

THE  
MERCERSBURG QUARTERLY REVIEW.

JANUARY, 1855.

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THE PARTHENON.

PARTHENON signifies the Dwelling of the Virgin, of Pallas Athene, the emanation of the divine wisdom of Jove. Every one of the many tribes, who afterwards formed the Greek nation, had one particular deity whom it worshipped as its patron; for, though the Greeks did not conceive the lumi-

## ART. IV.—INAUGURAL EXERCISES.

- 1.) Introductory Discourse, by Rev. John W. Nevin, D. D.
- 2.) Charge to the Professor, by Rev. Samuel R. Fisher, D. D.
- 3.) Inaugural Address, by Rev. Bernard C. Wolff, D. D.

## THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

Ephesians, 8-16.—Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers: For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

WE propose to consider from this passage, without farther introduction, the Origin, Nature, and Design of the Christian Ministry.

I. In the first place, its ORIGIN. This is here referred by St. Paul explicitly to what may be denominated the *Ascension Gift* of our Lord Jesus Christ. When he ascended up on high, we are told, leading captivity captive, far above all heavens, that he might fill all things, he gave gifts unto men; and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. The ministry was the result and fruit of his glorification at the right hand of God, when he became "head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." All lay in the Gift of the Holy Ghost, as his presence began to reveal itself in the world on the day of Pentecost.

This Gift forms in a certain sense the end or completion of

the Gospel. In it the "Mystery of Godliness," the economy of redemption, came first to its full perfection as the power of God, not in purpose merely, but in actual reality, for the salvation of the world. What was begun when the Word became Flesh in the Virgin's womb, was brought here to its proper consummation. The Incarnation of Christ and the Mission of the Holy Ghost stand related to each other, not simply as cause and effect, but as commencement and conclusion of one and the same grand fact. The first was in order to the last, and looked forward to it continually as its own necessary issue and scope. Short of this, the design of Christ's coming into the world could not be reached. He took upon him our nature, that he might die for our sins and rise again for our justification, that is, that having by his death exhausted the curse which lay upon the world through the fall, and having broken thus the power of death and hell, he might be constituted by his resurrection and glorification the head of a new creation, the principle and fountain of a new order of life among men, in the bosom of which it should be possible for the believing and obedient, through all time, to be saved from their iniquities and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. All this took place by the mission of the Holy Ghost, for which it was necessary that room should in this way be first made by the whole previous manifestation and work of the Redeemer.

The New Testament is full of this thought ; so that it is truly wonderful there should ever be any doubt in regard to it, with those who pretend to take the Scriptures as their guide. The Gospel goes throughout upon the assumption, that the power which Christ carried in himself for the salvation of the world could not make itself felt with free, full, constant action among men, till it had gone through a certain course of qualification previously in his own person. The Spirit dwelt in him, we know, without measure ; but so long as he continued in our present mortal state, it was necessarily confined to his own individual life. Between it and the surrounding world of humanity, comprehended as this was in the order of mere nature, rose as a high wall of separation, the law of sin and death which reigns

throughout this constitution, making it impossible for the law of spiritual life in Christ Jesus to reach it under its own form. Death and sin must first be conquered on their own territory by the Son of God himself; which however implied, of course, that he should with real victory transcend, at the same time, their domain, and so take possession of the world under the form of a new, higher existence, no longer natural, but supernatural, from the plain of which it might be possible for him to extend to men generally the power of his redemption in a corresponding real and truly supernatural way. The order of nature could never be the platform of any such work; and therefore it must be left behind for the sake of the work itself; and room must be found for the mystery of righteousness in another system altogether, in the order of grace, as this was to be constituted and made permanent in the world by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

This great idea underlies all our Saviour's instructions, as it may be said also to be the actuating sense of his own entire life. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and *die*," we hear him saying, (John 12 : 24,) "it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." This refers to himself; but then he adds immediately, as the standing law and general conception of the Christian salvation: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life *in this world*, shall keep it unto life eternal." So after his resurrection (Luke 24 : 25, 26 :) "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! *Ought* not Christ to have suffered these things, and to *enter into his glory*?" Everywhere we may see, that in the mind of our Saviour, the whole purpose and force of his life were felt to be conditioned by his dying, and so entering upon a new mode of existence, in which he should no longer be subject to the limitations of his mortal state, but have his humanity itself exalted above nature, and clothed with dominion over it for the benefit of his Church. His removal from the world of sense in this way was to be no loss to his disciples, but on the contrary great gain. He would be put to death in the flesh, as St. Paul expresses it, only that he might be quickened *in the Spirit*. His presence with his

people, under this form, would be not less real than it had been before, but in some sense, we might say, even more real, as being at the same time far more unrestrained, and intimately near, and powerfully efficacious for the ends of the Gospel, than it was ever possible for it to be previously to his glorification. For it is by the Spirit that he enters into living communication with the members of his mystical body; and the Spirit or Holy Ghost, we are told (John 7: 39,) could not be given, or *was* not, as the original text has it—that is, was not as the actual revelation of the Saviour's higher presence in the world—till Jesus was glorified. "I will not leave you orphans," he says, (John 14: 18, 19,) "I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also." So again, (John 16: 7,) "*It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*" The presence in the flesh must be withdrawn, to make room for a higher, better, and far more glorious presence in the Spirit.

The great burden indeed of our Saviour's valedictory discourse may be said to turn upon this thought; and after his resurrection, accordingly, all is made to depend with him on what was to be now brought to pass by his formal ascension into heaven. "Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you," it was said (Luke 14: 49. Acts 1: 4, 5;) "but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." The mission of the Spirit is made thus to be the great object of his whole previous life. It formed the travail of his soul, from the commencement of his sufferings to their close. For this he wrestled with the powers of hell. This was emphatically the purchase of his death, the boon of salvation which he came into the world to obtain for our fallen race. He became the author and finisher of our faith, (Heb. 12: 2,) by enduring the cross, with all its shame, and so being set down at the right hand of the throne of God; ascending up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things; leading captivity captive, and

taking possession of the world as its supernatural king and head, that he might bestow gifts upon men. And all these gifts were comprehended primarily in the Holy Ghost, as the form under which it was now made possible for the power of his glorified life to reveal itself with free effect in the world. The Holy Ghost, in this view, is not one among other gifts for which the world is indebted to Christ, but the sum and absolute unity at once of the whole; the Gift of gifts; that without which there could be no room to conceive of any other, and through which only all others have their significance and force. It is that which men need as the very complement of their life, that they may be redeemed from the power of the fall, and raised to a participation of the divine nature, (2 Peter 1: 4,) having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. For "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" and only what is thus born of God, as distinguished from all that is the birth of mere flesh, (1 John 5: 4,) can ever have power to overcome the world. So wide and vast is the grace procured for man by the death and resurrection of the Son of God, and bestowed upon them after his ascension through the gift of the Holy Ghost.

This Gift now forms the origin and ground of the Christian Church; which by its very nature, therefore, is a supernatural constitution, a truly real and abiding fact in the world, and yet, at the same time, a fact not of the world in its natural view, but flowing from the resurrection of Christ and belonging to that new order of things which has been brought to pass by his glorification at the right hand of God; a fact not dependent, accordingly, on the laws and conditions that reign in "this present evil world," and not at the mercy of its changes in any way—"against which the gates of hell shall not prevail," and that is destined to outlast and conquer in the end all other institutions, interests and powers of the earth. As a supernatural presence among men in any such constant and really historical way as the Gift and Promise of Christ seem necessarily to imply, the Spirit must have his own supernatural sphere, in distinction from the order of nature, within which to carry forward his operations as the power of a new creation

over against the vanity and misery of the old. This constitution or order of grace is what our faith is taught to receive in the article of the Holy Catholic Church; that great mystery which is denominated Christ's Body, and within which is comprised, according to the Creed, the whole supernatural process of man's salvation, from baptism for the remission of sins, onward to the resurrection of the flesh and the life everlasting. It is not of the first creation, like the art and science, and political institutions of mankind in every other view. It holds directly from Christ in his capacity of glorified superiority to the universal order of nature. He is "*head over all things to the Church.*" It is in virtue of his having conquered, and ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, far above all heavens—far above all principality, (Eph. 1: 21,) "and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come"—that he has by his Spirit created for himself this glorious constitution, and continues to reign over it through all ages as "the beginning (Col. 1: 18) and first-born from the dead." So when he commissioned his Apostles for their great work, all was made to depend on what had thus been accomplished in his own person. "All power," he said (Matth. 28: 18-20,) "is given unto me in heaven and in earth: Go ye *therefore*"—because it is so and I am able, as the conqueror of sin and death and hell, having all power in my hands, to become the author, the principle and ground of a new creation, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail; because it is so, go ye *therefore*—"and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

And here we are brought directly to the point which we have now before us for particular consideration, namely, the origin of the Christian Ministry. It is, by the terms of this commission, identified with the institution of the Church itself. The two things are not just the same. The Church is a much wider conception than the Ministry. But still they are so joined together, that the one cannot be severed from the other.

The idea of the Church is made to involve the idea of the Ministry. The first is in truth constituted by the commission that creates the second; for it has its whole existence conditioned by an act of faith in the reality of this commission, and this tested again by an act of real outward homage to its authority, the sacrament of baptism being interposed as the sign and seal of every true entrance into the system of grace thus mysteriously consigned to its charge. "He that *believeth*, and is *baptized*," it is said, (Mark 16: 16,) "shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."

