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ARTICLE I.

THE SABBATH.

“THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN.”

Philosophers tell us that all the forces of nature are indestructible. They may go from one form to another, and thus seem to pass out of existence; but, in reality, they are imperishable. The first ray of heat which came to the earth from the sun, though it may have been millions of years ago, exists to-day, somewhere, in some one of its Protean forms.

While physical force is thus, in the divine providence, immortal, it nevertheless wearies and grows tired. Illustrations, which are proofs of this, are easily given. Razors lose the power of acquiring an edge after they have been in constant use for a long time. In such cases, it is necessary simply to allow them to rest a while, and they are again ready for service. As a matter of actual observation, it has been found that the iron or steel of a railway track becomes brittle and liable to dangerous breakage, if it is subjected to the constant pressure and jar of passing trains. If there are suitable intervals of repose, the same number and weight of trains may pass over the track without serious injury. The same fact is observed with regard to cannon; and is, indeed, a truth of universal observation.

A more familiar illustration may better serve our purpose. Moses commanded that the seventh should be a year of rest for the land. There was an economic reason for this, which every

when the wilderness shall rejoice, when the ignorant shall be truly wise and the guilty clean, when crime shall be abolished and sorrow shall flee away, when peace and plenty shall abound, when every man shall sit safely under his own vine and fig-tree, with none to molest or to make him afraid, the glorious "gospel of the blessed God" must be carried to every house, its truths treasured in every heart, and practised in every life.

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ARTICLE III.

BROAD CHURCHISM.

*True Unity of Christ's Church.* S. S. SCHMUÖKER, D. D.  
A. D. F. Randolph, New York. Pp. 262, 12mo. 1870.

*Doctrinal Consensus of Evangelical Christendom.* PH. SCHAFF,  
D. D.

*Scriptural Idea of the Visible Church Catholic, as composed of  
Denominations of Christians.* R. L. DABNEY, D. D. 1874.

*The Church of Canada (Future).* Rev. G. M. GRANT. Halifax,  
Nova Scotia. 1874.

It will hardly be denied by the careful observer of the prevailing state of religious sentiment, that there exist, in the Christian world at the present day, strong latitudinarian tendencies. In books, pamphlets, and papers, as well as in ecclesiastical assemblies, we notice frequent manifestations of the Broad Church spirit. Many learned and good men, actuated by a pious zeal for securing closer outward unity among Protestant Churches, have been led to propose expedients which we must believe to be fraught with peril. The Broad Churchism of the day involves the spurious theory of Church unity, which has found no small number of advocates. We hail it as a favorable omen, that the Christian world seems more fully alive to the importance of bringing God's people more closely together, and of encouraging among the various denominations the exercise of fraternal and kindly feelings. Every true follower of the Saviour must deplore

the bitter controversies which have often been waged by Protestant Churches, and must lament the *opprobrium* brought upon the Christian name by sectarian asperities. It is also much to be lamented, that very small and trifling differences have sometimes given rise to new divisions and separate organisations. We long for the time when all the branches of the Christian Church will learn to regard each other, not in the light of antagonists or rivals, but as brethren, as members of one great family, and co-workers in the broad field of the world. But at the same time, we should beware of that mistaken, ill-guided zeal, which is ready to overleap the metes and bounds necessary for the preservation and sanctity of the truth. It appears to be a difficult matter, particularly in America, to keep within proper and legitimate limits any general movement for the good of the Church arising from a conscious want. The statement made by a distinguished member of the Dominion Evangelical Alliance, held in Montreal in 1874, was not very far from the truth: "As the word Reform was in every one's mouth a century before the Reformation, so unity has been the cry of Christian souls all through this nineteenth century." That this prevailing enthusiasm is leading even to extreme Broad Churchism, may be clearly seen from some facts which have been developed in the recent endeavors to bring about a closer union of the different branches of the Protestant Church. At a meeting of the Evangelical Alliance, held in New York a few years ago, a distinguished divine, the Secretary of the British Alliance, expressed the opinion that denominationalism should be "weeded out of our Christianity." At the first meeting of the Dominion Evangelical Alliance, held in Canada about two years ago, we find the following sentiments expressed by a minister, we suppose, of some eminence:

"We must be consistent: do we or do we not acknowledge one another as Christian Churches—different branches of the one Church? If so, we have no right to require uniformity of doctrine or ritual within any of our borders. We are bound to recognise all the variety in our own churches that we recognise in others. Why, for instance, should not a Presbyterian minister preach Arminian doctrine if he believes it, and a Methodist preach Calvinism if he finds it in the Bible? As a matter of fact, both these things are done often enough, but the Churches

do not yet recognise the right. . . . This liberty should apply to ritual as well as doctrine. Why should not varieties of both be allowed at once within the same polity? Such comprehensiveness seems to spring from the very idea that the Church is the Bride of Christ. What have we to do with the disgraceful titles of Remonstrants, Contra-Remonstrants, Calvinists, Arminians, etc., etc.?"

