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HOME REUNION SOCIETY.

A LECTURE
BY
EARL NELSON,
AND
ACCOUNTS OF TWO MEETINGS
ON
HOME REUNION
AT
SALISBURY.

W. WELLS GARDNER,
2, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS, LONDON, E.C. ;
AND AT THE OFFICE OF THE SOCIETY,
7, WHITEHALL, LONDON, E.C.

—
1878.

PREFACE TO OCCASIONAL PAPER, No. 4.

It has been considered useful as a guide to future action to publish as an occasional paper, an account of the two meetings at Salisbury, held in January and February, 1878, with the lecture on Home Reunion, delivered by Lord Nelson, on the previous eve of St. Thomas, from which the subsequent Meetings originated.

Lord Nelson's papers are very little more than the natural outcome of the Occasional Papers 1, 2, and 3. But his endeavour has been to present the Society's views in a spirit of Christian love and of fairness towards the Nonconformists, and it is evident that the endeavour has been so far successful as to have elicited a hearty response in the same Christian spirit from the Nonconformists. From having been for years estranged there is much ignorance of each other's ways and manner of thought which such Conferences will do much to take away; and though addresses by Nonconformist Ministers are of much use for further discussion by bringing out clearly their different standpoints and lines of argument, it would be unreasonable to expect from them more than qualified expressions of agreement when defending the principles of the bodies to which they belong.

The majority of the clergy, and the chief leaders of Nonconformity may look askance at the movement, but those who have joined together on either side from no sinister motive, feel a blessing from this work of Christian love, and know that however difficult it is to put forth any cut and dried scheme of Reunion, there is a sympathy and bond of union in the innermost heart of each, which under-

lies the outward points of difference. Even great principles, when viewed from different standpoints, are diversely interpreted. When men come to understand one another more, the reconciling of those apparently divergent principles will be much easier than is at present supposed. Nevertheless, it will be seen that while Churchmen have realized the existence of a specific teaching of Divine truths by the Nonconformist bodies,—a teaching which at once accounts for the true signs of spiritual life long evident among them—Nonconformists have learnt that Churchmen are not so cold and formal and lifeless as they had supposed.

Both have learnt some lessons of forbearance and of mutual respect. It is a great gain to know that those who in times past have said very bitter things of one another, have resolved, both in attack and defence to preserve a more Christian spirit. In such a cause all must work in patience, and on no premature plans, but sowing in love trust to God to give the increase.

Solvitur Ambulando.

Quinquagesima, 1878.

O Lord, Who hast taught us, that all our doings without charity are nothing worth. Send Thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtue, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee. Grant this for Thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.—*Collect for Quinquagesima Sunday.*

LECTURE
ON
HOME REUNION,
BY
EARL NELSON,

DELIVERED AT SALISBURY ON THE EVE OF ST. THOMAS'
DAY. 1877.

The Church of England, in her corporate capacity, has never forsaken her catholicity of doctrine, or her catholicity in practice, though many of her clergy and laity have unhappily, in many places and at many different times, grievously forgotten both. As a true branch of the Church catholic she is modelled on the original or gospel conception of what the Church should be ; and while she insists on safeguards at the admission of her teachers, she leaves her ordinary members the greatest legitimate freedom, requiring of the children of believing parents (by their sureties), or of adults, when admitted into the Church by baptism, a simple belief in the doctrines contained in the Apostles' Creed, and a simple promise, by God's help, to keep His will and commandments, and to fight under His banner unto their life's end. From this we may safely enter into amicable relations with all who are so qualified to come in, even though for a time they remain outside our communion. It is clear from holy scripture that our blessed Lord intended His Church to be a duly organised society, with special authority and with many special privileges ; but He never intended her to be a select company, from whom the less perfect were to be kept out, for He specially commissioned His Church to gather in the weak and the young and the ignorant for the purpose of edifying or building them up into the full knowledge of the doctrines of Christ. To this end it is essential that the Church should maintain all catholic doctrine which circles round, or rather radiates from, the one great central truth of the Incarnation of our blessed Lord as perfect God and perfect Man. This truth is preserved to us by the Church in her three creeds, and in the two great sacraments ordained by Christ Himself, and has been preserved and handed down to us through the

apostolic succession of bishops, priests, and deacons, which alone secures to all her members the due administration of those gifts of the Holy Ghost vouchsafed by our Lord to His Church. I mention this thus early in my paper because I am convinced that no improvement can ever take place in the relations between the Church and nonconformity if there is any half-hearted keeping back of her real claims. We believe her to be a reality with a definite history, with definite principles, and with definite and distinctive privileges. By placing these principles in the foreground, much useless discussion will be saved over minor differences of ritual and practice, which, though they have obtained fictitious importance from the strictness of our uniformity laws, can in reality form no scriptural or Christian ground against the desired reunion. It is also important that it should be made quite clear that, though these points must be considered vital, there is every reason to believe that much good may result from an amicable discussion of them, conducted in a true spirit of love, with proper preparation, and accompanied by earnest prayer for Divine guidance.

