary points of honor, that they will rather persist in the wrong, than give up an opinion they have once espoused, lest they should have the imaginary disgrace of submitting, or of being vanquished. These are all bad distempers, both in sinners and saints, but will prevail while we are in this imperfect state.

Now all these, and many other such flaws in men's tempers, are to be dealt with softly and gently ; and in a way that contributes most to the glory of God, and the maintenance of peace and virtue among men. The most friendly methods of address must be studied ; what is good in them must be esteemed and commended, and the stronger must bear the infirmities of the weaker. We are called by Christ to exercise much long-suffering and forbearance toward all such persons, provided that Christian liberty can be preserved, and that such weak, or narrow, or proud, or selfish persons impose not their opinions on their brethren.

3. Men's different attainments in grace and holiness, make much patience and forbearance necessary. Men of superior holiness and piety must be grieved at many things, even in good, but weak men, as well as in the ignorant and unconverted. Such are sometimes to be instructed and admonished ; sometimes to be reprov'd tenderly, and in private ; and sometimes to be openly rebuked, and yet are by no means to be cast out of the church. For the church is Christ's school, to convert and reform sinners, and to build up his weak saints in holiness and purity.

Men of warmth and zeal can hardly bear with their fellow Christians of equal goodness, who are naturally more calm and moderate ; who are not so easily, nor so vehemently, moved against the errors and iniquities of the times, as they themselves are. They are apt to censure, or ready to break communion with them, as if they were either lukewarm and careless, or knaves at the bottom, and secret deceivers. And young

converts are not only ready to blame and condemn the ignorant, the profane, and the careless ; but even to censure men of superior attainments and experience, who enjoy the comforts of religion, without that emotion and transport which they felt at their first experience of the spiritual life. In all such cases nothing but charity and forbearance can maintain love and peace. The Scriptures rank Christians into three classes, viz., children, young men, and fathers. Some in Christ's visible church are little children, dear to God, and members of his family, yet are children in knowledge; noisy, peevish, and troublesome, and have every other bad quality of children. Nevertheless, as they are his children, they are to be treated with tenderness, and are entitled to the love, the care and affection of the young men and fathers ; that is, the stronger Christians, notwithstanding their failings and imperfections.

4. The nature of Gospel truths lays a deep foundation for great forbearance in the church of Christ. For though all truths are of singular advantage, yet they are not all of equal importance. The great things to be believed and practised are plain ; but some things are more dark and obscure, and depend on our knowledge of chronology or Jewish antiquities. Some things are hard to be understood, and have a reference to events yet wrapt up in the womb of futurity. Now, in all such cases, there is room, even for good men, to differ, and adhere to their particular notions and interpretations without any prejudice to our common salvation.

Are the doctrines about the degrees of affinity and consanguinity to be observed in marriage of equal importance with the belief of a God, and future state, and the method of salvation through a Redeemer? Is a point in chronology, or a difference in sentiment about Melchizedek, of equal importance with the denying the doctrine of the new birth, the satisfaction of Christ, or the aid of the Spirit? Or may not men differ about the millenium, the return of the Jews to Judea at their conversion, and many other things, rather than in the necessity of a holy life? Time must remove some difficulties relating to Scripture prophecies, and the light of heaven, or the beatific vision, will possibly be the best comment to understand some other difficult texts. And how can men live together in peace without forbearance in such matters?

Some duties are strictly commanded in Scripture, and the ways and modes of performing those duties are, in a great measure, left to human direction, as is well observed in our

Confession of Faith.\* The public worship of God, and the administration of the sacraments, are never to be neglected; but the time, place and modes that are most for edification, are not so precisely pointed out. In these things, and all of a like nature, where we have only general directions, there is great room for differing in judgment; and in such points the greatest and best men have differed, and will probably differ, till the church of God be translated from this state of ignorance and imperfection. Probably, then, in the meantime, there may be no better way of preserving peace and unity, than to leave every man, in all such points, to the persuasion of his own mind; and to exercise charity, forbearance, and brotherly kindness, where the church believes the true design of the gospel is preserved, and its most essential duties faithfully performed. What the apostle determined concerning the observance of the new moons and Jewish feasts, is applicable in all such cases: "One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike; let every man be persuaded in his own mind."