The appointment of the Ministry in the form now mentioned, took place just before our Saviour's ascension; but it was not until the day of Pentecost that the appointment was fairly armed with its own proper supernatural force, as an institution springing from the glorious sovereignty with which Christ was invested, when he took his seat at the right hand of God as head over all things to the Church. The Apostles were directed to wait at Jerusalem, accordingly, till they should be endowed with power from on high. Then, when the right time was fully come, the Spirit descended in symbols of wind and flame. The great promise of the gospel was fulfilled. The Ministry received its baptism of fire. The Church came to its solemn inauguration; all as an order of things proceeding really and truly from the Saviour's glorification. "Being by the right hand of God exalted," the people were told at the time, (Acts 2: 33,) "and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear."

II. We are to consider, in the next place, the NATURE of the Christian Ministry, the peculiar quality and constitution of the office, as related to its origin in one direction and to its general purpose or design in another.

And what we need first and chiefly to fix in our minds here, is its *supernatural* character. This lies in what we have now seen to be the source from which it springs. It refers itself at once to the ascended and glorified Christ. When he went up, leading captivity captive, far above all heavens, and was constituted head over all things at God's right hand, then it was, and in this capacity and posture, that he gave gifts unto men,



and foremost among these the institution of the Ministry, endowed with power from on high for its own heavenly ends.

Let us endeavor to apprehend well the full force of this thought. We may speak of a divine agency in the order of nature. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." And still more room is there to refer the life of man, in its higher forms, to his ordination and care. "The inspiration of the Almighty giveth him wisdom." In this way, we are prompted to ascribe remarkable providences to his hand, and are accustomed to talk of nations and men as having been raised up by him for the accomplishment of particular ends. There may be a vocation thus, and along with it a corresponding commission, for purposes embraced in the economy of our present life, which are as truly referable to the divine will as this economy itself is in all its parts. Cyrus had his mission from God; so had Alexander the Great; and so also our own more illustrious Washington. Great statesmen, great artists, and great scholars, may be regarded as men sent of God for their own special work. We ascribe to them at times an actual inspiration from on high, a sort of truly divine afflatus, answerable to the idea of such a mission. And so the Bible itself teaches us to look upon the domestic constitution and upon civil government, as existing by the authority and will of heaven. Parents have a divine right to the respect and obedience of their children; and magistrates, according to St. Paul, are to be obeyed for conscience' sake. "The powers that be," he tells us, (Rom. 13: 1, 2,) "are ordained of God: Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Thus it is, we may see, that the order of nature admits, not only the idea, but the actual reality also of heaven-appointed functions and functionaries, in its own sphere, on all sides.

But is the Christian Ministry now a divine institution, only in the same general view? Such seems to be the opinion of many. They attach much the same force to the commission claimed by Calvin or John Wesley, that they are ready to allow also to that of Oliver Cromwell. Both the authority of the of

fice, and the vocation to it, are supposed to be lodged in some way in the moral constitution of the world under its ordinary form, and to be divine only in virtue of those general relations to God, which this must be allowed on all hands to carry in its bosom. But this is in truth to mistake and deny the supernatural character of the Ministry altogether, and to turn it into an institution of mere nature, the very thing which our faith is required to contradict. The peculiarity of the office is, that it does not originate in any way out of the order of this world naturally, but proceeds directly and altogether from a new and higher order of things brought to pass by the Spirit of Christ in consequence of his resurrection and ascension. It belongs to that constitution which we call the Church; which starts from him who is the resurrection and the life, and who has passed into the heavens as its glorified head; which is by its very conception, therefore, a supernatural fact; and whose whole existence in the world, accordingly—its actual relations, capabilities, and powers—is a mystery that can be apprehended only by faith. To conceive properly of the divine character of the sacred office, we must make full earnest with the relation it bears to the glorification of Christ, as the cause and source of an order of things higher than nature in the world, which was not and could not be in it before. It holds from him immediately as head over all things to the Church.

And as regards this point, it is plain that no account is to be made of the distinction that is justly enough drawn between the ordinary and extraordinary forms of the office. "He gave some, apostles," it is said, "and some, prophets; and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers;" various classes and orders, some special and for a time only, others for the ordinary use of the Church through all ages; but so far as their origin is concerned, all of precisely the same character and nature; since all alike are referred to the same ascension gift. The source of the apostleship, is the source also of the common pastoral episcopate. As the Church is a supernatural constitution, and so an object rightly of faith, in its ordinary history, no less than in the midst of Pentecostal miracles, so does the Ministry also derive its force really and truly from Christ, in

his capacity of head over all things to the Church, whether exercised by inspired or by uninspired men. This deserves to be well considered and laid to heart. Either the office in its ordinary form is a mere sham, an idle mockery without reality or power, or else it must be allowed to represent and embody in itself actually the force of a supernatural commission.

It becomes easy, in this view, to determine its relation to the world, as it exists in the order of nature. The office is no product, in any sense, of the life of humanity in this form. It holds, as we have seen, from another economy or system, founded in a power which has actually surmounted the order of nature, and reigns above it in its own higher sphere. On this ground it is, that we declare the Church to be higher and greater than the State. Patriotism after all is not the first virtue of man, if we are to understand by it devotion to the will of the State, regarded as an absolute end. To make this will the absolute measure of truth and duty, to find in it the last idea of right and wrong, to denounce the conception of a real jurisdiction on the part of the Church that shall be taken as owing no subordination whatever to the jurisdiction of the State, (in the style of some who carry on the war blindly with the Church of Rome,) is in fact to betray Christ into the hands of Cæsar, and to treat the whole mystery of his ascension and glorification as a cunningly devised fable. Governments have no right to place themselves at the head of the Church, or over it, in its own sphere; converting it into a department of State, as in Prussia; or making the civil power the source and fountain of ecclesiastical authority, as since the days of Henry the Eighth and Cranmer in England. What can be more monstrous than the conception of such a pretended headship of the Church, resting as it does at this moment in the person of Queen Victoria, because she happens to be the political sovereign of the British nation! But if it be monstrous for any civil power to usurp this sort of lordship over God's heritage, affecting to play the part of sovereign in the sphere of powers that belong not to this world, can it be at all less monstrous to think of making these powers dependent on the constitution of the simply natural world in any other view?

The people have just as little right here as parliaments and kings, to shape the Church to their own ends, or to take the creation of its Ministry into their own hands. The fond notion which some have of a republican or democratic order in Christianity, by which the popular vote, or the will of any mass or majority of men, shall be regarded as sufficient to originate or bring to an end the sacred office wherever it may be thought proper, and even to create if need seem a new *Church*, as they dare to prostitute that glorious name, for its service and use—is just as far removed from the proper truth of the Gospel as any other that could well be applied to the subject. It is completely at war with the Creed. It makes no account of the strictly supernatural character of Christ's kingdom, as a real polity not of this world, and yet from its own higher sphere entering into it and taking hold upon its history in the most real way. It drags the whole mystery down continually to the level of the simply natural understanding, and forces it thus to lose itself at last altogether in the world of mere flesh and sense.

The relation of the Ministry to the world on the outside of the Church, however, as now described, does not determine at once its relation to the mass or body of men who belong to the Church itself; and there is room here, accordingly, for the democratic notion just dismissed, to return upon us again under another and much more plausible form. The office may be viewed as something which proceeds from Christ, not indeed through the constitution of nature as is the case with that of the civil magistrate, but yet through the constitution of grace itself as this is comprehended in the general Christian community. We are thus confronted with the question concerning the order which the Ministry and the Church hold to each other, in the system of Christianity. Both spring from the same source, and date from the same time. Still there is room to distinguish between them, as regards inward priority and dependence, and to ask, whether the Church is to be regarded as going before the Ministry, or the Ministry before the Church. To this question, however, an answer has been in fact already returned, in speaking of the commission origi-

nally given to the Apostles. The terms of that commission are such as of themselves plainly to show, that the Church was to be considered as starting in the Apostles, and extending itself out from them in the way of implicit submission to their embassy and proclamation. They were to stand between Christ and the world; to be his witnesses, his legates, the representatives of his authority, the mediators of his grace among men. They were to preach in his name, not merely a doctrine for the nations to hear, but a constitution to which they were required to surrender themselves, in order that they might be saved. The new organization was to be formed, and held together, by those who were thus authorized and empowered to carry into effect officially its conditions and terms. Hence the Church is said to be builded upon Peter, as the central representative of the college of the Apostles (Matth. 16 : 18 ;) and in another place, again, (Eph. 2 : 20,) "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." So in the passage we have taken for our text, the Ministry both in its extraordinary and ordinary character, is exhibited as the great agency which Christ is pleased to employ for the edification of his mystical body. There is no room then for the theory, by which the Church at large, or any particular part of it, is taken to be the depository in the first instance, of all the grace and force which belong to the ministerial office, just as in a political organization the body of the people may be supposed to contain in themselves primarily the powers with which they choose to invest their own officers and magistrates. The order of dependence here is not ascending but descending. The law of derivation is downwards and not upwards, from the few to the many, and not from the many to the few. The basis of Christianity, as it meets us in the New Testament, is not the popular mind and popular will as such in any form or shape. It starts from Christ. It reaches the world through the mediation of his ministers. Their mission is from him only. "As my Father hath sent me," he says, (John 20 : 21,) "even so send I you." They are overseers set over the house of God by the Holy Ghost. By whatever names they may be distinguished, apostles, prophets,

presbyters, rulers, or pastors, their office is in its essential constitution episcopal. They are shepherds under Him who is the Chief Shepherd, clothed by delegation with his authority, and appointed to have charge of the flock in his name, (1 Peter 5: 2-4,) with a power so real in its own sphere, and so absolutely irresponsible, at the same time, in any democratic or republican sense, that they are warned before Christ not to use it as lords over God's heritage. However well then the famous watchword may sound for the popular ear: "A Church without a bishop, and a State without a king," it must be held to be, so far at least as the first part of it is concerned, absolutely treasonable to the true conception of Christianity. The question is not of the episcopal office in some special given form; but of the office in its broad New Testament sense, as involving the idea of a real pastoral jurisdiction over the Church, representing in it immediately the authority of Jesus Christ, and deriving its force from the sovereignty of heaven and earth to which he has been advanced by his resurrection from the dead.

