

# THE UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

---

NO. 3—JAN.—FEB., 1897.

---

I.—LITERARY.

---

## THE OXFORD MOVEMENT IN THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The Oxford Movement in the Church of England began about 1833. It was a reaction against liberalism in politics, latitudinarianism in theology, and the government of the Church by the State. It was, at the same time, a return to Mediaeval theology and worship. The doctrines of Apostolical Succession, and the Real Presence—a doctrine not to be distinguished from the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation—were revived. And along with this return to Mediaeval theology, Mediaeval architecture was restored; temples for a stately service were prepared; not teaching halls. Communion tables were replaced by *altars*. And the whole paraphernalia of worship was changed; so that, except for the English tongue and the mustaches of the priests, the visitor could hardly have told whether the worship were that of the English Church or that of her who sitteth on "the seven hills."

It must be admitted that there was some good in the movement. The Erastian theory as to the proper relation of Church and State is wrong. The kingdom of God should not be subordinate to any "world-power." No state should control the Church. And certainly such latitudinarianism in doctrine as that of Bishop Coleuso and others called for a protest. But the return to Mediaeval theology and Mediaeval worship was all wrong.

We have no good ground for doubting the sincerity of many of the apostles of the movement. Unfortunately, more than

latter tale teaches that the important thing is simply to believe in the "Common Fatherhood of God."

But nothing is more certain than that, while charitableness is a good thing, a correct creed is necessary. In order to a life acceptable to God there must be a correct creed and a life according to it. This is true in every sphere with which the experience of mankind has made us acquainted, and it is true of the spiritual world if God's revealed word be true. If the eternal laws of God are broken, their infractions must be atoned for.

---

A PAIR OF BLUE EYES. A novel by *Thomas Hardy*. Author of "Under the Greenwood Tree," "Desperate Remedies," etc. New York: Hovendon Company, 17 and 19 Waverly Place.

This story is better than its early promise. While the reader is being introduced to Elfride Swancourt and her father, a type of a certain class of clergymen of the Church of England, he feels like pitching the book into the waste basket. The heroine is never able to maintain our interest in herself, throughout the story. If she seems to gain it for a time it is chiefly because of the real interest which an idealizing lover lends her.

In Mr. Henry Knight, however, the author portrays a very exceptional character. This character raises the whole tone of the book. His entrance is like that of a noble and inspiring man into a social circle. The whole circle, whether consciously or not, receives and uplifts; and Mr. Hardy's entire work is better after the introduction of the essayist and reviewer.

Knight's talent and cultivation, while marked by some pedantry, are a positive relief to the inanity of the other characters. His cold-blooded honesty is refreshing and beautiful as compared with the tergiversation of the Elfride or with the hypocrisy of the worldly vicar. His purity, his truth, his ideal of true manhood and womanhood, his hatred of deception, and his conception of the proper relation between husband and wife, are admirable to the highest degree. True the author spoils him by making him guilty of an act of deception at the last. We suppose that most men would justify this act; and that the author would maintain that Knight hardly gave proof of lower character in the act. But we wish Knight had been frank with Stephen Smith. We have always admired Martin Luther for warning his rival that he was going himself to apply for the hand of the fair Katherine Von Bora if the favored lover did not make haste and pay suit.

It is not often that we rejoice in a noble man's not getting for a wife the woman of his choice, but it is a relief to us that a noble man is not tied to so fickle and unworthy a piece as Elfride of the light brown tresses.

The virtual criticism of a class of the clergy of the English Church is just what we suppose. Wherever there are church endowments unworthy men will at times gain admittance to ecclesiastical office for the sake of the temporal remuneration. Indeed, men seek the ministerial office in churches supported on the voluntary system often from no higher motives.

THOS. C. JOHNSON.