5. This leads to another remark, which is, that men are more affected by what they see, than with what they hear. And all men, but more especially weak Christians, have a peculiar fondness for the ways to which they were early accustomed, and for the modes of religion that they have seen practised with solemnity and a certain awe of piety and devotion. 'Tis therefore but natural to them to pay a high regard to those ways and forms in which they have experienced much of the grace of God, and comforts of religion. This is, in a particular manner, applicable to the different modes of public worship, and of receiving the holy sacraments. Good men, who are for bringing all to their own measures, should remember that their fellow Christians have equal pleas for adhering to their own particular modes. They have experienced as much of the life and power and comforts of religion, in the way wherein they have been accustomed to attend on Christ in

---

\* Chap. I. sect. 6, Sub. Fin. "There are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and 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 word which are always to be observed."

"All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned but the unlearned in a due use of the ordinary means may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them."

his ordinances, as those who are endeavoring to make them proselytes. And it is certain that God, who appointed these ordinances, has blessed them to his churches, though they have differed, and do differ, in the modes and ways of using them.

And, in a church like ours in America, collected from different churches of Christ in Europe, who have followed different modes and ways of obeying the "great and general command of the gospel," there is a peculiar call for charity and forbearance. And this becomes the more necessary, as the weaker or the more zealous Christians will be for imposing their favorite notions and practices, as what are alone authorized by the gospel. Now, in such circumstances, the stronger of Christ's servants must exert themselves, to maintain to all their Christian liberty, to prevent impositions and uncharitableness among Christians who differ in lesser matters; and should be contented to show their own sentiments in all such matters, by peacefully using that way, or mode, which they judge most agreeable to the word of God, and most for edification in these particular circumstances.

III. From this view of Christ's visible church, I am led to consider, what Christians are obliged to do to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, which was the third thing proposed.

1. And here we must observe, that there is no living infallible judge appointed by Christ to determine all controversies in his church, and so to maintain peace and unity. Synods and councils, and popes and fathers, have erred, and are liable to mistakes; for, as the apostle informs us, we all "know but in part." And this failure in knowledge is no less the lot of the Roman pontiff than of other men. The proud, assuming church of Rome is as much divided in sentiments and affection as any other church, notwithstanding all her vain pretenses. Every man must search the Scriptures, with the Berians, as far as he is capable; must believe for himself, and call no man on earth his master. The great doctrines of Christianity are plain, and God will guide the meek and lowly in the way that they should go. Though it is vain to pretend to be free from mistakes, yet may we safely depend on the Spirit of God to preserve us from damnable errors; for as many as are the children of God are led by his spirit. We are not to expect to be saved by the infallibility of our opinions, more than by the unerring obedience of our practice. Both are equally

impossible, and a dependence on either for salvation, is equally to be rejected.

2. Nor is church unity to be maintained by inquisitions, or acts for uniformity in religion. These secular engines of men's contrivance may distress tender consciences, and make hypocrites, but can not enlighten the understanding. Every man must believe according to evidence; and all men are not capable of the same proofs, nor of seeing things in the same point of view. And is there no tenderness for such? Suppose any church, or secular power, or both in conjunction, are under mistakes. Will they impose them on men who can see, or are even persuaded that they see, these mistakes? How will the imposers vindicate their conduct to Christ? Or who gave them such authority over his servants? Christ's kingdom is not of this world; nor is it, like the kingdoms of this world, to be supported by force and arms. The secular powers are to take care that their subjects be good members of civil society; and they are to be a terror to evil-doers; but they are no ministers of Christ's kingdom, nor does he require the aids of their power to maintain peace and unity in his churches.

3. But to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, we should study to be well acquainted with the great truths of the gospel, that are plain and easy; and in which the churches of Christ are generally agreed. We should determine, and resolve to promote holiness and purity, peace and brotherly love. We should pity the weakness and imperfections of our brethren. We should imitate the tenderness and forbearance of Christ and his apostles, and always remember our own infirmities, and liableness to mistakes. And, actuated by a sense of these things, we should sincerely love all that profess to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and treat them as brethren, if, in any tolerable degree, they maintain his truths and obey his gospel. If we desire or expect peace in the church, we must in a particular manner take care to cultivate the seeds of it in our own tempers. But this brings me to enforce the directions in the text, as the most effectual expedients to allay our animosities, and promote peace and unity among Christians; and these are lowliness of mind, meekness, long suffering and forbearing one another in love.