To say that there may be a Church without a bishop, in such view, a purely republican assembly of Christians in simply lay capacity, able to generate and produce from itself a full, valid ministration of the mystery of grace contained in the Gospel, without the intervention, in any way, of the ministry constituted and commissioned for the purpose by the ascended Saviour himself; to say, in other words, that the Church is before the Ministry, in the order of existence, and in no way dependent upon it, but complete without it, (the very thing the maxim *does* mean to say, if it has any meaning whatever,) is a heresy which at once strikes at the root of all faith in the supernatural constitution of the Church, and turns both the apostolical commission and the gift of Pentecost into a solemn farce.

Both from its origin, as already considered, and from its design, which yet remains to be considered, it may be inferred with necessary consequence that the office in question must be a single institution, in harmony with itself in all its parts. The commission given to the Apostles implied that they were to act in concert. It was not an authority which each one of them was left to himself to exercise, in his own way and for his own

pleasure. It belonged to them only in their collective capacity. They were bound by it to the real and fixed constitution of grace with which it was concerned, in the capacity of a college or corporation. And so as the Ministry assumed other forms, whether ordinary or extraordinary, it remained necessarily subject still to the power of the same law. Just as among the Jews, the Priesthood was one, though the Priests were many and of different orders; so in the Christian Church, however the Ministers might be multiplied, and the forms of their office varied, the office itself could be of force only as it retained always the character of a single body bound together, and in union with itself. As there can be by the very conception of Christianity, but one faith, one baptism, and one Church, so can there be also but one Ministry; and this unity must be taken to extend to all times and ages, as well as to all lands.

And thus we have, in the next place, the idea of apostolical succession; and along with that the conception also of ordination, as the veritable channel through which is transmitted mystically, from age to age, the supernatural authority in which this succession consists. It is easy, of course, to deride everything of this sort, and to make sport with the notion of a tactual communication, as it is sneeringly styled, of heavenly powers, and of grace that is supposed to trickle from consecrated fingers in the imposition of hands; but it comes certainly with a very bad grace from those who pretend to make a merit of their respect for the Bible. The Old Testament is full of this way of ordering spiritual things; and in the New Testament also exemplifications of it occur on all sides. The derision in question only serves to reveal and expose the unbelieving habit of mind from which it proceeds. What is in truth the subject of sceptical scorn in the case, is the existence in the world of any such supernatural constitution, any such mystery of faith, as the Church claims to be in virtue of her derivation from him who has "ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." The mockery regards the whole reality of the order of grace, as an abiding economy among men, different from the order of nature and above it. Let this first conception be admitted, with some felt sense of its

being a fact, and not merely a speculation or notion ; and then it will be easy comparatively to allow also all other points belonging in any way to the same grand article of faith. Sacramental grace will follow as a matter of course. And so will the idea of the Ministry, as an institution proceeding from Christ's commission, and armed with power by his Spirit, and having all its force accordingly in the unity and perpetuity of its first appointment. This involves succession ; and the succession, to be valid, must be kept up in some way within the bosom of the institution itself. For, as we have seen, this holds not from the natural life of the world, nor even from the higher life of the Church collectively taken, but directly and wholly from the commission and ordination of Christ ; and so can be maintained with its original character from age to age, only as it may have power to transmit the actual virtue of this first supernatural appointment from one generation still onward to another.

It remains to notice finally, under our present head, the force and power of the office. It is not properly of this world ; for the sphere of existence to which it belongs is that higher economy of the Spirit, which has been introduced by the triumph of Christ over the whole constitution of nature. The virtue which it carries in itself for its own ends, therefore, is not to be measured by any merely natural or worldly standard. The preaching of the cross is foolishness to the Greek and a stumbling block to the Jew, we are told, and yet the wisdom and power of God for salvation to them that believe. "The weapons of our warfare," St. Paul says, (2 Cor. 10 : 4) "are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." The power of the Ministry stands not in the wisdom, or eloquence, or art and policy of men in any form. It is a quality derived from the kingdom of Christ, and answerable to its heavenly constitution. In its own form and sphere, however, it has to do with relations that are most real, and takes hold of interests which are lasting and solemn as eternity itself. It involves the stewardship of the mysteries of God, (1 Cor. 4 : 2,) the administration of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, (Matth. 16 : 19 ; 18 : 18 ; John 20 : 23,)



the negotiation of the terms of eternal life, (Mark 16: 16; 2 Cor. 2: 15, 16; 5: 18-20.) All this supernatural force, in the case of those by whom it is thus exercised, is of course official and not personal. It belongs to the institution of the Ministry, and not to the men privately considered who may be charged at any given time with the sacred trust. Their personal character may come in to enforce or to prejudice its claims to respect; but the claims themselves are independent of this, and rest upon other ground altogether. They go with the office; and the whole case supposes, that so long as it may be held to its legitimate form this will be found true and equal to the purposes of its original institution. Even a simply human organization, where the mind and action of the individual functionary are necessarily ruled by the spirit of the body as a whole, is found to have a wonderful power of self-consistency and self-conservation in this way; as we may see, for instance, in the case of our civil courts, where the decisions of a judge, circumscribed and controled by the fixed relations of his office in the general system of which it is a part, are something very different from his merely personal will, and carry with them rightly and safely an authority to which out of such position he could lay no good claim whatever. And why should it be thought strange then, if the same law of organized corporate life, raised from the sphere of nature to the sphere of grace, and having to do with the "powers of the world to come," be represented as carrying with it in the Church, by virtue of Christ's Spirit, not only a general moral security, but an absolutely infallible guaranty, for the truth and trustworthiness of its results? What less than this can the commission mean, that clothes the Ministry with Christ's own authority, and requires the nations to bow to it under penalty of damnation? Whatever may be said of single ministers in their private character, or in particular acts of their office, the institution as a whole, and taken in its corporate unity, must be held to be equal in full to the terms of this appointment. It cannot prove false and recreant to its supernatural trust. "On this rock," Christ says, "I build my Church: He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

III. We come now, in the third place, to the DESIGN of the Christian Ministry.

The whole office is, as St. Paul expresses it, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto itself in love."

Here we have the great thought, which may be said to form the key note of this whole Epistle to the Ephesians, Christ "head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." The Church is no congregation merely of persons professing Christianity, brought together in an outward way, the result in such view of private and separate piety supposed to be brought to pass under such form on the outside of its communion. It is a living constitution which starts from Christ himself, in virtue of his resurrection from the dead, forms the home of the Spirit in the world, and includes in itself powers altogether above nature for the accomplishment of its own heavenly ends; within the bosom of which only is comprehended all the grace that men need for their salvation, as truly as deliverance from the Flood was to be found only within the Ark in the days of Noah. Here is the forgiveness of sins, the illumination of the Holy Ghost, the manna of heaven, the communion of saints, the victory of faith, the resurrection of the dead, and the life everlasting. And these benefits are conditioned by the vitality of the whole system or constitution to which they belong. Thus the Church is viewed as being to Christ in the world of grace, what the body is to the head in the natural world. It is the form in which he re-

veals his presence among men through the Spirit, and the organ by which he carries into effect the purposes of his grace. His people in this view are members of himself, and at the same time "members one of another," by their common relationship to the Church. "For as the body is one," the Apostle writes, (1 Cor. 12 : 12, 13; Comp. Rom. 12 : 5,) "and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body ; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free ; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." It is, as comprehended in the general organization of the Church, that its members grow up more and more into him who is the head, and this process of growth on their part is, at the same time, the edification of the Church as a whole.

The mystery of the general Christian life goes forward thus by the activity of its several parts, working unitedly together for a common end, in obedience to the law of its own supernatural constitution. The whole is an organic process. The growth of the Church is carried forward by the growth of its members ; while at the same time the plastic power from which this last comes resides only in the Church itself. There it flows from Christ, through the Spirit, fashioning and building up the new nature according to its own divine type. Its operation is primarily by the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, that living apprehension of the truth as it is in Christ, which faith only has power to produce, when brought into communication with the realities of the Gospel in their own sphere. Such knowledge is, as far as it goes, an actual entrance into the truth itself, and so a real participation in the life of him who is the absolute light of the world. What serves thus to redeem the understanding from darkness, brings into the will also the law of charity or love ; which becomes then a perpetual fountain of grace, and the source of all Christian sanctification. Such wealth of salvation, according to the Apostle, is comprehended in the knowledge of Jesus Christ as it is made possible to men in the Church ! His prayer for Christians was accordingly, that God might give unto them the Spirit of wis-

dom and revelation in this form, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, to know the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and the exceeding greatness of his power towards them who believe, (Eph. 1: 17-19.) His soul struggles seemingly with the greatness of the theme, and no language is found strong enough in its service. "For this cause," he says, (Eph. 3: 14-19,) "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

So in our text, the edification of the body of Christ is represented as going forward by the perfecting of the saints in this very process of faith and knowledge; whose scope is "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;" and through which, "speaking the truth in love," or rather as the original word means, *being one with the truth* in love, it is their privilege to "grow up into him in all things, which is the head," from whom the power of growth and spiritual completion is conveyed to the whole Church.