We might make references, *ad nauseam*, to show the prevalence of this Broad Church spirit. Dr. Schmucker, of the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary, in his little work, entitled "The True Unity of Christ's Church," (a book written in a most excellent and admirable spirit, and in many respects very valuable,) in proposing a remedy for the evils resulting from the divisions of Christendom, advocates the idea that a minister should be retained within the pale of his denomination, without censure or discipline, if his doctrinal code corresponds with that which is believed by any acknowledged orthodox denomination. (*Vide* "True Unity of Christ's Church," pp. 172-6.) The recent performances of the Presbytery of Cincinnati betray a state of opinion which may be regarded with some degree of alarm by the lovers of truth. Several members of this Presbytery, including a Moderator of the Northern General Assembly, assisted in the organisation of a Church, and the installation of a minister, on a most singular platform. Mr. McCune holds that all existing Church organisations are absolutely sinful, that no evangelical Church has a right to testify in favor of any peculiar doctrine of its system, that there should be no creed, embodying any system of doctrine, worship, or government. He asserts that under his system, he would admit into the Church believers denying the outward rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper. He denies infant church membership, and any advantage of baptized over unbaptized children. When Dr. Skinner endeavored, last spring in Presbytery, to make a speech condemning the practice of organising churches and installing ministers under such circumstances, he was ruled out of order, and a committee was appointed to report on the case at the next meeting. While the committee did not approve of Mr. McCune's views, they reported that in his relations with the Church there was nothing disloyal to Presbyterianism; and that the council installing him did not intend to do

anything hostile to existing evangelical denominations. They stated that he was led into these opinions by his devotion to organic Church unity. After a prolonged attempt to devise some sort of compromise, Dr. Skinner arose to express his views, and although it was decided by the Moderator that he was in order, he was utterly silenced by an embittered opposition, so that he was compelled to appeal to Synod, and then to the Assembly, to protect his right to a hearing.

There has been a variety of opinions among the advocates of outward unity, as to the exact manner in which it is to be secured and manifested. Some are in favor of merging all Protestant denominations into one, upon the very broad basis of *no creed* except the Bible or the Apostles' Creed. Others advocate what we might term a Compromise Creed, or one which would involve the surrender of certain points by all denominations. We should thus have a sort of Eclectic Creed, patched up in such a way as to harmonise differences of opinion. There are others still, a little less extreme, who would have all those denominations whose doctrine and polity are not so widely different, merged into one organisation. Thus the number of denominations would be very much diminished.

The postulates which underlie all these schemes appear to be the following; That a visible, organic unity ought to be the characteristic of the visible Church catholic, as of the invisible; that it is the will of our Lord, that his visible Church shall attain this; that when he prayed (Jno. xvii. 21) that all his people "might be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me," he prayed for this visible, organic unity; and that hence, the distinction and separation of denominations in the Church catholic is a state of disobedience, indefensible and to be repented of and forsaken by all who honor their Saviour's command. The advocates of "comprehension" also claim many advantages for their system: That the *odium* cast upon the Church by its divisions and strifes would be removed; that the chief argument of infidels would be refuted; that unity of effort in disseminating the gospel would husband resources now wasted, and win splendid gains to Christ; that thus the world would be



more speedily evangelised; that harmony and affection between God's people would be greatly promoted.

Now such results must commend themselves to every pious heart, if attainable. But they must not be sought, if in fact utopian, and if the proposed mode of pursuit introduces principles destructive to the interests of truth and the rights of conscience. We of course do not assert denominations to be unmingled blessings. We do not claim that the working of Protestantism under them is perfect. What work committed to human hands is perfect? But we assert that the development of the visible Church catholic into denominations, instead of being a rebellion against Christ's command and prayer, is the inevitable, the designed, and the legitimate result of the new dispensation, man being what he is. Our sin is not in the fact that denominations are perpetuated so long as honest differences of religious belief exist; but in the facts that denominations do not charitably recognise each other's rights, and that they contend uncharitably.

It is assumed that the unity for which Christ prayed is that of his visible churches, and that is a oneness of government and name. We assert, on the contrary, that it is of the spiritual and invisible Church he spake; and that the unity he sought and commanded is one of principles, morals, affections, and mutual good offices; a spiritual unity of a spiritual body. Let it be remembered that the higher and truer meaning of the word church, in the New Testament, is the Church invisible, the secret company of the regenerate, united to Christ in the mystical union. The *ἐκκλησία* is the body of the *κλητοί*: it is the *ἐκλεκτοί*. It is the body to which Christ is united as Head. Eph. v. 29, 30; Col. i. 24. He is not united to dead souls. It is the living temple of God. 1 Peter ii. 4, 5. It is the Bride and Spouse of Christ. Eph. v. 21. This Bride is brought to her Husband, "clad in fine linen, clean and white." Rev. xix. 7, 8. Christ has established a visible society, and to its parts the same name, in the plural, "churches," is given in the New Testament; while the invisible body is "the Church." These societies are the outward shell, which the true kernel is to occupy during its con-

tinuance on earth. With these scriptural facts before us, we ask: What species of oneness had our Lord in view, and of which body does he require it? Again we answer: a spiritual oneness of a spiritual body. This appears from the very fact that the Holy Spirit, while it calls the spiritual body a *church*, calls the visible, *churches*; that Christ's own providence separates Christian people in this world by geographical barriers, by nationalities, by civil governments, by languages, by inbred peculiarities of habit, associations, and modes of thought; that his Spirit, even while producing true piety, does not produce unanimity of belief on doctrines and church usages not essential to salvation; that yet he has made it every Christian's duty to speak out fully his own honest convictions of truth. We are the more confirmed in this proposition, by noting that the hideous results of Popery were logically reached, in the history of the patristic churches, by arguing from this false premise, precisely as these advocates of unity now argue. Disregard the distinction of the invisible from the visible Church, as the founders of Popery did; remember that the Church is catholic, holy, indefectible, according to the Scripture itself; and we have these corollaries: a visible unity, an earthly infallibility, separation the damning sin of schism; and no salvation outside the one visible Church. The reader may see this ancient logic well illustrated by Neander's History of the Donatist Controversy. The same mistake will bear the same fruits again.