Lowliness of mind, or humility, stands first, and is a grace of great importance to promote and maintain peace and unity among mankind, because from pride comes contention; whereas the humble man has no overweening conceit of himself, which might prompt him to despise, or set at nought, his

brother. Pride is vain, fond of power, haughty, assuming and intolerable. But humility gives us juster and more becoming sentiments of ourselves and our attainments. It levels the pride of the wise, and of the disputers of this world; teaches them that their understandings are narrow and limited; that there are many things beyond their confined grasp, and too high for them to understand. It commands us to give credit to God's testimony in matters of revelation; not to be wise above what is written; and, above all, not to be positive or dogmatical. It will keep us mindful that we have been sometimes mistaken, where we were very sanguine and certain that we were right, and will ever bring us to look to God for light and direction. It will keep us open to conviction, willing to learn, and ready to review our sentiments. In short, it will make us tender of our censures, and charitable to others from a sense of human weakness, even where we judge them mistaken, as long as they give evidences that they are sincere and conscientious.

Humility will give us a moderate opinion of our knowledge and attainments, compared with those of other men. If we know more than some of our brethren in some particulars, do they not exceed us in other parts of useful knowledge? Do not many know more than we do? Or, suppose our knowledge ever so extensive, what have we that we did not first receive? Does not the grace of God make one man differ from another in attainments, as one star from another in glory? Why then should any man despise his brother, because God has not thought fit to distinguish him so eminently for wisdom and knowledge. 'Tis certain, that this great and honorable gift is no easy trust, if we endeavor to improve it aright. Knowledge with humility is amiable and useful; but knowledge with pride is the source of contentions, the bane of the church, and the destruction of mankind. Humility will also cure that pride and censoriousness that arises from an opinion of superior holiness and purity. The proud Pharisees trusted that they were righteous, and despised others. Humility in the mouth of the best men, will speak the language of holy Job, "Lord, I am vile, what shall I answer?" Or will say with the Psalmist, "If thou, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand?" How far do we all come short of what the law of God requires, and of what we pray and resolve to be? Who would maintain a tolerable character in the world, if all the workings of his soul, if all his vain and sinful thoughts were open to our view? "Who can understand his errors?"



And what need has every one to pray that God would cleanse him from secret faults. A lowly sense of our own need of pardon and of Christ's imputed righteousness' will keep us from the pharisaical arrogance of thanking God that we are "not as other men;" and much more will it prevent our casting out our weaker brethren, or rending and dividing the churches, under pretenses that they come not up in all things to our attainments in purity and holiness. It will make us charitable to others where there is the appearance of grace and a holy life; merciful and pitiful to human failures and miscarriages, knowing that we are in the flesh, and liable to temptations. It will excite compassion toward those that are ignorant, and out of the way; and will make us ready to restore such as have fallen, "in the spirit of meekness."

In short, humility will teach us our wants and dependence on one another; will make men of high rank condescend to those who are their inferiors; and will promote a general desire among all men to oblige one another; for "the eye can not say to the hand or the foot, I have no need of thee." Where there are real excellencies, it will engage us to observe and esteem them, and in lowliness of mind to think others better than ourselves. How does it win the hearts of mankind, to see men of superior stations, of superior knowledge, or superior holiness, humble and obliging? How justly then is this grace recommended in the text, as a powerful means to preserve peace and unity.

Meekness is next recommended, as necessary for the same purpose. Christ has pronounced the meek blessed. We are commanded "to receive with meekness the ingrafted word;" and our Lord bids us, "learn of him, to be meek and lowly in spirit." How useful is this heavenly temper to maintain peace? It is not easily provoked, but slow to wrath. It prevents resentments to exceed the demerit of the offense; will not speak unadvisedly to widen breaches, by ill-natured and irritating reproaches; but rather inclines to give "a soft answer," that "turneth away wrath." The meek soul takes no advantage of his neighbor's temper; is ready to be reconciled after a breach, knowing that "anger resteth in the bosom of fools," and is unwilling to take hasty or severe methods of redress, when a redress becomes necessary. As meekness is not ready to take, so it is cautious of giving any man offense: it considers men's humors, and is careful not to fret or provoke them; renders to all men their dues; is conscientious in the discharge of relative duties; and studies by word or deed to

give no just ground of offense. "Put them in mind," says the apostle, "to speak evil of no man," to be no brawlers, but gently showing all meekness unto all men. But, above all, this grace will suppress our anger and passion in matters of religion; will oblige us to make allowances for smaller differences; will manage debates, where debates are necessary, with coolness and candor, moderation and a just regard to reason and argument. The apostle James gives this as the character of a wise man, who is endowed with knowledge, that he shows, out of a good conversation, his works with "meekness of wisdom;" and Paul says, "the servant of the Lord must be gentle unto all men, patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves; if, peradventure, God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."