And here it is precisely, we say, that the Christian Ministry has its grand purpose and use. It is the agency, through whose intervention in the Church, Christ is pleased by his Spirit to provide for the building up of his people in the faith and hope of the gospel unto everlasting life. The representation of the Apostle implies that the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, by which the saints are carried forward towards their proper perfection, are conditioned by this arrangement as its necessary medium. And how much again this involves may be understood, by considering what results are supposed to be reached after and gained by its means. The case has to do with the mysteries of the kingdom of God, with the treasures of wisdom which are hid in Jesus Christ, with the deep

things of the Spirit which surpass all natural thought and comprehension. It has to do with a knowledge that begins altogether in faith, and supposes, therefore, an actual order of supernatural life and truth answerable to such faith, brought home to the soul in the form of revelation, and challenging its implicit submission. The obedience of faith, as it is called, is made to be in this way, over against all speculation and opinion, the ground of the whole Christian salvation. Men are required to surrender themselves to the economy of the gospel, in order that they may be formed by it to its own purposes and ends; and it is assumed, that in doing so they will come really and truly under the action of the truth as it is in Christ, so as to be no longer children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but having their very being in the element of truth and charity, may grow up in all things into him who is the head, even Christ. When we are told then, that the Ministry is the agency by which all this is brought to pass, we are not only enabled to form some right conception of its design, but from this come to see again what must necessarily be its constitution, agreeably to what we have already found to be true of the same, in looking at it from the side simply of its supernatural origin. The nature of the office is determined and explained by the object it is formed to serve, no less than by the source from which it springs; and from this view full as much as from the other, may be easily found to require all the qualifications which we have before shown it to possess. In no other form could it mediate safely between Christ and his Church, and promote the perfecting of the saints, "till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God," as distinguished from the winds and waves of all merely human doctrine, "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

IN CONCLUSION, it becomes us to consider seriously, from the whole subject, what are the general tests and conditions of a true Ministry, and to ponder well the misery and danger of a false one, both for those who exercise it and for those who trust themselves to its care.

The Ministry, under its true form, supposes, as we have seen, a divine commission, a strictly supernatural appointment and source. And as there has been in fact but one such commission, that which was given by Christ when he passed into the heavens as head over all things to the Church, it must be able, all the world over and through all time, to refer itself to this as the actual charter of its authority, in clear exclusion of every other title pretending to take its place.

From this it follows necessarily, in the next place, that the Ministry under its true form, wherever it exists, must be comprehended in the unity of the office as a whole, and so also at the same time in the unity of that one true Church which we all own and acknowledge, as an object of faith, in the Apostles' Creed. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. All starts from Christ; all subsists by his Spirit; all rests on the same foundation of the apostles and prophets. The very thought of a loose and divided Ministry, in such a constitution, destroys itself, by overthrowing the conception on which alone the whole authority of the office must rest. To see and feel the reality of the commission from which it flows, is at once to see and feel also that it must be in union and harmony with itself through all its parts, that it must have the character of a single organization, and that the whole force of it must fall to the ground whenever it is pretended to sever it from such connection, and to exercise its functions in an independent and isolated way. In any government, the powers by which it exists and carries on its affairs, must form one single constitution. However they may be distributed, they must remain still bound together as one orb, whose parts all meet in the unity of a common centre. Laws, titles, offices, functions, all have force only by virtue of their comprehension in the order which originates and sustains the whole. To think of powers being validly exercised, or rights validly claimed, in the name of the government, without regard to this order, would be a monstrous contradiction. And can it be any less monstrous to suppose the possibility of any similar disruption of authority and office in the kingdom of Christ, and under the great seal which imparts to the Christian Ministry its supernatural warrant and force? "Is

Christ divided?" May the same seal be attached here to different ministries, in no connection with one another, held by no common law, and moving in no common sphere? Is the connection something which a man may carry away with him wherever he pleases, to use in his private capacity as to himself shall seem right and good? The imagination is preposterously absurd. The force of the commission holds only in the office considered as a whole. To rend it from this unity, is to reduce it to nothing.

And so from this we have, by necessary consequence again, the third condition of a true Ministry, namely, submission to a living rule or order in which this unity of office may be actually exhibited in a real way, as a fact coming down from the time of the Apostles. To act officially in any polity, the single functionary must not only join himself with its general organization, but in doing so must bow also to the authority which already belongs to it as an actually existing constitution in its own sphere. How much more is it meet and fit that this should be the case also, where the administration regards the supernatural constitution of the Church, and the mysteries of the kingdom of God! Christianity, in its very nature, involves the idea of authority, under a form not dependent on human thought or will; so that here above all, the conception of office must be taken to imply, at the same time, submission to the actual polity or order from which it springs, regarded as a living permanent constitution. And if this polity be represented by the unity of the Ministry, as we have seen it to be, there must be a line of historical continuance by which both together shall be found falling back to the great commission, in which the Church originally took its start. The unity of the Ministry in this way is not the consent merely of any number of men, whether many or few, who may agree to take the office upon them and exercise it in the same way. It exists always as a historical fact already at hand, and dating from the day of Pentecost, to the authority of which in such view, accordingly, all must bow, who are brought from time to time to have part truly in its commission.

Such seem to be necessarily, from the nature of the subject,

the great tests of the Christian Ministry in its legitimate and true form. Where these are wanting, we may have the show and sham, but not, it is to be feared, the reality of the sacred office. It is hardly necessary to say, however, how widely different from all this is the reigning popular view of the subject, especially in our own country at the present time. Few appear to make serious account either of the supernatural commission of the Ministry, or of its necessary unity, or of its dependence upon an actual succession in this form, handed down from the time of the Apostles. Indeed nothing is more common, than to hear ministers themselves, those at least who call themselves such, openly deriding every requirement of this nature, as a sort of exploded superstition, fit only for Catholics and Old Testament *Jews*. Any evangelical sect, they take it, has power to originate the office for its own use; or at all events may be satisfied if it has been able to carry off with it some small fragment or particle of an older succession, in breaking away violently from some other Church; as Micah felt that all was right, when he obtained a wandering Levite for his priest, (Judges 17 : 7-13;) or as the children of Dan considered it an object afterwards to steal away the same unprincipled priest, and to make him the source of a new, separate priesthood for their own false worship. (Judges 18 : 18-31.) The flaw of schism, in such a case, is not felt to be of any consequence; for the persons in question have no sense whatever of the necessary oneness or corporate solidarity of the sacred office. They laugh at the idea of its legitimacy and force being conditioned, in their own case or in the case of others, by any such relation. They are bound by no such consciousness. Their commission is felt to be a sort of private property, which holds good to themselves directly and separately, from the great head of the Church. Enough, it may be, that it is acknowledged by a single congregation. Or, at most, that it is comprehended in the organized ministry of some particular sect. They care for no wider comprehension. And with such unbelieving indifference to the idea of the Church as a present whole, how should they be expected to have any such faith in its historical character, as to feel the least real concern about



the derivation of their title through its living succession in past ages. The only authority they think it necessary to bow to, in such view, is the constitution and tradition again of their own sect. What though this be only of yesterday, and its creed confessedly a mere opinion or "persuasion?" They are willing to trust themselves blindly to its guidance, and then make a merit of what they call their Christian liberty and independence by throwing off all respect for Church authority under every broader and older view.

Need we say that such a habit of thought always involves in its last analysis, an entire want of faith in the supernatural constitution of the Church, and in the divine order of the Ministry as we have had it under consideration at this time. We have a right to say of it, indeed, that it is absolutely at war with the mystery of Christianity from first to last. It substitutes for it another Gospel.

By comprehending what the Ministry involves in its true form, we are prepared to understand how great must be the calamity of a false Ministry for all who are concerned with it in any way. It is by its very nature an imposture and usurpation, where it is most dreadful to think of any such outrageous wrong. By pretending to be the truth, at the same time, under such false character, it contradicts and opposes the truth itself in its own proper form. It belongs in this way necessarily to the realm of Antichrist. For this precisely is the true conception of the power we call Antichrist, that it exalts itself against Christ by wickedly thrusting itself into his place, and seeking to pass itself off under his name. The grand criterion of the spirit, according to St. John, (1 John 4: 3,) is just this, that it "confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh;" is not willing to know and own the actual of a new and higher order of life in him as the Word made Flesh for us men and our salvation; but pertinaciously insists on resolving the whole mystery of godliness," (1 Tim. 3: 16,) either directly or indirectly, into the form of a mere abstract spiritualism belonging to nature in its own sphere. Thus a spurious Christ, existing only in the thought and fancy of men, and having no power to effect a real union, and so a real reconcil-