In the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, we have the nature and grounds of unity explained. This unity rests on the following facts: There is "one body"—not one ecclesiastical organisation, but one spiritual body, of which Christ is the Head. Just as the several parts of the human body have the same principle of life, have different functions to perform, and are mutually dependent and sympathetic, constituting but one body, so all believers are members of the one mystical body of Christ, and are animated by the same spiritual life. "We, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." There is one Holy Spirit dwelling in this body. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jew or Gen-

tile." The unity of Christ's people is further illustrated by the unity of the *hope* in which they are called. They cherish the same hope of heavenly glory, which is born of the Holy Spirit. Again, "There is one Lord," who is the Head of the one body, the Church, the invisible company of the elect. There is "one faith"—faith in Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. There is "one baptism," one outward badge of profession. There is "one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."

The relations which Christians sustain to each other, and the duties growing out of these relations, are very clearly and correctly stated in our Confession. "All saints that are united to Jesus Christ, their Head, by his Spirit, have fellowship with him in his graces, etc. And being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man. Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification," etc.

In full accordance with the teachings and spirit of God's word, we are taught here that the union between Christ's people arises from their union with him. And from this union with each other, there arise the communion of saints and obligations to mutual duties, some of which are public, as between different churches, and some are private. According to this scriptural view, the Church is still one; one in the eternal purpose and electing love of God; one in subjection to a common divine influence; one in the possession of a common inheritance.

Let us, in the next place, turn our attention to the early history of the Church, and examine, first, the relations which the churches of the apostolical period sustained towards each other. We do not find that a complete organic unity and sameness of order were established between the churches in the different provinces and cities. They were one in faith and Christian fellowship; but the idea of a compact ecclesiastical organisation and



supreme Broad Church judicatory evidently had not arisen at all. The apostles exercised, conjointly, a general supervision over the churches, no one of them claiming any preëminence over the other. They resolved themselves into a body of elders, and each one acted in association with the apostolical college. Peter calls himself a fellow-elder. 1 Pet. v. 11. The unity of the apostolical churches has its most perfect outward representation in the Council of Jerusalem. This body consisted of apostles, elders, and brethren, who consulted together concerning the best methods of adjusting the differences between Jewish and Gentile Christianity. We have no *ex cathedra* message or bull from Peter; we have nothing that smacks of Broad Churchism; but only a circular letter, issued in the name of the brethren collected together from neighboring churches. It is a remarkable fact, that, though the apostles were called by Christ in person, and made the infallible bearers of God's revelation and founders of the Church, yet they never undertook to dictate or enforce any measure bearing upon the ecclesiastical relations of the different churches. This would not have been the case, had they been taught by the Saviour the necessity of organic unity.

This instance of the apostolic history, as recorded in Acts xv., and illustrated in the Epistles, gives us valuable confirmation. Differences of rite, usage, and belief, are here recognised and allowed by the apostles, which must have resulted in distinctions resembling those now called denominational, and in partial separations of worship; yet we hear of no rebuke from the apostles for any schism therein. Christians of Jewish extraction were expressly permitted to circumcise their infants, to observe the Hebrew festivals, to abjure pork, to keep the seventh day as still a Sabbath. They were forbidden to impose these observances on the Gentile Christians. There must have been, hence, different worshipping assemblies, at least to a certain extent, at different times and places, and a difference of ritual and worship. These Jewish and these Gentile Christians at Antioch must have been outwardly related to each other marvellously like the Presbyterians and Lutherans in the city of Charleston! But the

inspired apostles did not arrest nor even rebuke this state of things.

We examine next the history of the post-apostolical churches. The information which we have concerning their state after the time of the apostles, is meagre. At the same time, history furnishes us with facts which are sufficient to show that the churches did not act towards each other on the principles of organic unity. We find friendly correspondence and intercourse between the churches of the different provinces, but no grand ecclesiastical organisation. When the Church, in course of time, abandoned the scriptural principles which we have explained, it glided very gradually but very naturally into Papacy. There can be no doubt about the statement that even after the metropolitan system had been established, the provincial Synods remained independent of each other for some time. Let us look at the relations which the churches sustained to each other from the earliest period after the apostles. Communities belonging to the same province were bound together by closer bonds of union. Members of these contiguous communities frequently met together to deliberate respecting disputed matters of doctrine and discipline. The earliest Councils of which we have any account were those assembled towards the close of the second century, for the purpose of settling the controversy respecting Montanism and the time of Easter. But these were not Œcumenical Courts of the whole Church. The independence of the churches may be clearly seen from the action taken by them in regard to Montanism after it had spread through many of the provinces. It seems that the controversy waxed hottest first in Asia Minor. Synods were then held to inquire into the matter, and their proceedings were sent to the more distant churches.\* According to Eusebius, the habit of holding regular Councils or Synods was first formed in Greece, because the political constitution of Greece was especially favorable to the existence of representative religious assemblies.†

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\*Neander's History of the Christian Religion; chap. vi., pp. 5, 23-25, Torrey's Translation.

† It must not be supposed that by quoting this opinion from Eusebius, it is designed in the least to intimate that the apostolic writings them-

From thence it passed into Syria and Palestine, and towards the close of the third century became universal. At this period we find Synods held at the same time in places as distant from each other as North Africa and Cappadocia. From the best authorities we gather that these Synods were held in different districts to consider any matters of interest which might arise. At first they made no attempt to force any ecclesiastical measure, or to interfere with each other's rights. Though differing often, they regarded each other as true churches of Christ, and cultivated fraternal feelings. Presbyters, confessors, and laymen generally took part in the deliberations. We read of Synods in North Africa, in Syria, in Spain, in Arabia, which were constituted of bishops, presbyters, confessors, and laymen.\* Some light may be thrown upon the relations existing between the Synods, by the fact that when a Council was convened to settle any controversy, the parties at variance often sought the moral support of the other churches. We have an instance of this in the Novatian Schism. Both Cornelius and Novatian sought the recognition of the churches abroad.†

When Christians passed from one province to another, they carried certificates from their bishops, which guaranteed a welcome from any church to which they might go. These "*epistolae formatae*," as they were called, furnish us with evidence of the independence of the Synods, and at the same time of the friendly relations existing between the provincial churches. Even after the doctrine of outward unity had gained considerable ground, and was bringing about consolidation, we find some of the churches asserting their independence. The churches of North Africa and Britain, and some of the Eastern churches, declined entering into any grand confederation, and insisted upon

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selves did not provide for representative assemblies, whether larger or smaller. Presbyterians base their doctrine of ecclesiastical courts, whether called Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, General Assemblies, or Ecumenical Councils, not on Eusebius or any of "the Fathers," but on the Scriptures.—EDITORS SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

\* Schaff's History of the Christian Church, Vol. I., § 112.