Long-suffering is next recommended. God bears long with us, and he commands us to bear with one another. Without this, there can be no peace maintained in private families, in civil societies, or in the churches of Christ. When the apostle recommends peace and unity to the church at Rome, he uses these words, "now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded toward one another." Here two divine perfections are mentioned to promote unity and peace: The God of patience, because he patiently bears with sinners, and teaches and enables them to bear with one another; and unless we do so, we are not his children, nor can we have peace among ourselves. To this is annexed the God of consolation, because peace in the churches of Christ is one main-spring of comfort and edification.

We can not live in Christ's visible church, where there is so much weakness and imperfection, without bearing with many things which we can not entirely approve. When we consider how easily all men are betrayed, through infirmity, passion or surprise, to things that lessen their own honor, and hurt their neighbors; when we consider their different attainments in knowledge and grace; their different tempers, education and views, we must either suffer wrongs, bear injuries and provocations, and make allowances for inadvertencies, indiscretions and mistakes, else we can not live as Christians; but he that suffers long and learns to bear with these evils, lives superior to the lesser storms of life, and in patience possesses his soul; while the jealous and captious, the peevish and hasty, live in continual vexation, and disturb their own peace and the peace of their neighbors.

4. We are commanded to forbear one another in love. In

order to peace, we are not only to bear, but to forbear. No virtue is more necessary to men, in all stations and relations of life, than forbearance. We can never set all men right. We need great allowance and forbearance ourselves, and should give the same to others. Epictetus said many fine things as a philosopher, and yet they may be all comprehended in bearing and forbearing. But this is a duty not only recommended by reason, but also by revelation. The inspired apostle commands us, "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so do ye also." Christ commands us to forgive an offending brother as oft as seventy times seven. 'Tis the character of charity, "that it beareth all things;" and, in the epistle to the Galatians, Christians are commanded to "bear one another's burdens, and so to fulfil the law."

'Tis impossible for persons so different in their tempers, knowledge and grace, to live as the members of the same body, without long-suffering and forbearance, nothing being more impracticable than to bring all men in all things to a uniformity in sentiments. And nothing has so much divided and torn in pieces the churches of Christ, as an imposing, intolerant spirit. Many things will ever demand compassion and forbearance and love; and they can only by such gentle methods be removed, or healed, or prevented from hurting the church of Christ. What furious debates prevailed in the churches about the time of keeping of Easter; about the descent into hell; about the habits of clergymen and the like; yet now-a-days no church is much concerned about these things; they are neither considered nor respected as the essentials, or great matters of religion. It seems, at length, as agreed among Christians of good sense, and a charitable turn of mind in all churches, that these, and many such things, demand Christian forbearance. In short, no church will ever subsist long on a firm foundation, without a tolerating and forbearing spirit in the lesser matters, unity in the great matters of faith and patience, and cordial charity in all things.

And this brings me to another remark, founded on the text, viz.: That our forbearance must not proceed from pride, haughtiness, peevishness or disregard, as if our brethren were unworthy our notice. This will neither mend, nor unite them to us. Our forbearance must be in love. This is Christ's new commandment, and the grand cement of the church. 'Tis

a sovereign remedy for our censures and jealousies. It will excite us to abate and yield as much as we can for peace, and to desire an entire union even where we differ. When Christians do not love one another, they magnify differences, find pretences to divide; and wish and seek and rejoice in one another's ruin! But to engage us to forbear, and to love one another, let us always remember what the apostle John says, "he that loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

IV. To enforce this great and necessary duty of peace and unity, the apostle uses a variety of the most powerful arguments, that I am now, in the fourth place, briefly to open up, and offer to your serious consideration. "There is one body and one spirit," etc.