It is not impossible that many misconstructions, occasioned by the exaggerated form in which the accidents of the day present many truths to our view may, by such discussion, be removed ; that when viewed in their ancient simplicity, many truths now misunderstood may be found consistent with the teaching of scripture and the early Church. For instance, I am happy to think that many Nonconformists rightly hold with the Church the doctrine of the Incarnation of our blessed Lord. The fact that many do extensively use Dr. Liddon's Bampton Lectures on the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, clearly points that way. Nevertheless, there is no doctrine on which greater misunderstandings exist, even among Churchmen ; none, also, that by its wonderful ramifications into all the fields of theology, if not of natural science also, is more worthy of careful study ; but even when such discussions fail of any direct result, no harm can ever come of an earnest endeavour, guided in brotherly love, to understand one another better, or to learn more of the revelations in holy scripture of God's wonderful mercies to mankind.

Again, though it is impossible to exaggerate the sin of schism, which, when rightly understood, is nothing less than the rending

of Christ's body, the Church that He has willed to be one, we are surely not justified in accusing hereditary nonconformity of the original sin of schism, nor of casting the whole burden of such sin upon the original seceders from the Church. History only too clearly reveals that the cruel conduct of the Church towards the original Nonconformists arose much more from political exigencies than from any desire for the extension or for the purity of the kingdom of Christ.

I would now ask you to consider the relations between the Church and the nonconformists from three different points. 1. The common ground to which we may both fairly appeal in any amicable discussion. 2. The good things which Nonconformity has done for the Church. 3. The good things which the Church has done for nonconformity. And first, the common ground. We have a common Bible to which, when rightly interpreted, we both profess to appeal. I should, however, be deceiving you if I led you to suppose that this by itself was a great element of unity, because we are all so apt to place our own private interpretation of it before the interpretation handed down from the earliest ages of the Church, and of course one man's unsupported private interpretation is sure to clash with another's. We have a common origin in the Church before the division between East and West. There were errors within the Church then, as the parables of our Lord would lead us to expect, but outside of it there were only heretics with whom none of those who hold the true doctrine of the Incarnation could have had anything to do. We all showed this to be a common starting point when as a united and reformed National Church we deliberately appealed to an Œcumenical Council (of the whole Church East and West) so soon as it could be properly called together. And many of the Nonconformists bodies, as they have dropped off one by one from the Church of their fathers, appealed, often it may be in an exaggerated or mistaken way, to the practices and teaching of the early Church as justifying the particular doctrine or practice which they desired at that time to bring into greater prominence. We may also consider as common ground the old historic National Church before the Reformation, and before there were any direct schisms. We may glory in her successful missions to the heathen tribes of Germany and Scandinavia in her zeal in building up

our Constitution, and in maintaining the liberties of our people ; in her preservation of the Holy Scriptures and the encouragement of learning through her monastic establishments and schools ; in her continuous protests against the aggressions of the Papacy, which, strong in the midst of many errors, surely paved the way for our glorious Reformation. It is, I know, the fashion to ignore all this, and to teach that nothing but evil was to be found in the old National Church before it was reformed, but a fair unbiassed study of past history will not support that view. Neither can we afford to dwarf our Church's history by ignoring altogether the earlier part of it. We might just as well attempt to understand a man's character by ignoring all the goodness and all the evils of his youth, which combined have helped towards the formation and full development of it. Then, too, we have a common sin to lament over, for we have each in turn been the persecutor and the persecuted. We found fault with the Papacy for bringing the full virulence of persecution against the Protestants of the Continent, but we were neither of us loth to use the weapons ourselves. The Church against the Nonconformists, as I have hinted above, and subsequently Nonconformists against the Church, and in those colonial possessions in which the Nonconformists had the upper hand most cruelly against other Nonconformists who differed from them. All this, by whatever side it was indulged in, whether by the Church or by Roman Catholic or Protestant Nonconformists, was I venture to think, as far as it went and in itself essentially anti-Christian, and utterly opposed to that law of love which unhappily is not yet restored to its normal place among those who profess themselves to be followers of the crucified One. And now, let us consider, secondly, some of the benefits which Nonconformity has done for the Church.