† Neander, Vol. I., pp. 240-4. Schaff, Vol. I., § 115.

their liberty for some time.\* The North African Church, in a Council held A. D. 393, protested against the title of patriarch. Notwithstanding the fact that the germs of the Papal system were introduced into the Church at a very early period, a long time elapsed before the simple principles taught by the apostles were entirely abandoned. We can trace the development of the doctrine of organic unity, and can mark its influence in gradually changing the whole constitution of the primitive Church. It is true that the idea of a special priesthood, which had gradually stolen into the Church through the medium of Jewish Christianity, the personal ambition of bishops, and the ideas of government deduced from existing political constitutions, all tended towards the building of the Papal structure; still we find the spurious theory of Church unity underlying all those changes through which the simple system of the apostolic Church passed, until it lost almost every vestige of its original nature.

Ignatius, one of the earliest of the fathers, the head of the Church at Antioch, was probably the first to introduce the germinal principles of the hierarchical system. He had no idea, however, of the results to which his principles would lead. There is no hint of a primacy in his writings, and no distinction of order among bishops. The bishop appears only as head of a single congregation. According to this father, the bishop is the centre of unity and the vicar of Christ for the single congregation. Disobedience to him is schism and rebellion. Ignatius's doctrine of the episcopate *grew out of his notion of outward unity*. If unity is necessary, then the means of promoting it must be devised.

Every bishop thus becomes a personal centre of ecclesiastical unity, and a visible representative of Christ. It is a curious fact, that this so-called immediate successor of the apostles derived his notion of the necessity of catholic unity from false and materialistic conceptions of the Incarnation of Christ, and of the Church as represented under the figure of the body of Christ.

Irenæus went a step farther than Ignatius. Beginning with

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\* Coleman's Apostolical and Prim. Church, chap. iii. Neander, Vol. II., pp. 163-5.

the idea of outward unity, he advanced the doctrine that the blessings and gifts of the Holy Spirit were mediated only through the outward determinate organism of the Church. Instead of the Church's being derived from the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost was derived from the Church. To be separated from the Church was to be cut off from the communion of the Holy Spirit. Irenæus made no distinction between the visible and invisible Church, and utterly confused these ideas.

Cyprian, the great churchman of the third century, went still farther, and gave something like completeness to the system. He held that the episcopate was *one*, and that each bishop held *a part of the episcopate for the whole*. The Church was one from the beginning, and must remain one in unbroken episcopal succession. There are no salvation and no grace *extra ecclesiam*. Christ communicated the Holy Spirit to the apostles, the apostles to the bishops, and through a regular succession of bishops the power of the Spirit is transmitted. It is not a difficult matter to see how this outward conception of the Church gradually subverted the primitive system. In single congregations the pastor represented the unity of the Church. When several congregations were represented in Presbytery, the permanent moderator very soon acquired preëminence over the other presbyters, and became the centre of unity for the presbytery. Thus a prelatical bishop grew out of the Presbyterian system by superinducing these false notions of outward unity. The metropolitan bishop became the centre of unity for a province. Cyprian only saw his theory carried out in the metropolitan system. But his doctrine could not be complete without a visible supreme head of the Church.

The only determinate point at which the representation of this outward unity could find a complete realisation, was one officer holding the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The state of the case, then, is very plain. The gradual abandonment of those principles of unity taught by the apostles led to the despotism and corruption of the Papacy. We refer the reader to Schaff's and Neander's Church Histories for the facts which we have stated.

This authentic history has brought us to a point of view from



which the argument becomes exceedingly impressive. We are taught by it, that *the only condition for organic unity in the visible Church is the presence of an earthly infallibility*. Did not the blunder of confounding the invisible with the visible Church, and the organic with the spiritual unity, lead historically to the development of the papal claim to infallibility? This we have just shown. Does not the Pope expressly ground his demand for universal allegiance of Christians, and outward oneness, upon his pretended infallibility? A connected view of a few plain propositions, the statement of which is, to any Protestant mind, their proof, will show how natural and necessary the result was; and will be again, if the same false premises be adopted by the Church. One of these is, that the visible Church is ordained by Christ to be *a witnessing body*,—"the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Tim. iii. 15. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Isaiah ii. 3. Paul's commission, Acts xx. 24, was, "to testify the gospel of the grace of God." The words of the Church's Lord apply with all the force to her which is consistent with her inferiority: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto THE TRUTH." John xviii. 37. *Secondly*. The rights of private judgment are inalienable. *Thirdly*. Each witness is bound in conscience to testify "the whole counsel of God." Acts xx. 26, 27. Only thus can he clear himself from the blood of all his hearers. *Fourthly*. If the rights of private judgment are to be respected, each man's honest understanding of God's truth must be binding on himself. To each man, his own sincere understanding of the Bible must be practically his Bible. *Fifthly*. The truths of redemption are, some of them, fundamental to salvation, and some non-fundamental; but the latter are revealed by the Holy Spirit, and are edifying although not essential, and are so connected logically with the essential doctrines, that in the case of any soul, the denial of a point not essential may involve a liability to the rejection of what is fundamental, and so, to perdition. *Lastly*. The Holy Spirit, in applying truth to the sinful soul, does not so work as to produce entire uniformity of belief in details, and we