[*There is one body.*] Here, and in many other places of the Holy Scriptures, Christians are represented as one august body, whereof Christ is the head. And this consideration must be a powerful motive to union, love and concord. For nothing is more unnatural than for members of the same body to destroy one another. They are all appointed for mutual service, and "the eye can not say to the hand or the foot, I have no need of you." Fools and madmen tear their own flesh, and mangle their own limbs. Can we, then, be so mad, or so cruel to fellow-members of that Christian body to which we belong, of that body of which Christ is the head, as to cut them off as useless, or to treat them as if we had no connexion with them? Do we believe that our Lord will not plead their cause? Or is it decent, safe or honorable, to render any person useless or contemptible, whom he vouchsafes to approve.

Menenius Agrippa, a nobleman of great wisdom, reduced the discontented Romans, and brought them to their temper and duty, by showing how inconsistent it would be with the welfare of the body, for the members and the belly to quarrel. This so touched these discontented heathens, that they readily came to terms of peace and reconciliation with the senate. And shall the members of Christ's body have less regard to their common safety and welfare? Do not our divisions as much expose and weaken us, as the divisions in that empire did the Romans? Or shall it be said, that all other united bodies are more affectionate, and more ready to help and befriend one another, than Christians? Or shall we, of all denominations of Christians, be thought the worst and most unfriendly? Sure, this is indecent and greatly out of character! The heathen admired how the primitive Christians loved one

another. Will Christ our head, will the good angels, or will sober good men, approve our contentions and divisions? And if such a conduct be scandalous and unsafe, no church has a louder call for reformation than ours at this very time.

[*There is one Spirit.*] There is one spirit that inspires, strengthens and guides all the children of God, though his graces be given in various degrees. "As many as are the children of God, are led by the Spirit of God, and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," his fruits are love, joy and peace. And can men who are habitually unkind and uncharitable say they are led or guided by this blessed agent? Can such as will not listen to terms of love and friendship with their fellow-Christians, pretend to his guidance, or are they in any tolerable degree fitted to live in the kingdom of heaven, where perfect love and friendship reign? 'Tis the great work of the Spirit, in the economy of redemption, to unite all believers to Christ as their head, and to unite them in peace and love among themselves. Sure, then, nothing can be more unchristian, or more contrary to his design, than envy, strife and contention. Can he inspire hatred or uncharitableness? or be the author of schisms or divisions? No, these things are the deeds of the flesh, and the works of the kingdom of darkness which he came to destroy. And must it not grieve him to see this grand design disappointed? Sure we can not imagine that all Christians act and believe as inspired with one spirit, while they are divided and torn into parties, and while they promote the kingdom of the devil, by their malice, rage and uncharitableness. Shall infernal spirits more faithfully unite under their hellish leader, than professed Christians under the leading and conduct of the Spirit of God? Or will the peace of God rest on those who neither love nor seek peace with one another? A *divided* church is a house divided against itself, and he that foments or encourages, or secretly wishes for the continuance of such a state, is destroying the church of Christ. He may provoke the Holy Spirit to withdraw his comfortable and healing influences, and leave him to follow the devices of his own blinded understanding.

[*One hope of your calling.*] Another argument he uses is, that we are all called in one hope of our calling. As lost sinners we have all the same hopes of pardon, and the favor of God in this world, and of eternal life in the next. And should not those hopes humble our pride, inspire us with love, and unite us in peace and friendship? We have all offended God,

and continue daily to offend him, and will we forgive nothing, who must be ruined forever, unless he forgive us so much? Our compassionate Redeemer strongly assures us, that "unless we from our hearts forgive every man his brother their trespasses, neither will God forgive us." Let all that grumble, and are sour, and uncharitable, and unwilling to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, consider that these are the words of Christ, and that heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than any of his words shall fall to the ground. If we, then, have all one hope to be pardoned and forgiven, why will we not all as cordially receive Christ's declarations and comply with the gospel terms, on which these hopes are founded?

We all hope for the same inheritance and are travelling to Immanuel's land, and is it not hard that brethren can not travel together in peace, but will fall out by the way? Shall we refuse to live together in unity on earth, who soon hope to be fellow-members of the glorious general assembly and church of the first-born? Sure none of us hate any of our brethren to that degree, that we wish never to see them in the kingdom of glory. And shall we who hope soon to unite in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb in heaven, refuse to unite together at the command of our Redeemer, to promote his kingdom and interest upon earth?