First and foremost comes the universal protest of all nonconformity against Erastianism, which has helped the Church to a more earnest endeavour to get rid of that system of the mixing up of politics with religion, which must ever be detrimental to a true and free Christianity. And next I would mention the help nonconformity has given in casting away, I hope for ever, the persecuting spirit to which I lately referred. I am aware that this was begun and carried out from no special hatred of the spirit itself, but mainly in their own defence, and necessarily

against the Church, who was keeping up penal laws against them. Nevertheless, from whatever cause, it was finally accomplished. The work began in William III.'s reign, and was consummated by the Catholic Emancipation and the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. These were looked upon at the time both by Nonconformists and Churchmen as the greatest blows that could be dealt against the National Church; but over-ruled by God's providence they have become the means of opening out the more Catholic side of our Church, have relieved her from the opprobrium of political oppression, and have not only in theory, but in very deed, given to the Church itself a freedom from undue State control, which has manifested itself by the vast increase of spiritual life since prevalent amongst us. Nonconformity, by the introduction of a voluntary discipline and the organization of lay ministrations, has materially helped us in restoring two chief things which English Christianity lost at the time of the Reformation, the one by the substitution of temporal punishments for ecclesiastical censures, the other by the fall of lay brotherhoods through their own corruption and decay, and when the work they had been given to do was accomplished. It is on this ground that I should be the last to propose any scheme of reunion that would in any way tend to interfere with the true independence of the Nonconformist bodies as great lay brotherhoods acting in unity with and under the distinct authority of the Church. The Nonconformist bodies have done a great work each in their turn (and this has not been confined to the more orthodox among them) in pointing out deficiencies which had arisen in doctrine or in practice during the different periods of our post-reformation History. *E.g.*, the Independents leaving the Church on a protest for the rights of conscience against the usurpation of the temporal power. The Papists witnessing on the other hand, by their exaggerated demands for a complete spiritual despotism against too lax a discipline and against disobedience to constituted authorities. The Baptist, standing up for the ancient forms in the administration of baptism against the carelessness of the Church in her then mode of administering the rite, and in the instruction of her baptised children. The Quaker, on the other hand, witnessing against the growth of formalism and against the then increasing disbelief in the free

work of God the Holy Ghost in the hearts of men. Even the Unitarian negatively witnessed to the Church's neglect of her more intellectual and philosophic members, just as Wesleyanism witnessed against her neglect of her poorer and less instructed ones. We cannot deny also, that a great debt of gratitude is due to those noble witnesses for Christ among the Non-conformists who have helped to keep alive a true Christian zeal when periods of deadness have come over the Church and Non-conformity alike. These men have ever been foremost to help the more earnest spirits in the Church against a cold Erastianism—working with them for the abolition of slavery, for the amelioration of our prisons and of our convict population, for the improvement of the spiritual and social condition of our people, and showing a spiritual life in missionary labours among the heathen, which has greatly stimulated the zeal of the whole Church of Christ. Thirdly, I have promised to bring before you some of the advantages which our National Church has brought to the Nonconformists themselves. By her catholicity of doctrine and of practice, setting forth the whole doctrine of Christ in her creeds and daily services and ever-recurring seasons of fast and festival she has been the undoubted cause of preserving the Protestantism of England from drifting into that excess of false doctrine and infidelity which has made such inroads upon the Protestantism of the Continent. In the words of Canon Curteis, “She has attempted, by God's blessing, not without manifest success, to infuse Christianity into the very nerves and veins of an adult and fully organised nation, and to consecrate—not curse or secularise—science, family life, and political life.”

It is also through the National Church that Nonconformity has secured that link with the past to which I have before alluded : preserving an uninterrupted line of Bishops from the Apostles' time until now, enshrining in her Book of Common Prayer and other translated portions of the old service books, the prayers and hymns and worship of a long catena of saints. The Church has also given to the whole nation a body of divinity in sermons and commentaries on the Holy Scriptures, and treatises against heresies and infidelity, partly original productions, partly by careful translations of the works of other ages of the Church, which have

largely been made use of by the Nonconformists. The Church of England has also kept alive, in spite of much practical narrowness amongst her clergy and laity alike, a spirit of large heartedness which has not only been a witness against schism, but a wonderful check against that exclusive spirit whose root is selfishness, and which is the natural out-come of all schism. She has also been, and ever will be, the only effectual bulwark against the aggressions of the Papacy, for it is only under her shelter that the Nonconformists can hope to hold their own in such a warfare. In concluding this part of my paper, it is only fair to state my own belief that many benefits which the Church has rendered to Nonconformity are to be traced among other causes to her position as the Established Church. It is of some importance, now that so many of the allowed evils of Establishment have been removed, that the religious Nonconformists should prayerfully reconsider the expediency of that crusade against Establishment in which their more political brothers are tempting them to embark with renewed energy. The undivided Church, in the strength of her unity, fought on apostolic lines against all new doctrines, heresies, and infidelities ; and the Church of England, before and after the Reformation, until the first schisms began, fought in the strength of her unity against Papal aggression and mediæval error. An increase of Christian zeal, witnessed by all divisions of Christians, has naturally called forth fresh opposition from the great enemy ; and old heresies and infidelities are again holding up their heads against us, often under new names, presenting again the same errors which the undivided Church protested against, exposed and overcame. The sins of the nation also cry out as a witness against the continued shortcomings of our common Christianity. In how many places have not Nonconformists and Churchmen to point with sorrow, where hundreds are to be found who never enter church or chapel.