have no warrant to expect that he will. When we consider that true Christians always have differed; when we remember the different languages, races, states of society, governments, modes of education, grades of civilisation, from which the Spirit calls them into the visible Church; when we reflect that, the truths of redemption being moral, men's apprehension of them must be tinged by the remains of indwelling sin which are in all, we see that the hope of entire harmony of opinion among Christians is little short of moon-struck madness. Here, then, we have the conditions under which *Providence ordains* the visible Church to be constructed and to operate. Let common sense compare them, and it becomes manifest that *the only construction which is possible under them* is this: a visible Church, one in fundamental beliefs and in spiritual affections, but separated as to non-essential details into "denominations," in which those Christians shall associate themselves together in the honest exercise of spiritual liberty, in the maintenance of the phases of testimony in which they are severally agreed. This result we claim to be, according to the mind of Christ, *legitimated*, and not *illegitimate*; a result not to be repented of and forsaken as sin, but to be used and perfected, and continually approximated towards harmony, so far as unavoidable human infirmities allow. Do we claim that it is a perfect result? No. That differences, even in non-essentials, are good *per se*? No. But is any actual civil government perfect? No; yet is the commonwealth God's ordinance; and the Christian is commanded to honor it, even though imperfect. In this sense we say that a visible Church composed of "denominations," not fused into one ecclesiastical whole by a mechanical unity, is the ordinance of Christ for us: in that it is the only practicable result of existing conditions, conditions which cannot be removed without miracles, under which he commands us to construct and operate a visible Church.

The only practicable result—*unless we can have among us a visible infallibility*. Under the Old Testament the visible Church could maintain an organic unity, because *it had* such an earthly infallibility—the oracle and the line of prophets. Under the

rule of the apostles, the Church had such an earthly infallibility in the common inspiration of the Twelve; and yet it is exceedingly instructive, that even then they did not provide for an organic unity, as we have seen. The Papacy professes to offer such an earthly infallibility; and in this it has its consistent ground for enforcing the outward unity.

If the arrogant dogma of Rome, that the Holy Spirit makes the Pope this infallible organ, be false, as we believe it to be, then this theory of organic unity forces us to the other alternative of doctrinal infidelity. For outward unity on a grand scale cannot be realised, if God's ministers are faithful in the investigation of the whole truth, and in the proclamation of their sincere convictions. The suppression of the truth, and the binding of the conscience, are necessary consequences of every attempt to realise organic unity. To prevent differences of opinion from existing, we must stop men from thinking. And to prevent the formation of parties, we must prohibit the expression of their views. No parliamentary enactments nor ecclesiastical discipline can make men think and feel alike.

They may be forced to shut their mouths and lay down their pens. And what is this but a grinding despotism, completely destructive of all liberty of conscience? Bishop Reinkens, who has been so prominent among the Old Catholics, spoke the truth when he said: "The real reason why Rome forbids the reading of the Bible is, that it may thus keep the unity of the Church. So long as the laity may not read, the unity of despotism is preserved; but when they read the unity is broken." That is a beautiful unity indeed, thus brought about and maintained!

Surely those cannot be true principles of unity which lead to tyranny, persecution, and a denial of the right of private judgment! If Rome's theory of outward unity be true, we cannot escape the logical result, that persecution is a duty. In the light of the actual illustration given by the history of Rome, the reader may see how regularly this consequence follows. Let the attributes of the visible and invisible Churches be confounded; let the organic unity be substituted for the spiritual: then the old inference will follow, that any separation is the sin of schism.

Again, let the prerogatives and promises of the invisible Church be ascribed to the visible, and by the same mode of reasoning the dogma of infallibility will virtually reappear; not, indeed, in the form of a Protestant Pope, but in that form in which it so long inhered in Rome, and was held to our own day by the Gallican Church, of infallibility in the ecumenical body. And then "the right of dissent" will be judged precisely as it was in the days of Augustine and the Donatist controversy. Persecution for separation is no more opposed to the popular creed of our day than it was to the principles and declarations of that pious Father; yet his premises compelled him to embark in defence of the despotic work. The same premises will bear the same fruits again, in due time.

But the advocates of "comprehension" demur; asserting that on their scheme all the advantages of spiritual liberty may be reconciled with unity, while the doctrinal testimony may be as free and clear as ever, and Christianity may perform its witnessing function as fully as now. Let our church-covenants, say they, be discharged of all points except the fundamental, for our rulers and teachers, as well as for our laity. Let each recognised form of doctrine which retains enough saving truth to deliver a soul, assert itself freely in the bosom of the same denomination. Let the Calvinistic brother be as free to assert Calvinism and refute Arminianism as he now is, but in the spirit of love, and without making any separation in the body of Christ.

The discussion of this plea will bring us more expressly in contact with the Broad Church theory. We assert that it can be clearly shown that neither the interests of truth nor of unity will be advanced by any such scheme. No careful student of Church History can fail to mark the bitter controversies which have been carried on by parties in the same Church—controversies which can hardly find a parallel in any denominational strifes. We recall the long quarrels between Franciscans and Dominicans, between Jansenists and Jesuits, within the bosom of the Church of Rome. Look at the struggle between the Old Catholic party and the Ultramontanists, which has resulted in the secession of the former from Rome. Within the pale of the Church of Eng-

land we find Evangelicals and Tractarians disputing about as warmly as any denominations have ever done. We see within this Church two contending parties, differing perhaps more widely than any Protestant denominations: the one teaching the doctrine of justification by the sacraments, the other that of justification by faith; the one contending sharply for priests, and altars, and sacrifices in the Church, the other holding fast to the truth that Christ is the only Priest, and altar, and sacrifice; the one holding that no man has a right to preach unless there has been a distillation of grace upon his head from the fingers of a bishop who is in the regular line of the apostles; the other willing to recognise as Christian brethren the ministers of the various branches of the Protestant Church. So far as *real* unity is concerned, these parties are no more united than the different denominations are. The attempt to tie them both to a common broad platform can only prove the occasion of continued controversy and unhappy confusion.