iation between the natural and supernatural worlds, is set up in mockery and rivalry of the true Christ, and made to challenge the faith of the world under the usurpation of his glorious name. And what else is it but the same spirit at work, when the true supernatural constitution of the Church, proceeding as this does from the mystery of the incarnation "justified in the Spirit"—the Son of Man received up into glory—is ignored, or virtually denied, and made to be practically of no account, by the substitution for it of another conception altogether, reducing it in fact to a simply rationalistic and natural form! Or when, in full conformity with this, the supernatural origin of the Ministry is sublimated into a sort of Gnostic idealism merely, its commission converted into a religious myth, the idea of its necessary unity and apostolical succession derided as a silly dream of the middle ages, and an institution of wholly different form and nature, excluding these characteristics in their true sense altogether, is brought forward and exhibited as fully equal to all the purposes and ends of the sacred office? Could any presumption more certainly refer itself, by St. John's criterion, to the domain of Antichrist? Whatever any such false Ministry may affect or pretend, it is a Ministry in truth, not of faith, but of unbelief, not of righteousness, but of sin. It practically proclaims God a liar, (1 John 5: 10,) by "not believing the record that he has given of his Son," not owning the mystery of the Gospel in its own form, but daring to put it into another form agreeably to its own taste. Christ, having risen from the dead, establishes his Church as a constitution above nature, and in virtue of the power that belongs to him as the fountain and head of this new creation solemnly commissions the Ministry in his own form, clothing it in a real way with powers answerable to the economy to which it belongs, and promising to surround it with the guaranty of his own presence in the Spirit through all time; bids it go teach all nations, baptizing them into his name; makes salvation to depend on believing and obeying the order which he has been pleased thus, in his sovereign goodness, to appoint. And now, in the face of all this, the false ministry of which we are speaking stands forward, and preaches to men that salvation depends

on no such special constitution whatever, and that if they will but trust themselves to *its* guidance all may be expected to come out right in the end. Is not this, we ask again, the very spirit of Antichrist? And what shall we say of those, who commit themselves to the care of such an episcopate, in the prosecution of eternal life? The very thought is dismal in the extreme, and the case, if Christianity be more than a dream, one of the most deplorable that can well be presented to the contemplation of a believing mind.

Of such vast significance is the question concerning a true Ministry and the true Church. It has to do, not merely with the accidental form of Christianity, but with its inmost constitution and life. All are bound, as they value their salvation, to look well to the nature of the commission and charter under which they propose to secure this all important object. Indifference with regard to the matter, is itself a just occasion for apprehension and alarm; for it implies at once serious infidelity towards the whole subject—infidelity at the very point too, where Christ makes all to depend on faith, when he says; “He that *believeth*, and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that *believeth not* shall be damned.” As every minister is bound to be well assured, that he is a minister, not merely of this or that sect, but of the true Church Catholic, and has part thus in that one great commission from which hangs the unity of the whole office; so also are all other persons under obligation to satisfy themselves, on good and sufficient grounds, that they are in the bosom of the Church in its true form, and under the guidance and care of a legitimate and true Ministry.

## CHARGE TO THE PROFESSOR.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:

You have now been fully inducted into your office, as Professor of Didactic and Practical Theology in the Theological Seminary of the German Reformed Church in the United States. The circumstances in which you are thus placed are fraught with interest and solemnity. You are manifestly entering upon the most important career of your life. Whatever may have been the positions you have, in the Providence of God, been permitted to occupy heretofore, none can equal your present one in point of moment. You will, therefore, suffer a few words of counsel, which I may be induced to address to you, in discharge of the duty assigned me in the solemnities of the present occasion.

In the first place, I would affectionately remind you of the peculiar responsibility of the position you have this day assumed. You have doubtless carefully and prayerfully looked at this feature of it, before deciding to venture upon it. It may not be amiss, however, briefly to direct your attention to it again. Upon you hereafter will devolve, in connection with those who may be associated with you in the same work, the duty of training young men for the important office of the ministry of the Gospel. This is truly a responsible service. He who occupies the direct relation to the Church of a minister of the Gospel, has weighty responsibilities resting upon him. To him, in a most emphatic sense, is entrusted the welfare of immortal souls. This responsibility, however, must be greatly increased in the case of those to whom is committed the special duty of training the ministry for their responsible position. The fitness of the ministry for their work and the consequent success of their labors, depend, in a great measure, upon the kind of training they have received during their period of preparation. For the very cast of piety by which the rising ministry are distinguished, as well as their distinctive modes of

thought, their views of duty, and their plans of active operation in their respective spheres of labor, is likewise determined, to a very great extent, by the character of the influences to which they have been subjected in the midst of this same moulding process. This truth is perhaps not as generally realized as might be expected. A little observation, however, will be sufficient to satisfy any intelligent mind of its correctness. If its force, therefore, be admitted, it cannot fail to impress the mind with a deep sense of the intimate connection subsisting between the position of a Professor in a Theological Seminary and the success of the ministry of the Gospel in the important work assigned them; and of the consequent weighty responsibility resting upon one occupying the sphere upon which you have this day formally entered.

In the second place, permit me briefly to advert to some of the specific duties which will devolve upon you in your present position, in order that its weighty responsibilities may be properly met.

Let me then exhort you to give special attention to the cultivation of proper habits of piety in the young men who shall be entrusted to your care. This duty will devolve upon you, in common with those associated with you in the same work. It is one of the most important that can claim the attention of a Professor in a Theological Seminary; and yet, it is to be feared, that, in some instances at least, it does not receive that special attention which its great importance demands. The fitness of the ministry for their work is to be measured, to a very great extent, by the character of their piety. Intellectual training, it must be admitted, is of the very highest importance to the ministry of the Gospel. It is rendered valuable, however, only when it is sanctified by the presence of deep-toned piety. In the absence of the latter, the former only fits its possessor for interposing the more formidable obstacles in the way of the real progress of the kingdom of Christ. In discharging this important duty towards their pupils, the professors in a Theological Seminary, should exercise over them a special pastoral care. They should at all times, in their intercourse with them, endeavor to acquaint themselves with their

spiritual condition, impart unto them such counsel and direction as their circumstances require, and strive, in every appropriate way, to encourage in them the formation of habits of the most deep-toned piety. They should do this, not only from a regard to the prospective usefulness of their pupils, lying as it does, at the very foundation of success in their ministrations; but also from a regard to their personal salvation, so that when they have preached to others, they may not at last themselves be found to be cast-a-ways.

The duty to which I have thus far referred, as has been already intimated, belongs to you in common with those participating with you in the office of teaching in the Seminary. There are others which devolve more especially upon you in the particular department you have been called to fill; and these must receive at least a passing notice, before it will be proper to close my present remarks. The Professorship into which you have been inducted has been designated as the "Professorship of Didactic and Practical Theology." This title plainly indicates the nature of the specific duties you will be expected to perform.

From the first term employed in this title, it is manifest, that it will be required of you to endeavor, according to the best of your ability, to make the students committed to your care, perfectly familiar with the system of religious truths, as these are distinctive of Christianity, and thus to indoctrinate them fully in the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In your efforts to accomplish this end, it will be necessary to have a constant reference to the fact, that, in the several spheres they may subsequently occupy, it will be expected of them to unfold these truths clearly to others; to hold them up and enforce them also, in all their practical bearings; and likewise, to defend them successfully against the various assaults of enemies. In the discharge of this part of your duty, you will be expected, in the language of the solemn obligation you have assumed, to "make the inviolable divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and the truth of the doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, the basis of all your instructions." The former is to be regarded as containing all things which relate

to the faith, the practice and the hope of the righteous; and as constituting the only rule of faith and practice in the Church of God, so that no traditions, as they are called, and no mere conclusions of reason contrary to the clear testimony of the Scriptures, can be received as rules of faith or of life. And the latter is to be received as containing, in a convenient summary form, the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. In carrying forward your instructions upon the particular basis thus pointed out, with a view to indoctrinate the students committed to your care in the principles of the Gospel, it should be your constant aim, to make them, not only sound in the faith, but also workmen, that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The second term in the title employed to designate the Professorship to which you have been called, indicates, that to you will be specially entrusted the duty of preparing the young men who shall sit under your instructions, for turning to practical account in the active duties of the ministry, the varied furniture with which they may have been provided during their course of study, by way of qualifying them for their important work. In this particular sphere, it will be expected of you, to endeavor to familiarize them with the secret springs of human action, and to teach them how to form their various plans of usefulness and carry them out with the greatest prospect of success. It will be your duty, to impress indelibly upon their minds, the necessity and importance of mingling from day to day, as much as possible, with the different members of their flock, familiarizing themselves with their wants and contributing to their relief; and especially to teach them how to so shape their intercourse with their people, as to ensure from it, the most happy results. In a word, it will devolve upon you to instruct them how to labor out of the pulpit, as well as in it, so as to make their various ministrations effectually subserve the important ends they are designed to promote.

The particular duty to which I have just referred, is a most important one, and one too, which, it is to be feared, has been only too much neglected in the most of our Theological Seminaries in time past. To this neglect, it is doubtless owing,

that, at the present day, whilst we have so many able and instructive preachers, we have comparatively so few efficient and successful pastors. For, it matters not how excellent our pulpit performances may be, they will accomplish comparatively nothing, if they are not faithfully followed up by labors of a more personal and private character. And in view of the particular defect to which I have referred, it is no wonder that some excellent men have been led even to question the utility of Theological Seminaries for preparing candidates for the ministry, as compared with the method of preparation under the private instruction of an active pastor, pursued by our forefathers.