Can any one reasonably doubt that our present disunion is a mighty hindrance to the crusade against infidelities and sins which our Lord and Master calls upon His Church to carry on. Is this a time when those who profess to hold the same doctrine of the Incarnation and the Atonement, who glory in the same Bible, and share amongst them a good deal of national historic Christianity, should be found arrayed in hostile camps, army against army,

while the great enemy of souls can attack us in detail ? If we are really earnest in fulfilling our blessed Lord's prayer that those who hereafter should believe in Him should be one (visibly one), that the world may know that the Father hath sent Him, we must first endeavour to see our different shortcomings with each other's eyes, and thereby to realise more the hindrances in each other's way. The Reformation cost us many losses notwithstanding the many advantages which it secured. It severed, though from no fault of ours, our intercommunion with the Churches of the Continent, thus giving an indirect encouragement to schism, and it exaggerated for a time the political aspect of religion much more than is a real consequent of establishment, as a careful study of the history of our Anglo-Saxon Church would clearly reveal to us. Our want of discipline, our want of lay organisation, our pewed and shut-up churches, our too strict Uniformity laws, the evils arising from the sale of next presentations, the bitterness of our internal divisions, with other evils of the past which have been happily removed, must all jar upon the minds of the religious and conscientious Nonconformist looking upon us from without. Just as the political animosity of the Nonconformist and the natural tendency of schism to subdivide itself, and drift away from its original standing ground, and finally from the very faith itself, jars against the feelings of the conscientious churchman. All these evils to our common Christianity we should endeavour to remove. Differences are both healthy and inevitable when there is zeal abroad. For when conducted within the Church without rancour and bitterness this diverse action from different schools saves one part of the truth from being ignored by the exaggeration of the other parts of it ; the balance of the whole truth held by the Church preventing the special prominence giving to any particular truth leading into error or issuing in some fresh schism. In the same way there is no doubt that the stumbling blocks now placed in each other's way would be much more speedily removed if we could act more together for the removal of them. There are signs to which we cannot shut our eyes even in the midst of bitter animosities within and without, which show a growing desire for rest and union ; yea, the very bitterness of the strife makes us crave for that rest and peace which a return to the principles of true Christian love can alone

secure to us ; while the very earnestness of the attack of the great enemy of souls should make us all the more anxious to concentrate our efforts to build up our defences on sure foundations lest our very faith in Christianity be undermined. It is from such a feeling that certain churchmen have associated themselves together to encourage a greater spirit of true Christian love in the relations between the National Church and Nonconformists.

First, by joining together in earnest prayer that no fault of ours may be allowed to hinder a return to that unity for which our blessed Lord prayed, and continues to pray, in His never-ceasing intercession for us at the throne of grace, Secondly, by greater social intercourse and united action whenever we can work together without any sacrifice of first principles ; by endeavouring to understand one another more, through meetings for reunion, by pamphlets and lectures, and carefully arranged conferences in which our important differences may be carefully considered in a spirit of love and of prayer. It may be a long time before any amount of discussion, or of historic search, or of Bible reading, will secure that full and complete unity between us which the acceptance of the vital truths of the Church Catholic would alone give ; but this is no reason for our remaining in our present hostility towards one another, which so effectually prevents us from bringing our full light to shine for the building up of the whole body of Christ.

It behoves us all to be very loving towards those who differ from us, to be very careful lest in the heat of party strife (political or religious), even for the gratification of our own lawful desires, we needlessly put stumbling-blocks in our brother's way. If we realised more how the least unkind word or action rankled in man's heart, steeling it against all impressions for good, turning everything in it to a spirit of opposition, we should all of us be much more careful than we are of what we do or write or say.

It is our duty as Christians to carry out the work Christ has given us to do in His own way. He knew what was in man, and how wonderfully a word of sympathy and Christian love, offered in humility, can touch a chord even in the roughest heart, and by its utter unselfishness and unworldliness bring with it a power which is Christ's alone.

The work we have undertaken is one which the world would

consider to be impossible. Disestablishment has not helped towards it, either in the United States or in our colonies; but faith can remove mountains, and if we earnestly believe in the words and the example of Jesus—if we, with St. Thomas, learn to confess Him to be our Lord and our God, our weak faith will quickly be strengthened, and these hindrances which our worldliness and selfishness and pride have cast in the way will disappear, that the full power of Christianity may be manifested to all.