We now proceed to a more particular consideration of the latitudinarian tendency of Broad Churchism. We have very grave charges to bring against this theory. It tends to produce doctrinal error and indifference to truth, a loose and imperfect system of discipline, and a lower tone of practical morals. It is adverse to the edification of souls. It forsakes the great witnessing duty of the Church, by giving equal countenance to the lower and the higher doctrine, the true and the erroneous. It is fated to contradict itself always, by extending a misplaced charity to some damning error, while it denies a proper forbearance to some non-essential infirmity. It does not require any deep insight to discover that the principles of Broad Churchism contain the germ of these deplorable results. But let us look at the stern, inexorable logic of facts. We need not go far back in the history of the Church to find illustrations exactly in point. The history of the Campbellite Church is full of solemn warnings. This Church began by making war upon all creeds, and set out to reëstablish what its founder deemed the primitive system of doctrine, government, and worship, upon the basis of the "Ancient Gospel." Mr. Campbell bitterly denounced all Confessions and Symbols as



fruitful sources of discord and mischief. Hostility to creeds, whether orthodox or heterodox, was the peculiarity of this reformation. He termed the various denominations of Christians, with their voluminous Confessions and ecclesiastical constitutions, "not churches of Jesus Christ, but the legitimate daughters of that mother of harlots, the Church of Rome." Mr. Campbell's indiscriminate onslaught on all creeds gave him a large measure of that influence and strength which he first gained. He proposed a remedy for sectarian disorders, which would issue in a certain and speedy deliverance from the existing evils so deeply lamented. Only two things were necessary to abolish sectarianism and establish union among all Christians, viz., belief in the one fact that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, and, secondly, immersion for the remission of sins. Observe the workings of this scheme of Christian union. In a short time this Church of "the Ancient Gospel" had within its pale, and under its fostering care, Universalist, Unitarian, and Arian preachers! Sharp and bitter controversies inevitably followed. Rev. Barton Stone, an Arian preacher from Kentucky, engaged in a dispute with Mr. Campbell. Dr. Thomas of Virginia, who held most monstrous and soul-destroying errors, was a prominent preacher for some time in this "Church of the Apostles." Without retracting any of his views, he became reconciled temporarily to Mr. Campbell, and was permitted by the latter to remain in the Church for fear of creating divisions. The principles upon which Mr. Campbell founded his Church worked out their logical results in a short time. Within its broad and capacious bosom, this Church had a heterogeneous multitude of every variety of creed. Mr. Campbell himself was forced to say that in his Church "all sorts of doctrine have been proclaimed by all sorts of preachers." This was the inevitable consequence of the principles of church-organisation as set forth by this Reformer. Consistently with his creed, he taught that Unitarians and Universalists might be received into the Church, on condition that they would not propagate their opinions. As might have been expected, discipline was pretty well abandoned, and suffered equally with doctrine. This reformed Church, whose boasted peculiarity was freedom from

sectarianism, soon became more intensely sectarian and intolerant than any of "the daughters of Rome." Mr. Campbell's Church has far surpassed any of the denominations in the use of caustic and scathing epithets. It would be difficult to find a stronger argument in favor of distinctive creeds than that furnished by the history of this Church, whose great cry was, "No creed." The theological beliefs of the congregations which compose this Church may be briefly defined as being those of the last preacher they hear. They are consequently "carried about by every wind of doctrine."

Again, we find in the Church of England a great diversity of religious opinion, as we have already shown, a good deal of infidelity, and a sad neglect of church discipline. A strict discipline would tend to rend the Church and create divisions. Hence its lamentable neglect.

Again, since the union of the Old and New School Presbyterians in the North, we observe a falling off in discipline, particularly discipline for opinion. We find in this Church, ministers of Unitarian and Rationalistic proclivities. If the union of these two branches of the Presbyterian Church, whose differences did not appear so great, has brought about this result, the argument becomes very strong against forming a union when the differences are much greater. We do not think it would be far from the truth to state, that the broader the basis of union, the more lax and imperfect becomes the system of discipline and of doctrine. This position seems to be substantiated by the history of the different Churches. Let the reader examine for himself.

Since theory and practice, or doctrine and life, are very closely connected, it is not difficult to see how Broad Churchism militates against the great end for which the Church was established, namely, the production of holiness of life. Man's life is determined by his principles. It is a matter of first importance what principles we adopt. For principles will be active. They are the moving causes which lie at the very source of conduct. Even the affections of the soul are determined in a great measure by imbibed principles. They have something to do, it is true, in determining principles, but they are also acted on by th

principles. It is also unquestionably true, that indifference to right in any particular tends to *weaken right principles*. And that which tends to weaken right principles tends also to the injury of practical morals. When we swerve in a greater or less degree from conscientious convictions, whether in the way of open violation or suppression, we soon find ourselves becoming indifferent to the claims of right. This is one of the ways in which Broad Churchism tends to bring down the Christian life to a lower plane.