[*One Lord.*] Another argument to engage us to peace and unity is, that we have all one Lord; Christ is not divided. He has but one interest, and in this all his followers ought to be united. But can his kingdom be so well promoted, while his subjects are divided? Or, if we all faithfully serve the same master, how can we be at variance? Shall we, then, who are all enlisted under his banner, all united against one common enemy, all called by his name, and all protected and provided for by his power and grace; shall we who are all as living stones built on the same foundation, or as living members deriving vital influence from the same head; shall we, I say, notwithstanding all these endearing ties, worry, and calumniate, and hate, and despise one another? Christ commands us to be at peace among ourselves. He searches our hearts, and knows our most secret inclinations, and it is vain to call him our Lord, unless the powers of our souls are subject to his influence, and unless we yield an unreserved obedience to whatsoever he commands us. Would our Lord preside in our assembly as he did among his disciples, or would he condescend to appear in clouded majesty, as he will appear to judge the

world, and would he command us to be at peace among ourselves, would we not lay aside our grudges, would not all our cavils and difficulties vanish? And would we not cast ourselves down at his feet, and with tears of joy obey him? The case is now the same, we know that he is really, though not visibly, present with us. We know as well that he has commanded this duty, as if we heard his living voice. We know that he sees through all our pretenses and excuses, and knows "all the divisions of Reuben," that occasion the thoughts of the heart. Can any argument then be stronger, or can anything more powerfully excite us to this duty, than that we are all united to Christ as our common Lord, and should be united to one another.

[*One Faith.*] There is but one faith. That faith which was once delivered to the saints, the doctrines of salvation by a crucified Saviour, which we have all believed, and all embraced. And there is but one grace by faith, by which we are all united to Jesus Christ. And since we are so closely united in the same faith, and in the same designs, under the same Lord and Master, how can we be divided as enemies, or hate one another?

[*One Baptism.*] There is but one baptism, by which we were all admitted as members of the same visible church, enlisted as good soldiers under Christ's banner, and devoted to the service of the living God. By our baptism we are obliged to resist the world, the flesh and the devil; to keep the commandments of God, and to promote his honor, and the salvation of lost sinners. And can these things be as effectually promoted, while we despise and revile, as if we aided and assisted one another? If we were enlisted under different leaders, we might be tempted to divide to promote their different interests; and, therefore, to cure the Corinthian divisions, Paul uses this very same argument, drawn from our baptism: Is "Christ divided," says the apostle; "was Paul crucified or were ye baptised in the name of Paul?"

[*One God and Father of all.*] Lastly: To excite us to live as one united body, he puts us in mind that we have all but one Father. God honors us with the endearing name of his children. But can we say we are like him who is love, and dwells in love, if we are filled with hatred and ill-nature? Does it become rebels, who are exalted to such privileges and expectations? Does it become the poor apostate children of Adam, who are taken into his family through grace and favor, to dishonor him and themselves by quarrels and contentions?

Or will the children of so benevolent a parent bite and devour one another? O, my brethren, let us remember this endearing name, and live in peace, that the God of peace may be with us!

As these arguments have been urged by an inspired apostle, for the very same ends for which I have used them, they must have the same force to us as to the church of Ephesus, for we see that we all claim the same glorious privileges that belonged to that church; we all belong to the same Lord, have all one faith and one hope; are all admitted by baptism as members of the same church, are all led by the same Spirit, and all count it our honor, and our happiness, to have God for our Father; and for these reasons, are indispensably obliged, unless we would forfeit these privileges, to live in peace; to love one another as brethren, and to observe this apostolic command, which is to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

#### APPLICATION.

1. From this view we have taken, of the members of Christ's visible church, who are so unlike one another in knowledge, in temper, in education, and in the attainments of holiness, we may be convinced, though peace and unity be a great and an indispensable duty, and of the highest importance to the churches of Christ, yet it is not to be procured, nor preserved, without patience, forbearance, and self-denial. Our own good tempers are the great obstacles; and these we must first deal with. How unreasonable is it for any man to expect that his neighbor shall do all, and he himself do nothing! How arrogant to pretend to dictate the terms of peace to others, without setting the example by gentleness, and a Christian compliance with all their reasonable demands! Has any man a right to think that all the world shall bend to his notions, and yield him uncontested obedience? Let us suppose ourselves infallibly right; so was our Lord Jesus, yet he bore with many lesser faults and infirmities in his disciples, thereby setting us an example that we should follow his steps.\* Did the old Romans count it their honor to forgive every personal injury that came in competition with the good of their commonwealth, and shall the redeemed of the Lord, under the light of the gospel, do less for the glory of Zion and the good of the Christian world? It would cer-

---

\* Hence that honorable expression among them: "Condonare inimicitias republicæ."



tainly give us joy to see breaches healed, and peace restored, in any branch of Christ's church, and have we not the grace and resolution to practise that, in our own case, which we so much love and applaud in others?