The Rev. G. SHORT (Baptist minister), in moving a vote of thanks, said that there might be things in the lecture with which perhaps some of them would disagree; but he was sure he carried with him the general sentiment of the audience when he said that nothing could possibly be better than the excellent spirit and manly frankness with which his lordship had set forth his views. He would not abuse the kind invitation that had been given from the chair by making remarks in which he should presume to differ here and there from the views of the noble lord. Of course, his lordship knew that, kind and catholic and Christian as he was glad to confess his sentiments were throughout his address, there was a *per contra* at least to some of the points he had set forth. He should be very glad if that audience and some more of the citizens would return the respectful courtesy that was intended that evening by the many Nonconformists, who were present to listen deferentially to his lordship, by attending to hear an equally dispassionate statement from the other side of the question. For his own part, he believed that much good was likely to accrue from the treatment of the subject in the generous and manly way in which it had been treated by his lordship. His lordship had suggested conferences, he had even invited lectures, and, so far from any injury accruing to the Church of England, he believed that very great good, from many points of view, would be the result. They wanted to have those things freely and openly treated. It was quite true, as his lordship had hinted, that there was a great yearning on the part of all Christians—not Christians inside the Church alone, but outside also—for unity; and, although he did not believe that they would quite see eye to eye on some of the doctrines and ecclesiastical tenets to which his lordship had referred, yet at the same time he knew, with regard to the section

of nonconformity which he represented, that they did not wish to keep apart from their fellow-Christians. They laid claim now to some culture and intelligence, to say nothing of Christian feeling and Christian love, and he could say that among them there was a great desire for unity.

The Rev. W. CLARKSON (Congregational minister), in proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman, said he thoroughly endorsed every word that fell from Mr. Short as to the character of the lecture they had had that evening. He believed that they all—and he was sure the Nonconformists—hailed Earl Nelson's coming among them with very great pleasure. They all knew that he was a thoroughly earnest man—a man who was devoted to the cause of Christianity, and one who took up a very different ecclesiastical and theological standpoint from many of them, but he could say for the Nonconformists whom he represented that they were always glad to learn what was to be said by others who differed from them. They had listened to the catholic, charitable, just, and generous lecture of the noble Earl with very great pleasure. Not a single word had fallen from his lips calculated in the slightest degree to give pain to any who might differ from him in some of his views, although there were several things said to which he, for one, should feel obliged to take exception. Some statements were made, for instance, the accuracy of which he, for one, should certainly feel bound to dispute, and some inferences were drawn which he should feel bound to question, yet nothing was said that was not just and generous, and they were all very glad indeed to attend that evening to hear the opinions of a layman of the Church upon the interesting question on which he had spoken. He thought it would be perfectly in harmony with the spirit of Earl Nelson's remarks if on a future occasion some one from among the Nonconformists came forward and took up the question which the noble Earl had introduced, and gave the opinions which were held by them, and they should all be very well pleased if Earl Nelson would preside on the occasion. He thought he could say that those who spoke from the Nonconformist point of view would abstain from saying a single word that would be in any way painful to his lordship as Chairman.



HOME REUNION MEETING

HELD AT THE

ASSEMBLY ROOM, SALISBURY, JANUARY 14, 1878,

EARL NELSON, in the Chair.

REV. W. CLARKSON'S LECTURE

IN RESPONSE TO EARL NELSON'S PAPER ON DECEMBER 20, 1877.

The large Assembly Room was filled almost to overflowing.

The proceedings having been opened with prayer by the Rev. Canon Morrice,

The noble CHAIRMAN explained the reason why the meeting had been called, viz., to hear a lecture in answer to the one lately delivered by himself on "Home Reunion," on the 20th of December. It was a subject very near to his own heart, because, however far it might be from attainment, still he was perfectly certain that a great deal of harm came to their common Christianity from the divisions that existed between those calling themselves Christians. And at a time when men were boldly denying the Lord who bought them, he thought it was the duty of those who loved our Blessed Lord to see what they could do in a true Christian spirit to draw nearer one towards another, instead of only meeting together for the purpose of devouring one another, and saying hard things of one another. The object which he set himself to attain in his lecture was to say all that he thought could fairly be said for those who differed from him,—and boldly to give vent to his own opinions with an earnest desire to avoid giving offence to those who differed from him. The Nonconformists present at the former meeting recognised at once the spirit which had actuated him—and met him in that same Christian spirit. He wished it to be clearly understood by Churchmen and Nonconformists that neither Mr. Clarkson nor himself had any sanguine expectations that what they might do would result in any rapid reunion of the Nonconformists with the Church. They were met together to hear a paper in response to his own; and the object before them in all these meetings was not as to who could say the most bitter or the most telling things one of the other, but boldly

to put forth the points in which they differed in the greatest spirit of Christian love. There was no reason why there should not be a series of such meetings, and so long as they were conducted in a spirit of Christian love and from a sincere desire to increase Christ's kingdom, he was perfectly certain that such meetings would bring a blessing down upon them.