From the argument just made, it appears to us that if it is wrong to discipline a minister for holding and preaching erroneous doctrines, it is also wrong to discipline him for erroneous conduct, particularly when that wrong conduct is the result of adopted opinions. To hold that it is wrong to administer even spiritual discipline for doctrinal error, is to maintain a principle which borders very closely upon that infidelity which denies the criminality of the sin of unbelief. Wrong beliefs on all important moral questions have a criminal cause, the voluntary powers of the soul, which enter in so largely. These are not matters, therefore, which come within the sphere of pure intellection. The Broad Church theory appears all the more objectionable, when we consider the great importance of a good and regular system of discipline. Surely the great witnessing body which Christ has set up in the world to be a shining light, a consecrated priesthood, a repository of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, a living exemplification of the holy and beautiful principles of Christianity, should exhibit purity in life and doctrine, and fidelity in duty. Is it not one of the sacred duties Christ has imposed upon his ministry, to guard with holy care the doors of the Church, and save the honor of his name? It is often said with truth, that the inconsistencies of professors of religion have done more to injure the Church than the united ranks of infidelity. Broad Churchism thus disparages one of the divinely appointed means for keeping the Church pure, and for preventing Christ's name from being dishonored before the world.

Look again at the inextricable and terrible confusion which is likely to arise in the minds of the masses under the workings of

this false system. A plain man would be most uncomfortably bewildered by a succession of preachers: some preaching Pelagianism most vigorously, and others maintaining that man is by nature utterly depraved and guilty, and unable, in his own strength, to do anything to please God, or to accomplish his own salvation; some teaching that Christ made no penal satisfaction for sin, others that his sufferings were vicarious; some holding that Christ's death was only a moral expedient to which the Almighty resorted, while others hold that he was our real and necessary substitute. If wide latitude in doctrinal preaching be allowed, we are unable to see how this confusion can be avoided. We hardly know of anything better calculated to prejudice the mind of a plain, uncultivated man against Christianity than constant contradictions and inconsistencies exhibited in the exposition of God's word.

The unfaithfulness of the Broad Church scheme to truth, receives a pungent illustration from the fatality which seems to impel it always to violate its own theory. No Broad Church is consistently broad. Each one, as though to betray the fact that it is animated more by lust for latitudinarian license than by zeal for charity, has repelled Christian brethren differing from itself in some most trivial particular, while embracing the most soul-destroying error. Thus, Campbellism strains out the gnat and swallows the camel. It swallows without difficulty the Arian, the Pelagian, the Unitarian, and even the Universalist; but should the best Christian, after adopting its two dogmas of Christ's Messiahship and immersion for the remission of sins, ask leave to indulge his parental piety in the harmless rite of baptizing his infant children, (even by immersion,) it would sternly reject him. The Anglican Church nourishes in its capacious bosom Calvinists and Arminians, Arians and Pelagians, Sacramentarians and virtual Papists. But should one of us, who does not admit the absolute necessity of prelatic ordination, seek to enter it, he would be thrust out as "a heathen man and a publican." Worse than this: for a long time this Church, while almost all-embracing of serious and vital error, was so nice and critical as to exclude her own prelatic daughter of America,

on the pretext of some trivial irregularity in deriving her orders. The Northern Presbyterian Church, a few years ago, was willing to include all the semi-Pelagianism it had excluded in 1837, but was too scrupulous to admit one who dissented from her Jacobinical political theory of civil rights.

Our last objection to the Broad Church theory is that it is inconsistent with the faithful performance of the Church's witnessing duty. This, we saw, is her prime function. The advocates of "comprehension" plead that if the different schools of theology be left free to preach, each one, its conscientious beliefs, but all in the same communion, what we deem orthodoxy will have precisely as many advocates as it has now, and the opposite doctrines will have no more, while the unity of the Church will be saved. This is delusive. The whole value of the orthodox testimony would be neutralised by this unnatural alliance. In supporting this reply, we refer first to the homely adage: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." How weak is this plan of campaign, which brings the foe into our own citadel, and arms him from our own resources, and then proposes to contend with him! Again: the friends of truth have found to their cost that as one cannot fight his adversary until he gets him at arm's length, so an effective testimony against error cannot be borne until the supporters of truth and falsehood separate themselves. Either the internal contest must move directly towards that result, or it is futile. Witness the abortive struggles of the evangelicals in the Anglican Church. They have had numbers, learning, orthodoxy, zeal, honesty of purpose; but they began on the understanding that the "glorious comprehension and unity" of their Church must not be rent for the sake of dogma. Consequently their loud and earnest testimony has gone mainly for nothing. Their adversaries advance steadily Rome-ward, regarding their protests as mere impertinences, and carrying a regular stream of "perverts" with them. So in Scotland, the only testimony which did anything effectual against "Moderatism" and "patronage," was that of the Gillespies, Erskines, and Chalmers, who did their work *by seceding!* The reasons of this are plain. In a "broad" communion, the orthodox witness



against looser doctrine is repressed by the practical consciousness that he cannot attack his own equals and comrades freely. The cry is raised that he "disturbs the peace of the Church." According to its constitution, the laxer creed is as fully authorised as is his own. The testimony for the lower theology is as much the Church's testimony as his is. The world, which is Pelagian by birth and inheritance, always finds the lower testimony the more palatable. Hence, the higher doctrine, if it does not separate itself, is unavoidably suppressed, and the teaching of the whole Church becomes negative. No fortress is stronger than its weakest bastion. So, the doctrinal weight of a church never counts for more than that of the lowest doctrine which is openly tolerated within it. Witness, again, the Anglican body. It has a Calvinistic creed, and many Calvinistic ministers, and much Calvinistic literature. But every intelligent observer sees that her weight in Christendom is virtually on the side of Arminianism, which she tolerates. Once more: it must be remembered that the parts of the visible Church are organised bodies, not groups of separate persons; and that their divine Head has given them organic as well as individual functions. We ask, with emphasis, Has not a Christian denomination, then, an organic, a concerted testimony to bear for Christ's truth, his whole truth? And how can she bear this, if not by her organs, her ministry? Her trumpet must not give an uncertain sound. In a word, we see not how we who are clothed by Christ's appointment with the authority of presbyters, to "hold fast the form of sound words," and "to commit to faithful men, who shall be able (*ικανοί*) to teach others in their turn the things which we received" of the Holy Ghost among many witnesses, can, without moral obliquity, prostitute that sacred authority to empower erroneous men, with our ecclesiastical authority, to teach what we honestly believe false and dangerous. Thus again (as on page 264,) does the "Broad Church" theory evince its corrupt tendencies.