In a word, my fathers and brethren, besides all the arguments I have already mentioned, give me leave to add, that such is the situation of affairs, both temporal and spiritual, that we must determine to lay aside our fruitless animosities, or behold our religion destroyed and our names become a reproach among good men. The sole question now is, whether we can forbear and forgive one another; or whether we are determined to sacrifice character, duty, and happiness to pride, obstinacy, love of superiority or false honor? What a shame it is to see men who can follow peace, when it is for their temporal advantage, neglect and refuse it in the important affairs of their eternal salvation! What name does such a conduct deserve? It is flagrant rebellion against the Almighty God, open despite to that great and new commandment, which he has made the test of our Christianity, and the first proof of our allegiance to the kingdom of his Son Jesus.

2. From what has been said, 'tis evident that Christians can only be agreed in the great matters of faith and practice; and must exercise charity in many things where they can not agree. Hence, allow me to remark, my fathers and brethren, that we must either disobey God, and proclaim to the world that we are among the very worst of men, or we must unite in peace and friendship. For no Protestant church, no denomination of Christians, are more unanimously agreed in the essentials of religion, than we are. Our synods have no disputes concerning their general plan of doctrine, worship, discipline and church government. And the greatest part of our ministers on both sides, never gave one another the least offense. Few of those who heretofore differed are now alive; and those who are alive have long ago professed and exercised friendship to one another. Let me, then, conjure and beseech you, in the name of Christ, to examine your conduct. What is the bane of our church? What can tempt us to live as if we had no connection with one another? Or what root of bitterness destroys our mutual harmony? Look on the divided state of our flocks! See the limbs of the same body torn asunder! and many of them by our unhappy divisions like to be forever deprived of gospel ordinances! Is this a state favorable to the religion of one common master or advantageous to ourselves? How contemptible a body does it

render us? How easy a prey to our foes, if any think fit to deceive or mislead us? And how great a reproach to our friends? Are we not ripening for a stroke from our anti-Christian enemy, and ill prepared for such a day of trouble and rebuke? Would we willingly die in such a state of contention, and leave such a mischievous legacy to our children? O, my fathers, brethren and friends, let us at last resolve to obey the gospel, live in peace, and the God of peace will be with us. And let us pray that the Spirit of grace would give a healing temper to all the divided churches of Christ.

Without such a life, what good can we look for here? Or with what confidence can we call ourselves the ministers of the blessed Jesus? Every one should rather consider his own mistakes, than be eagle-eyed to mark and expose his neighbor's. We must bear with our people, and one another. We must not be self-willed nor self-pleasers; nor must we put the laboring oar into our neighbor's hand, and sit at our ease and command him. All the meekness and condescension which the apostle so warmly recommends is necessary; and as well may we expect the cure without the means, as well may we expect a harvest without plowing and sowing, or a victory without toils and dangers and watchings, as peace without forgiveness, self-denial, and forbearance. And shall we decline any difficulties in obtaining that which so much belongs to our Christian profession? Or shall we be discouraged through fear or the danger of disappointment? Let us do our endeavors. Men's hearts are in God's hand. The duty is ours, and the blessing is his. No good man should be ever discouraged from his duty, through fear of opposition;\* and why then should we look for better success or more ease in the world than the best of God's servants? Or will we do nothing till there be no opposition in promoting the kingdom of Christ? Or shall we live to see such happy days? This time is rather to be wished for than expected in this state of suffering and of sin. But will we run no risks, "nor cast our nets again at the command of Christ, though we have hitherto toiled and taken nothing?" Once more, I entreat you, my fathers and brethren, let us, when so loudly called upon, dare to do our duty, and leave the success in the hands of Almighty Wisdom.