The Rev. W. CLARKSON commenced his lecture by a brief reference to the one recently delivered by the noble Chairman, and, in passing, expressed his general approval of the spirit of the Home Reunion Society, of which the Bishop of Winchester was President, and Earl Nelson the Chairman. The object of that Society was "to present the Church of England in a conciliatory attitude towards those who regarded themselves as outside the pale, to lead towards the corporate reunion of all Christians" holding certain doctrines. The acceptance of the Apostles' Creed, and the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, and of Episcopacy was fundamental, but, outside these lines, all reasonable liberty was to be allowed. Inspired by an earnest wish to meet the prominent if not powerful scepticism, and the widespread and most lamentable indifference of our times with a united front, the devout and devoted men who had originated that Society were approaching God in prayer, and were drawing towards their fellow-countrymen in the spirit and with the language of conciliation, in the hope of bringing about finally a solid and visible unity between all orthodox Christian Englishmen. It would, he said, be an ungracious and a guilty thing in the Nonconformists not to meet such an overture in the spirit in which it was made.

The Reverend gentleman then continued:—That which will naturally be expected of me this evening, as the spokesman of the Nonconformists, is to deal frankly with the question, whether we consider this a practicable scheme; whether, in our desire for unity, we are prepared to sink preferences and surrender institutions of our own; what hope there is of realizing the aspiration of the Society so far as we are concerned. Now, as your lordship has stated, there is common ground between us, and this common ground is no narrow strip but a good broad area on which much may well stand. In the great matter of Christian theology, we Nonconformists accept freely and fully not only those central and cardinal doctrines of the "ever-blessed Trinity

and the Incarnation and Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ," which the Reunion Society insists on as a *sine qua non*, but also those of the inspiration of the Scriptures, of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the Church, of the efficacy of prayer as a power with God, of human accountability and immortality.

You will permit me, my lord, to say that one sentence in your lordship's lecture surprised me. As reported, and correctly I believe, your lordship said, "I am happy to think that many Nonconformists rightly hold with the Church the doctrine of the Incarnation of our blessed Lord." What surprises me is that your lordship should make a statement which is so far short of the whole truth. You will be glad to hear, my lord, that not only do many of us, but that, with the exception of one (numerically) small section of Nonconformists, all of us hold that main doctrine. And not only do we hold it as a part of our creed but with the closely related doctrine of the proper Deity of Christ, it is to a very large extent indeed the staple of our sermons, the substance of our hymns, the foundation of our prayers. It is, to our thought and feeling, the solid fact upon which the entire structure of our faith stands. To say what I have now said is to anticipate myself when I affirm that substantially we hold the three creeds which are considered essential by the Reunion Society. To the doctrines contained in the Apostles' creed, and in the Nicene creed we give our assent, though many of us have a strong dislike to the subscription of creeds which are human, and therefore fallible expositions of Divine, and therefore, infallible truth. The Athanasian creed I am bound to distinguish from the others. To the use of its damnatory clauses we altogether object, as an assumption of a prerogative which is not ours but God's. Many of us would say that the creed itself is not either scriptural or unscriptural but rather extra-scriptural; that it is hopelessly impossible, if it were desirable, to explain the relations of the persons in the Trinity in the terms of human philosophy, and certainly is nowhere required of us in Scripture; that it is a vain thing to "prepare a psychology of God's infinite Spirit in the tiny moulds of our human understanding" (Bushnell), but we all reject the error against which it was aimed, and ascribe true and

proper Deity to the Saviour and to the Holy Spirit of God. In fact we stand here on common ground. As your lordship stated, we use our Bible in our own language; moreover our hymnologies include the same hymns: we have appropriated many of yours; you have appropriated many—probably more—of ours, for any hymnology would be poor, which was not enriched by the productions of Watts and Wesley, and Montgomery and Doddridge. Moreover we read with profit and pleasure—our ministers consult to our advantage, and give out from, for the benefit of our people—the works of Episcopal divines, Hooker and Butler, Paley and Pearson in Evidences; Alford and Ellicott, Lightfoot and Webster in Exegesis; Trenchard and Vaughan, and Liddon and Mansell, and Mozley and Farrar are on our shelves, and we continually lay them under tribute. They defend the doctrines we wish to guard; they expound the scriptures as we desire to have them treated; they advocate doctrines which are dear to our hearts. Undoubtedly, my lord, there is much ground—and that of most valuable order—which you and we have in common. Let me go a step further in this direction. There are some things in which we have of late been approaching each other. Your lordship made some candid and liberal admissions of benefit derived by the Church of England from nonconformity. To those then mentioned I may add the minor ones of the adoption of Sunday evening services, of Sunday schools, of week-night services, of family prayers, of the revival of the agapæ or social Christian gatherings round the same board, working societies, improvements in psalmody. But I wish to say that if Episcopalians have wisely adopted some things from us Nonconformists, we, on the other hand, have lately “returned the compliment.” It was natural that in a revulsion from what seemed a condemnable system there should have been a dislike to usages and habits which were associated with that system though no essential part of it. For a very long time there remained many, and I fear there still remain some, Nonconformists who objected or still object to all ways and methods simply because they were connected with the Church of England. But that folly is fast disappearing. Speaking for the vast majority of us I do not fear to say that we appreciate and are prepared to adopt anything which we believe really tends to