It is a gratifying fact, however, that the religious public have of late years been becoming specially alive to this want, and are laboring with commendable efficiency to provide for its removal. Professorships of Practical Theology are being established in nearly all our Theological Seminaries, and filled with men specially qualified for the duties they impose. Our own Church has happily caught up the spirit of the general movement, and in the selection of yourself for the particular post to which you have been called, I have no doubt but that distinct reference was had on the part of many, to your past experience as an efficient and successful pastor. Let me then counsel you, to give special attention to the particular duties which will devolve upon you as Professor of Practical Theology, so that the students who may be privileged to share your instructions, shall become men distinguished not only for their learning and pulpit talents, but also for their working powers, turning every thing they possess to practical account, in the way of promoting the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

With these few counsels, honestly, though it may be imperfectly expressed, we would affectionately commit you and the particular cause entrusted to your care, to the Great Head of the Church, praying that he may be ever present with you, to guide you with his counsel and replenish you with his grace, so that you may always be found to be an efficient and successful teacher in our School of the Prophets.



## INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

THAT my mind is deeply affected by the circumstances under which I appear before you at this time, may well be conceived. I am about to take the place, in the Theological Seminary of the German Reformed Church, of a divine, as distinguished for his rare Christian virtues, as for his powerful intellect and ripe scholarship. To attempt his eulogy before this audience, would be superfluous. Nothing, that I could say, would increase the estimation in which he is held; and when I express profound regret that he was led to retire from a post, which no one is likely to fill with equal credit to himself and advantage to the cause of theological science, I only give utterance to the general sentiment.

The responsibility I thus assume, would be sufficiently trying to the sensibilities of a man of thorough mental training, and of large experience in the fulfilment of the duties of the station. In my case, the full consciousness of deficiency in these respects, together with a due sense of the importance of the position to which I have been called, at the present conjuncture of affairs in our Church, painfully oppresses me.

The state of the Church at large also adds to my embarrassment. It is very much unsettled. With great vagueness, as well as diversity of opinion respecting the doctrines of the Bible, there is an equal misapprehension in regard to divine institutions. According to the popular theory, the family is scarcely of this character—certainly not the State. Governments, we are usually told, originate with the people, and to say that “the powers that be are ordained of God,” would be political heresy.

It would not be an easy matter to define the character of the Church, in popular estimation. If it exist at all, in concrete visible form, any association of individuals for religious worship, may be considered a church. It requires no particular organization—has no specific authority, and no peculiar sacredness

of character. The ministry is equally destitute of such claims. The worship of the sanctuary is made up chiefly of rhetorical exhibitions; and the sacraments—especially the Lord's Supper, as a memorial of Christ's death—are rites proper to be observed, but of nothing more than moral efficacy. Such opinions prevail to a large extent. Now, it is not to be expected that all men should trouble themselves with subtle scholastic criticisms upon the sacred text, or with abstruse speculations in reference to the constitution of the Church, or the sublime mysteries of our holy religion. It is, however, important that all men should have clear conceptions of saving truth, otherwise they may be led into dangerous error. They should also have a just appreciation of divine ordinances as means of grace, or they will be tempted to resort to inventions of their own, and their religious services will frequently degenerate into cold formality, or wild fanaticism.

Nor is this all, or the worst, that may be said of the existing state of the Church. As the natural result of vague and various opinions upon religious subjects, there is no cordial union or coöperation among professing Christians—at variance in their views of divine truth, their experiences are different, and they can have no sincere sympathies. With occasional intercourse and interchange of kind feeling, they seldom participate in each others counsels, or assist in each others labors. When, as it sometimes happens, they occupy the same field, a spirit of emulation and rivalry is soon elicited, and jealousy and suspicion separate and keep them apart. Generous and noble spirits, ready to unite in every good work, are to be met with in all confessions, but no two denominations, in their ecclesiastical capacity, can be brought in this way to coöperate. The tendencies are of an opposite character. This is undeniably true of the existing denominations in Protestant christendom. Facts of recent occurrence, in the history of our American Churches, bear melancholy witness to the truth of these statements.

It may be said, that this after all is no great evil. The divisions in the Church lead to greater exertion, and more is done than would otherwise be the case. But is it not a libel

on the Gospel, to suppose that the spirit of emulation which it condemns is more efficient than the spirit of charity which it enjoins? Besides, the good which it effects must be equivocal in its character, and can never compensate for the jealousy and ill will, and other forms of evil to which it gives rise.

Nor are these the only difficulties which disturb the Church. The original league between the powers of earth and hell for its destruction still exists, and the adversary at the head of it carries on the warfare with great skill and perseverance. When unable to accomplish his end by direct assault, he resorts to covert means, and seeks to strip the Church of influence, where he cannot resist its power. It is so contrived, accordingly, that the interests of education and charity, which properly belong to the Church, are taken out of the hands of professing Christians and committed to the management and control of irreligious men. In this way the spirit of the world enters and reigns within the sanctuary. In many instances, the pastors of large and wealthy congregations derive their chief support from men of the world, and though they may have it in their hearts faithfully to fulfil their duties, they must nevertheless be careful not to come too violently in conflict with the cherished opinions and prejudices of those upon whom they depend for the comfortable circumstances in which they and their families are placed.

In view of these, and other difficulties, in the Protestant Church, there are earnest-minded men whose confidence in its existing organizations is very much impaired, and it is with them a serious question, whether in their present form they can be sustained. The interest in this question is increased by recent events in Europe. Every thing there, in the spheres of religion and politics is unsettled, and the elements at work are antagonistic in their character, and of great power. The ultimate issue we need not fear. The Church will be carried safely through. But we can scarcely expect that the existing agitation will be composed, without effecting great changes in the condition both of Church and State. Their institutions cannot be maintained in their present form. They have waxed old, like a garment, and must be laid aside and give place to

others, the product organically of a new order of things. In the mean time, the Church will be exposed to peril, and the faith and patience of the saints will be severely tried. The best hope is, that in the general wreck, the connexion between the Church and the State will be dissolved, and that each will be left free, in its proper sphere, to the employment of its own resources, in the fulfilment of its proper functions.

The misfortune is, that in Europe, and especially in Germany, the Church is unaccustomed to this sort of self-reliance and independent exertion. Their divines speculate profoundly, but they are deficient in practical talent. Were they more active, carrying out their theories into practice, we would look with greater confidence for valuable results, as the fruit of their labors. American Christianity, unfortunately fails in the opposite direction. We are so absorbed in the pursuit of wealth and material advantages, that we scarcely have time to think of those important questions of the age, relating to the moral and religious improvement of the race, which engage their attention. This is the more to be regretted, as there are those present who will live to see this western continent covered with a teeming population, in the possession of unexampled resources, in the way of intelligence, power and wealth, and unless we transmit to them, not merely our social and political institutions—but what is indispensable to their perpetuity—the Gospel in its purity, a faithful ministry and divine ordinances, we will fail in our duty, and the consequences may be disastrous.

That, in view of a state of things so unfavorable, I shrink from the responsibility of the office to which I have been called, is not surprising. But instead of giving way to distrust and fear, should we not rather rouse ourselves to fervent prayer and active efforts to prevent the evils we dread? That the Church is in trouble, is not a strange thing. It has always been the case. It is wonderful, according to human probabilities, that it still exists. As well might we expect that a spark of fire, kindled on a rock, lashed by the surges of the ocean, would survive a storm, as that the Church should have been able successfully to resist all the assaults, open and disguised, that

have been made upon it from the first. No sooner was it in being, than its destruction was attempted. Throughout the period of the patriarchal dispensation, it often seemed to be in peril. Nor were its peace and prosperity uninterrupted, when those who composed it were established in the land of Canaan, and invested with peculiar privileges as the chosen people of God. It has had similar trials to encounter during the Christian dispensation. It might have been supposed, if the Scriptures had not faithfully admonished us to the contrary, that when the Son of God should ascend again to heaven, and be seated in authority and power at the right hand of the Father, that he would throw over his Church an impenetrable shield of protection, and preserve it safe from the hands of its foes. But such has not been the case. "The heathen" are still permitted to "rage, and the kings of the earth to set themselves, and the rulers to take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed." Satan, the great adversary, is now, and until the hour of his total and final defeat, he ever will be, as intent upon the ruin of the Church, as he was when, in the guise of a serpent, he tempted our first parents in the garden of Eden, or when he afterwards assailed the Son of God in the wilderness of Judea. Immediately preceding the Reformation, it seemed as if all true piety had become extinct—the ordinances of worship were perverted to the basest purposes, and the priests at the altar were frequently polluted with the worst of crimes. But by the power of its own imperishable life, derived from its proper spiritual head, the Church either threw off, or corrected much that was wrong, and started under a new form of organization, with fresh vigor, in the work of evangelizing the world. Its troubles, however, have not ceased. Protestantism, as well as primitive Christianity, has had its trials, and will have them again. Its greatest danger now appears to be from internal dissension. And yet we may venture to hope that it will suffer no material harm from this source. The very form which the discussions have assumed, warrants this expectation. They relate to the Church itself, and involve the questions at issue at the time of the Reformation. In the solution of these questions, the most earnest and gifted men in

our day are intensely occupied, and we may venture to hope, as well as sincerely pray, that the results of their investigations will be propitious, establishing the Church upon a firmer basis than ever. The trials of the Church hitherto have always been the prelude to its triumphs, and its sorest conflicts have ever issued in glorious success. They, in fact, have been the processes, by which its energies and proper life have been developed, and its greater prosperity secured.