Allow me to make one remark more, from what has been said, and I shall have done. The best men have, in every society, been the most charitable, peaceable, and condescending;

---

\* While men are weak, or wicked, there will be opposition to every good undertaking.

the most open to conviction, and most ready to forgive injuries. They ever breathe the spirit of peace and good-will, and are remarkable for a growing conformity to the peaceful state of the blessed above. As for us, my brethren, the greatest and best men of our particular persuasion, who were heretofore unhappily concerned in our divisions, have, to my certain knowledge, most heartily lamented them, and used unwearied diligence for establishing peace, and longed to see it accomplished. The reverend, exemplary, and pious fathers of this church, Messrs. John Thompson, Jonathan Dickinson, Thomas Evans, Samuel Blair, Francis McHenry, and Aaron Burr, who, we have good reason to believe, are now in glory, pressed earnestly after it, sought for it, and labored to accomplish it, till they were called from their labors here to a better state. And of those who now survive, Mr. George Gillespie, that pious, zealous saint of God, has often endeavored it, and on this occasion has sent us (possibly) his last, most pressing and friendly direction. Here, too, I shall take the liberty to mention Mr. Gilbert Tennant, though present, who has written more, and suffered more for his writings, to promote peace and union, than any member of this divided church. None of all his useful writings do him more honor than his *Irenicum*, or "Peace of Jerusalem," which was treated with great indifference by one party, and with great contempt by the other. And both, instead of thanking the man that reached out a friendly hand to help us over our difficulties, were ready to worry and despise the peace-maker. And, in justice to all the other members of both synods, as far as I have the honor of their acquaintance, I must declare that they seem grieved for our divisions, and greatly concerned to restore peace; and 'tis well known, that some, in a particular manner, have esteemed it a matter of the greatest importance to the kingdom of Christ, and have exerted themselves with much candor and friendship, to the utmost of their power, to attain what we so much need and long for. O, that God would direct and prosper their endeavors, and crown them with the blessings of the peace-makers, who are called the *children of God!*

Upon the whole, then, with whom shall we consult on this interesting occasion? Or whose advice shall we follow? Should we have recourse to some of the weakest Christians, under their prejudices and mistakes; or should we give way to the pride and corruptions of our own hearts; or should we consult the worst of mankind; or obey the fallen angels; no doubt but they would all unite in sentiment, and cry out that it is base, or dishonorable, or inexpedient and dangerous,

to unite in the bonds of peace: at least they would insist on terms that were impossible and impracticable, abatements and stipulations, only to gratify pride and ill-nature. But were we to be advised by the best men that are now alive in all the churches of God; or by our holy departed friends that are now "the spirits of just men made perfect;" if we listen to the apostles and prophets of Jesus Christ; or were the angels of God, those ministers of peace, who rejoice in the conversion of sinners, to persuade and advise us; or would we call to mind and obey the great command of our wise and gracious Redeemer; or, in one word, were we determined to pay obedience to our Creator and Preserver, the God of peace and love and long-suffering, all, all, with one united voice, would advise and conjure us to put away anger, wrath and malice, and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; which, that we may be all persuaded and enabled to do, may God grant for the sake of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

---

#### ART. IX.—RECENT GERMAN WORKS.

By C. A. BRIGGS, Berlin, Prussia.

1. *Christliche Dogmatik von Dr. Alois Biedermann.* The author, Prof. of Theology in Zurich, belongs to the Swiss Rationalistic school, whose principal organ is the *Zeitstimmen*. The work here presented to the public is a remarkable one, and well worthy the attention of theologians. He gives a very thorough statement of Dogmatics in its biblical and historical forms, but only to undermine and destroy it by his criticism, and substitute a few fragments in its place. It reminds one of Strauss' *Life of Jesus*, taking his earlier and later works together—indeed, the author candidly admits his obligations to the philosophy of Hegel and the criticism of Strauss. The views of the various church parties are so stated that they mutually contradict and destroy one another, so that the whole system is ready to fall at the first breath of criticism. Schenkel does not satisfy him; he makes too much of the ethical principle and the conscience, which can afford no proper foundation for theology; and he presents the historical Christ in too positive and definite form. Strauss suits our author much better. His scheme is thus:

Part I. The (fundamental) *Principle*. 1. The nature of Religion. 2. Religion and Science. 3. The (fundamental) Principle of Christian Dogmatics. The *real* principle is contained in the idea *Son of God*, which came into history as a new religious fact in the religious personality of Jesus. The history of Christian doctrine is the historical expression of this principle, immediately as the doctrine of the person and work of Christ, mediately of the other doctrines presupposed in, and consequent upon, this central doctrine.

The *formal* principle was expressed at the Reformation as the *sole authority*