devotion and Christian service, whether it be suggested from within or be copied from without. I think, my lord, you would be surprised if you could learn in how many hundreds of Nonconformist chapels last Sunday the Psalms of David were chanted, the Te Deum sung, the Lord's Prayer repeated ; in how many prayers passages from the liturgy were inwoven ; in how many Nonconformist buildings that liturgy itself, slightly altered, was used. Our people are, as I trust they ever will be, firmly attached to extempore prayer, and it is one of the things of which we are justly proud that there cannot occur an alarming sickness in one of our royal palaces, the beginning of a famine in India, or the first mutterings of a threatened war at home, but from every Nonconformist pulpit in the land there rises, alike unbidden and unrestrained, earnest supplication to God for the interposition of His healing, His outstretched, or His shielding hand ; but not the less for this can we appreciate those forms of devotion which for so many ages have borne the prayers of the people of God to His throne on high. We naturally prefer the method of worship which we received from our fathers, but we can heartily enjoy the occasional use of the Morning or Evening Prayer in an Episcopalian sanctuary, and when we find ourselves on the Continent it is our common custom to resort to the services open to us, provided by an Episcopalian Society. What bigotry there was—and I am free to say there has been not a little—is dwindling to a vanishing point. We have learnt from the Episcopalian order of service to introduce a much larger liturgical element into our worship by multiplying the number of our hymns,—a very great gain in every respect. We have, many of us, taken down some humanly-constructed fences our fathers put up in the way of Church membership, and while holding tenaciously to the doctrine that the Christian Church should be composed only of spiritual men, we are recognizing the fact that it ought to include *all* these—the weak and the immature as well as the strong and the more perfect. We have thought it well to build more ornate and elegant places of worship. There is a movement also with us as with Episcopalians in favour of abolishing pew-rents. The spirit, the animus, shall I say the demon of denominationalism is disappearing. No one can appreciate more highly or applaud more heartily such sweet singers as John

Keble, such earnest workers as Charles Kingsley, such vigorous leaders as the Bishop of Manchester, and, I will add, such outspoken antagonists as Archdeacon Denison, than we can.

But, my lord, it is not for a moment to be imagined that because we have parted with our prejudices we are in a mood to abandon our principles. A man's principles are not the less but the more dear to him when he holds them no longer blindly and unreasonably but intelligently and discriminatingly. I am obliged to break with the noble Chairman when he qualifies his remark about the Bible constituting common ground by the observation that we are too apt to put our own private interpretation before that handed down from the early ages of the Church. We know of no age of the Church which can relieve us of our duty before God of examining His own word and judging thence what is His mind and will. The Tractarians of forty years ago grounded the movement which they created, and which has reached such prominence to-day, on the duty of accepting the interpretation of the Bible by the fathers of the first three or four centuries. But these fathers, good and holy as they were, were uncritical in the last degree, and, so far from shewing themselves specially fitted for the work of interpreting Scripture, proved themselves remarkably ill-adapted for that work. It is not on the men who indulged in such puerilities as considering the rods which Jacob put in the troughs before Laban's sheep as a type of the Cross, or looking on the five barley loaves in the miracle as representations of the five senses, or (according to others), the five Books of Moses that we shall rely as authorities on Biblical interpretation. We remember that the stumbling-block which hindered the recognition and reception of our Lord Himself was none other than a blind trust reposed in the fathers of the Jewish Church. We remember the Master's injunction, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life." We remember His challenge: "Why do ye not of yourselves judge that which is right?" We remember the praise of the more noble Bereans, for that they searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so: we believe in the presence of the Spirit of God, ready to illumine the mind of every devout reader of that Word which He Himself inspired, and we do not merely claim the right but we acknowledge the duty—a duty which none may take out of our hands without presumption and