Peace is sacred and lovely; but Truth is also holy and beautiful. "We love not Cæsar less, but Rome more." We claim that order of primacy, given us by an inspired apostle: "first pure,

then peaceable." (James iii. 17.) We seek peace through truth, which is the emanation of God's omniscience, his own instrument of sanctification, the stewardship of his ministry, the trust committed to his Church. Saith Milton, in his *Areopagitica*: "Truth indeed came into the world with her divine Master, and was a perfect shape, most glorious to behold. But when he ascended, and his apostles after him were laid asleep, then strait arose a wicked race of deceivers, who—as that story goes of the Egyptian Typhon, with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good Osiris—took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds." Broad Churchism would fain teach that it is the advocates of orthodoxy who have been the conspirators with Typhon, and that she is the Isis to gather into one the scattered members of her Lord Osiris. Nay, this reverend office must belong to those who hold the murdered at dearer price than to connive with Typhon and his conspirators. She is not the faithful Isis who doth that! The sacred and mourning spouse must abhor them by so much as she reveres her dismembered Lord; nor can she be content until she has found all his sundered limbs, and has seen his form as perfect as it shall be at her Master's second coming.

Let us hear Milton again, a little farther on:

"We stumble and are offended at the least dividing of one visible congregation from another, though it be not in fundamentals; and through our forwardness to suppress, and over-backwardness to recover any enthralled piece of Truth out of the gripe of Custom, we care not to keep Truth separated from Truth, which is the fiercest rent and disunion of all. We do not see, that while we affect by all means a rigid and external formality, we may soon fall again into a gross conforming stupidity, a stark and dead congealment of wood and hay and stubble, forced and frozen together; which is more to the sudden degenerating of a Church than many subdichotomies of petty schisms."

We close with an application of this discussion to a question now claiming the attention of our Church. Is an Ecumenical Presbyterial Court essential to realising the scriptural unity of all Presbyterian churches? The principles we have established answer, No. It is not the existence of denominations, nor of national Churches, as dictated by necessity, which rends the

unity of Christ's spiritual body ; but it is heresy of doctrine, hatred, false accusations, and worldly conformities. We have seen that it was not through Ecumenical Church Courts that the primitive Church sought to realise outward unity. We find no such court in existence until the fourth century. If an Ecumenical Court is essential to our system, then it does not correspond with that of the primitive Church, and we ought to change our theory. We have already examined the relations which existed between the Churches of the apostolic and post-apostolic period, and we failed to find them bound together by close ecclesiastical ties. Yet, do we not hold that they were all Presbyterian ? Their respective geographical positions had much to do in determining the extent of their organisations. In deciding the extent to which we must endeavor outwardly to realise unity, several important questions must be considered. We must inquire whether the interests of truth and sound doctrine would be advanced ; whether our resources would be more rapidly and advantageously developed ; whether geographical barriers might not prevent that association which is necessary between bodies united in one compact organisation.

These views were maintained by Dr. Thornwell, in his defence of the action of the Southern Church in forming an independent organisation. We quote from his Works, Vol. IV., pp. 452-3 :

"The unity of the Church does not require a formal bond of union among all congregations of believers throughout the earth. It does not demand a vast imperial monarchy like that of Rome, nor a strictly universal Council like that to which the complete development of Presbyterianism would naturally give rise. The Church catholic is one in Christ ; but it is not necessarily one visible, all-absorbing organisation. There is no schism where there is no breach of charity. Churches may be *perfectly at one* in every principle of faith and order, and yet *geographically distinct* and *mutually independent*. . . . In all Protestant countries, church-organisations have followed national lines. The Calvinistic Churches of Switzerland are distinct from the Reformed Church of France. The Presbyterians of Ireland belong to a different Church from the Presbyterians of Scotland."

One of the grounds upon which Dr. Thornwell justifies our withdrawing from the Northern Church is, that the principles of

our fathers may "have a richer, freer, fuller development among us." This answers precisely to our position, that entire ecclesiastical independence may be most consistent with our duty and our system. Then it cannot be true, that an Ecumenical Court is necessary to the integrity of our system. Who can doubt that cases might very probably exist in which geographical and linguistic obstacles, differences of race, secular customs, and resultant modes of thought, with obstinate misunderstandings of the wants and rights of brethren in those distant lands, might render it simply impossible for the latter to submit their ecclesiastical interests to that foreign court? To hold such a court as essential to the integrity of the visible Church, is to make a necessity out of an impossibility.

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ARTICLE IV.

SPIRITUALISM.

*The Phenomena of Spiritualism Scientifically Explained and Exposed.* By the Rev. ASA MAHAN, D. D., First President of Oberlin College. A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago, and New Orleans. 1876.

*Principles of Mental Physiology, with their Application to the Training and Discipline of the Mind, and the Study of its Morbid Conditions.* By WILLIAM B. CARPENTER, M. D., LL. D., F. R. S., F. G. S., etc., etc. New York. D. Appleton & Co. 1876.

The term *spiritualism* has long been used to designate that system, (the opposite of materialism,) according to which all real existence is spirit; but it is now used almost exclusively to express the doctrine that the spirits of the dead hold communications with mankind. These spiritual communications are given only through certain persons called *mediums*, who are said to be more easily influenced and controlled by the spirits, owing to their