This, in a remarkable degree, has been our own experience, as a denomination. We too have had our trials. In Europe we had much to endure from persecution and undeserved reproach. In this country we have had a similar experience, with a singular change of the position of our adversaries, and of the nature of the charges brought against us. When the views of truth held by Reformed divines were first embodied in their confessions, it was alleged that they were rationalistic, and allowed too large a liberty to the human mind. The same doctrines taught now, we are told, with a strange inconsistency, are Romanistic in their character, and interfere materially with the right of the individual to interpret the Scriptures for himself. For the last ten years, especially, we have been most unrighteously dealt with. But God has been with us. With Paul we can say: "We have been persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." The agitations, which it was thought would divide and distract us, have led to a more cordial understanding, and united us more firmly; and this day the German Reformed Church stands before the world in more perfect unity and greater strength than ever before—more fully conscious of her denominational character and mission—her ecclesiastical position more accurately defined, her past history better understood, her institutions more highly appreciated, her resources more available, and her obligations to use them, in the fulfilment of her proper destiny, more freely and more generally acknowledged.

There is, accordingly, everything in our present condition and prospects to inspire hope. Our position as a Church, geographically considered, is an important one. It is intermediate and extends east and west, not north and south. Thus

situated relatively, our people are not so much exposed to the sectional excitements which have distracted other denominations. They also are chiefly engaged in agricultural pursuits, and industrious and frugal in their habits, they are seen to acquire a firm hold on the material interests of the country. In this respect their advantages are likely to be very great. Their theological position is equally favorable. It is very well known, that there are at this time two opposite tendencies in religion, as well as in politics, especially in this country, where it would seem the moral problems of the age connected with Church and State are to be worked out. In portions of the Protestant Church there is evidently a proclivity towards rationalism, whilst on the other hand, there is an obvious reaction, which, if not kept within proper bounds, may carry those who are brought within the sphere of its influence, into the domain of Romanism. As it regards the rationalistic tendency, it is not the less decided, nor likely to be the less disastrous, because it exists amongst those who are unconscious of it, and who profess to be perfectly secure in the belief of Bible truth, with great show of zeal for its propagation and spread. The danger is particularly with a class of persons, who graduate their piety by the measure of their hatred to Popery, and with great parade of their attachment to the principles of Protestantism, too often ignore their own confessions. This is by no means surprising. Their confessions, originating in opposition to error, as it sprung up from time to time, in the belief or practice, of the Protestant Church, and based also upon principles of mutual antagonism, rather than of direct resistance to the fundamental abuses of Popery, have run themselves out in an extreme way, to their final consequences; and however true they may have been in reference to the errors they were intended to oppose, they do not furnish ground, strong enough, or broad enough, for the Church of the present or future, to stand upon. They grew out of a condition of things no longer existing, and not likely to recur, and having answered the end of their construction at the time, it is no more than might have been expected, that they would gradually lose their hold, as standards of doctrine and tests of communion, upon the re-

spect of those who once avouched them. In regard to these tendencies, the theological position of the German Reformed Church is most auspiciously intermediate, and unmistakeably conservative, and it may be that its advantages in these respects may be appreciated and brought into requisition sooner and to an extent greater, than many now expect.

In view of this fact, it is matter of congratulation, that the German Reformed Church, in its opposition to both those tendencies, has been providentially thrown back upon its original principles, as set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism, and manifests at this time a stronger attachment to them than ever. It would be interesting to trace the process and causes by which this has been effected; but to advert to the principles themselves will be more profitable. In doing this, it will be seen that they refer to the fundamental truths of Christianity. They are not simply a protest against error; they are the open unqualified assertion of positive truth. They regard the advent and incarnation of Jesus Christ as the central fact of the Gospel, and the Son of God, the God-man Mediator, as the author and source of salvation. They regard man by nature as totally depraved, and of himself utterly unable to effect his recovery and restoration to the divine favor, and insist upon his regeneration and sanctification, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, in the faithful use of the Word and Sacraments, as divinely appointed means of grace. And whilst they deny that the righteousness of the believer is either the measure, the ground, or the condition of his acceptance with God, and firmly maintain that he is justified freely of grace, through faith, they also hold, that in his regeneration there is, in virtue of his union with Christ as his spiritual head, the principle of a new life imparted to him, that will produce in him the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and fit him for the service of God, so that his justification is not a legal fiction, nor an imaginary result, but an actual fact. They recognize the Church, with its ministry and ordinances, as divine, not only in its origination, by the appointment of God, but as being in fact a divine constitution, for the conversion of the world, and as carrying within itself supernatural elements adapted to this end. They



also hold that the Holy Scriptures are the only sufficient rule and measure of the faith and practice of the Christian. At the same time, they give no countenance to the notion that a formal connexion with the Church, and the use of its ordinances, are sufficient to ensure salvation. They are proper and necessary in their place, but without faith as the gift of God, and without cordial repentance as its appropriate fruit, the attendance upon them avails nothing. Rejecting those loose notions, which disparage the Church, and divine ordinances, they insist upon a vital union with the Lord Jesus—not merely the belief of his doctrines—not merely obedience to his commands—as the very element of all sincere piety, and the starting point of all experimental religion.

Recognizing these truths, we are accustomed to attach great importance to educational religion. By this is not meant learning religion by rote. According to our conception of the phrase, it is the regular training of the young in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord.” There is a wide difference between education and instruction. A man may be instructed without education, but he cannot be educated without instruction. Education is the bringing out of the elements of knowledge received in instruction, and *religious* education is the development, in the form of living principle, of that, which is communicated by the process of instruction, in the form of knowledge. Not only, therefore, is the mind of the religiously educated man instructed, but his affections and will are also influenced and controlled by the truth which he has received. If religion does consist in fact in a thorough and entire change of man’s whole being, and if it is not brought about in an arbitrary magical way, the principle indicated is certainly most reasonable. And if God has devised a method of salvation, we are constrained to believe that it will be most effectual in the case of those, who have not as yet by actual transgression and continuance in sin, familiarized themselves with evil and provoked his displeasure.

We may also suppose that, in any such plan of salvation, the means employed would be appropriate to the end proposed. Persuaded of this, we have no hesitation in asserting, that if the

divine method in the use of the means appointed for the purpose, were fully and faithfully carried out by every family and member of a given community, in covenant with God, it would never fail, but in every instance, would be effectual in bringing those born within the sphere of its influence, as they grew up to years of maturity, under the saving power of the Gospel.

This is implied in the baptism of children. In the use of this holy ordinance they are consecrated to the service of God, are received into covenant with him and are entitled to the privileges and blessings of his kingdom. But if, after they are thus admitted to favor and invested with privileges, there are no means to secure the benefits proposed to be bestowed upon them, and they are to be left exposed to the temptations, that are in the world, then is this sacred and impressive rite without significancy. It is utterly useless and no better than solemn mockery.

To the importance of the religious training of the young, the practice of the Churches of the Reformation bears the most decided testimony. The ablest and best men thought their time and talents well employed in the preparation of catechisms for this purpose, and never was the duty more carefully attended to. In one of the confessions of the seventeenth century, it is declared that "children born within the pale of the visible Church and dedicated to God in baptism, are under the inspection and government of the Church, and are to be taught to read and repeat the catechism, the apostle's creed and Lord's prayer. They are to be taught to pray, to abhor sin, to fear God, and obey the Lord Jesus Christ. And when they come to years of discretion, if they be free from scandal, appear sober and steady and have sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body, they ought to be informed that it is their duty and their privilege to come to the Lord's Supper." In the German Reformed Church it is required of "every minister to give especial attention to the youth in his congregation, that they may thereby be prepared to make a public profession of religion as members of the Church, and to approach the Lord's table with just views and a proper frame of mind." And "the

members of Consistory, particularly the elders, as shepherds and overseers of the flock, shall be present at the catechetical instructions, as often as it may be practicable, for the purpose of observing the deportment of those who are taught, and their acquaintance with religious truth." And to guard as effectually as possible against the abuses to which all methods of admitting persons to the communion of the Church are liable, it is required that, "before a confirmation, the minister shall diligently examine, in the presence of the elders, whether the applicants for admission to the communion of the Church, rightly understand the doctrines of religion, and whether they manifest their practical influence and purpose to lead a pious life."

Such are the prominent distinguishing features of the German Reformed Church. Surely they are eminently Protestant, evangelical and scriptural. It may also be remarked, that the spirit in which the principles of the Church are set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism, is strictly irenical. This venerable symbol of our faith was prepared, as is well known, for the express purpose of soothing and allaying the bitter animosities which had been produced by the theological discussions of the day. Without compromising truth on either side, or countenancing error in any form, its object was to mediate between the opposing parties and bring their disputes to a close. That it failed in this praiseworthy object, is no more to be laid to its charge, than is the Gospel to be blamed for not converting the world. The fault, in both cases, is to be ascribed to the perverseness of our fallen humanity. We may hope that it will yet succeed, and one day furnish, as it was intended, the ground of reconciliation, upon which all Churches may unite.

There is nothing invidious or unreasonable in this hope. The principles avowed in the Heidelberg Catechism are those in which the Reformers at first, generally concurred. Even upon the sacramental question they did not materially differ. Luther, for a time, acquiesced, or at least did not object, to the views expressed in the Reformed confessions, and it was only when he discovered, as he thought, danger of their losing sight of an important truth, that he took the stand, which has so

long and so unhappily divided the Protestant Church of Germany. The Lutheran and Reformed theories, in fact, are not antagonistic. They are both different and complementary parts of the same doctrine. They both admit a real presence in the eucharist—never indeed denied, or overlooked by divines pretending to orthodoxy, until a later period—and at variance only as to the manner in which that presence obtains.

Whilst, however, the Heidelberg Catechism, in its spirit, is decidedly irenic and conciliatory, as it regards the Protestant confessions, it is directly opposed in its principles to the abuses and perversions of Christianity in the Roman Catholic Church. It is equally opposed to all rationalistic tendencies. In no form does it countenance either. This is the ground which the German Reformed Church of this country has always maintained, and still maintains. It is here precisely, that she feels herself strongest and most secure; and the idea that she is disposed to abandon this position, in one direction or another, is an absurdity conceived either in profound ignorance, or palpable prejudice. It is here, too, upon this ground, that I, with the strongest conviction, profess to stand. No where else, indeed, can I stand. If I forsake it on either side, I place myself in a false position. On the one hand, I would shrink with dismay from committing myself to the waves of a plausible rationalism, which almost imperceptibly, yet not the less certainly, carry their victim into the vortex of scepticism and unbelief. On the other, I should feel myself in danger of making shipwreck of the faith among the rocks and quicksands which lie open or concealed in the opposite direction. With the Heidelberg Catechism for my guide, I hope to steer clear of both. I shun empty formalism and at the same time avoid a false spiritualism, ending always in an outward show of carnal observances—thus serving God in the use of his appointed means of grace, and worshipping him in spirit and in truth.

This is the only safe ground. It is the ground we have ever occupied, as a denomination, and that we must continue to occupy. Consistency demands it. The cause of truth—the interests of pure Protestantism, equally require it at our hands.

The fear of obloquy must never be permitted to drive us from it. I would sooner perish amidst the wreck, and be buried under the ruins of our venerated Church, than to defer in the least to the opposition, which any fits of envy, or jealousy and pride, may be able to array against us. All that can be done, in this way, will do us but little harm. No denomination, indeed, can stand permanently, and prosper, upon any other than the ground just indicated. Other principles may prevail for a time, and serve a good purpose, but they will pass away with the occasions which gave rise to them. Other causes and contingencies, of greater moment, and more immediate pressure will be continually occurring in the providence of God, and the Church that has no better foundation, will sooner or later lose its vitality, and be known only in the history of the past.

I may yet remark, that it is only upon this original Reformation ground that Protestants can unite. This is the ground upon which, as has been intimated, Protestantism started, and only while occupying it, can it make progress. It is not by ignoring the truth, or by eviscerating it, in the spirit of affected charity, of its proper contents, that different portions of the Church can be brought together in a real union, but by holding it fast and confessing it. Ignorance and unbelief separate and divide; whilst faith binds men together in the bonds of peace and unity and love.

Let us then firmly maintain our proper denominational position. We need not fear the result. The principles which it involves have borne us safely through seasons of sore trial and severe conflict. They will do it again, with the blessing of God.

What is more, we have a work to perform. It is not merely to assist in giving the Gospel and the ordinances of worship to the thousands who are daily flocking to our shores from the fatherland. This itself is a great work. But as a denomination, we ought to do our part to leaven afresh, with the principles of the Reformation, the theology of this wide spread Protestant land. This is still more important—and not sufficiently appreciated by many. We may not need theology, in its more scientific forms, for the conversion and edification of

souls. But we do need it, and we must have it, for the defence, the development and the illustration of truth; and no where, and never, was it more loudly called for, than precisely in our own country at the present time.

In this great work, it would have been our pleasure to join hands with other branches of the Reformed Church, especially with those who held the same form of doctrine, and professed to be interested in its dissemination. It was a mistake, however, to attempt such coöperation, without first assuring ourselves that there was nothing to interfere with the object contemplated—that the parties have an affinity for each other—were harmonious in their principles, and of congenial habits and dispositions. Unfortunately, in a particular instance, this was not the case, and the result must ever be lamented. The formal connexion, hastily and unadvisedly formed, terminated in a wider separation. What was worse, in leaning towards a denomination, which in great measure was unacquainted with the history and genius of our Church, and had no sympathy with the habits and spirit of our people, we estranged ourselves from another, which was “bone of our bone,” and to which we were bound by the strongest and most intimate social and ecclesiastical ties.

In this connexion, it may not be out of place to remark, in reference to a union of Protestant confessions, that, desirable as it is, if it ever does take place in a permanent way, it must begin with the Churches of the Reformation. Let be said upon the subject what may, the Lutheran and Reformed Churches embody in their confessions the principles of Protestantism, and represent in fact the two sides of the great movement of the sixteenth century. They must, accordingly, first be reconciled in their views and be brought to coöperate harmoniously, before anything of the kind may be expected of other denominations. It is not enough to lay aside peculiarities of Church order, and worship and doctrine, and to meet on neutral ground in friendly conference about the interests of Christ's kingdom. There must be some acknowledged truth, appealing with authority and power to the consciences of men, or they will never be brought and bound together as one body

in Christ Jesus. It is worth while to remember, too, that in Germany have originated those world-wide movements in the sphere of religion that have contributed so much to the welfare of our race in modern times; and if another shaking in Israel is to take place, it may possibly again originate there.

The German mind is peculiarly fitted for earnest and profound speculation, whilst that of the Anglo-Saxon is more inclined to practical exertion; and in America, where both elements frequently combine, and where all is full of fresh life and vigor, may be found the proper field for their display.

It is only in this way and upon some such ground as this, that a union of denominations can be effected. At one time, the evangelization of the world by the Bible Society and other kindred associations, had a happy effect in bringing Christians together in harmonious coöperation. The object was most worthy, and the result for a time was highly encouraging. It was pleasant to see the followers of Christ, of every name, and from every part of the world, meeting in fraternal embrace upon the same platform; and it seemed as if Satan was really foiled and his ingenuity at an end, for the means of arresting the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom. But these expedients for promoting coöperation among Christians, did not and could not—as, indeed, they were not intended—enable those who favored them most heartily, to advance to the same ecclesiastical position, and hence were insufficient to bind them together in one brotherhood, forgetful, in love to Christ, and zeal for his cause, of every private and separate interest. The denominational attachment in our day is stronger than ever; and it remains to be seen upon what more advanced and elevated position the Churches may yet unite and work together for the glory of Christ. May the providence of God speedily disclose it to our view.

In the mean time, the several denominations have a part to perform. Of none is this more certainly true, or more freely confessed, than of our own. To perform it, however, we must have a ministry of our own training, acquainted with the history and imbued with the spirit of our Church, as well as versed in its doctrines. This is required, with a view to its efficiency,

its peace and perpetuity. When the ministry of a Church is gathered in from abroad, and made up of men of different views, there will be frequent misunderstandings. If they are men of integrity and have any strength of character, they will be disposed to preach what they hold to be true, and to introduce the customs and practices to which they have been accustomed. They may even unwittingly imagine that everything new to them in the opinions and habits of the people, with which they have become connected, is necessarily wrong, and that they have been providentially called to correct it. Any such attempt, however honestly made, must interfere with the harmony and peace of the Church. It is, therefore, important to have a ministry of our own training, or composed at least of those who sincerely sympathize with us. They should also be interested in the history and the destiny and the proper mission of the Church, otherwise they will labor amongst us at great disadvantage, and with very little comfort. It is not enough that a minister strive for the conversion of souls. This is a primary duty, and one in which he cannot be too zealously engaged. But he should look beyond this, to the glory of Christ, and to the building up, and prosperity of his Church. It is in fact, when the Church prospers, and is active, that, in answer to the prayers of the saints, he may look for the happiest results, as the fruit of his labors in the conversion and sanctification of his people.

To succeed, one must also have a ministry imbued with the spirit of self-denial, and a willingness to endure hardship, and, if need be, persecution. Our people in many places, are in a transition state, in more senses than one, and with large accessions from abroad, must remain so for years to come. A minister laboring amongst them, must expect to make sacrifices of ease and comfort and to meet with trials. This is hard for flesh and blood to submit to, especially when the ministers of other denominations are well provided for. But when there is the spirit of faith and self-consecration, it may be done, and may even be turned to spiritual account. Nor must we suppose that we are beyond the reach of persecution. We sincerely pray that we may be permitted to escape, but judging from the



signs of the times, the hour may come before many are prepared for it.

Such a ministry, a learned, a devoted, self-sacrificing ministry, we should labor to provide. No other will enable us to maintain our position, or perform our duty as a Church. Without such a ministry, we had better give up our denominational existence, and fall in with other confessions, as our respective inclinations may prompt us, or as circumstances may seem to require. As to a union of denominations at this time, it is not to be thought of. The tendencies are of an opposite character. No two can walk together, except they be agreed. The only way, therefore, is for each, in the spirit of forbearance and charity, to maintain its proper ground, advocating its measure of truth, and fulfilling its appropriate duties, until, in the providence of God, the way is prepared, and the means provided, for all to advance to a higher position, where we may see eye to eye, and every heart throb in unison, filled with the love of Christ.

In doing this, we may expect many discouragements. Numerically, we are a small body, and compared with other denominations, have little influence. At this time, too, we are suffering undeserved reproach. We must not, however, despond. We are not forsaken of God. The tokens of his gracious presence, experienced during the past year, are too manifest to be mistaken; and earnest and good men regard us with interest, and would be sorry to see us halting in our course. Let us then, "thank God and take courage," determined to persevere; and though our name be blotted from the record of ecclesiastical organization on earth, and we perish, let us perish contending for the faith of our fathers, and we shall certainly find it written in the book of life in heaven. But no such result can take place, so long as we have a work to perform, and we continue faithfully to perform it, planting our feet upon the rock of ages; for though we wrestle, not only against flesh and blood, but also against principalities and powers in high places, we shall overcome in the end, and our "rest will be glorious."