which we may place in no other's charge without unfaithfulness, of seeking from the very Word of God, from the very lips of Jesus Christ, to know what is His will concerning us. And now, my lord, I have to present what constitutes the most serious barriers in the way of corporate Reunion between the Church of England and the Nonconformists—a barrier which, without a radical change of view on one side or the other, must be insurmountable. I am sure that I speak the sentiments of the Nonconformists generally—ministerial and lay—when I say that we attach supreme and indeed vital importance to those doctrines which are popularly known as evangelical. With the views we hold of the way of salvation in Jesus Christ, we could not possibly be members of a Church which teaches every child as the first thing it learns that in baptism it was made a “member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.” With the views we hold of the Christian ministry, we could not possibly become members of a Church which authorizes any living man in any office whatsoever, to say “believe in the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest . . . whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven.” With the views we hold on this subject we could not by formal membership sanction such a claim as is contained in the solemn words (appointed to be used at the visitation of the sick) “By His authority (Lord Jesus Christ) committed to me I absolve thee from all thy sins.” With our convictions as they are, and are likely to be, we could not belong, organically, to a Church where ministers are by the highest ecclesiastical authority allowed to preach and publish the doctrine of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. And I am bound to say, my lord, that if these grave and weighty difficulties were considered fatal by our fathers there is all too abundant reason why they should be so considered by us. For we quite understand the serious and widespread movement which is denominated “Ritualism.” We know that, with perhaps a few exceptions which need not be noted, the men who are leading that movement are not convulsing the Church and agitating the country on some small matters of church furniture, or ministerial costume, or devotional accessories. We know that they are seriously, and earnestly, and successfully aiming at the restoration in the Church of England of the Catholic faith: they

do not conceal this : they avow it, and we have to consider that by a very large and growing number of the clergy, the formularies of the Church are being strained to their utmost tension to admit these sacramental doctrines and sacerdotal usages, which to our minds are entirely at variance with the spirit of our Lord's and of the Apostles' teaching.

There is one thing which above all others in the matter of usage, is placing an absolutely impassable barrier between us. We shrink with what to others may seem a needless alarm, but with what we think the teaching of all history and the knowledge of human nature justifies us in calling a well grounded and holy horror from the revived habit of auricular confession. I should be simply toying with my task, and trifling with you my lord, and my audience, if I did not plainly say that with such doctrines in the standards of the Church and such an immediate prospect before us as that of the Anglo-Catholic party going the full length—and perhaps further—allowed therein, and of that party waxing stronger and stronger, it is vain to hope that without a very decided and even radical change of conviction on our part on subjects on which we now feel very strongly indeed, an organic union is out of the question.

There is another matter of prime importance which needs exposition and which I gladly avail myself of this opportunity of clearing up. Your lordship was so frank as to speak in high approval of the “protest against Erastianism which has helped the Church to a more earnest endeavour to get rid of that system of mixing up of politics with religion which must ever be detrimental to a true and free Christianity.” And, I learn, from one of the papers your lordship was good enough to send me, that the action of the Home Reunion Society includes “the removal of all defects and abuses in the practical working of the Church's system which may justly give offence to Nonconformists.” Yet another remark in another paper issued by the Society, and a remark in your lordship's lecture, falling in with a very general impression, oblige me to feel that in one respect our motives are misunderstood and we ourselves misjudged. I observe a distinction drawn between the religious and the political Dissenter—to the disadvantage and disparagement of the latter. I venture to say, my lord, that this is a real case of a distinction without a difference.

If we are political—if we enter the field of ecclesiastical politics—it is not *though* we are religious but *because* we are religious men. We are not seeking spoils for ourselves; we are not looking for funds for our denominational treasuries; we are not expecting that any ecclesiastical changes will be of any benefit at all to our particular sects. Quite the contrary. We honestly believe that in the changes which impend we shall most likely seriously suffer so far as the present Nonconformist organizations are concerned. We have no party interests whatever to serve. It is because as Christian men we desire that the great Head of the Church should be honoured instead of being dishonoured : because as servants of Christ we feel strongly that His Church ought not to be, as now, at the mercy of the parliamentary majorities ; because as spiritual men our sense of what is right is keenly shocked by the fact that the faith once delivered to the Saints is now largely in the hands of a Legislature which is secular and not spiritual,—it is therefore that we enter the political arena. I do not want, my lord, to rake up this evening our well-known objections to the appointment of the chief officers of the Church by the Prime Minister for the time being, the gift of many livings in the hands of the Lord Chancellor, the sale of livings, the dependence of Convocation on the Houses of Parliament, &c.; but I do very much wish to assure your lordship, and those with whom you are acting, that these anomalies or incongruities are real and solid stumbling-blocks to us as earnest and spiritual men ; that they are not mere political enginery, but things which profoundly offend our feelings and which are condemned by our judgment as Christian disciples responsible to Christ for the constitution of His Church. We may believe, we do believe, that the presence in the Church of England of tens of thousands of spiritual men makes that Church a spiritual institution ; but looking at it (as we are bound to do) as an organization, we are obliged to say that we consider it, in its dependency on the State, and its absence of self-government and discipline, very far indeed from resting on a scriptural foundation. We have yet to learn (and I am much mistaken if you, my lord, and your friends, have any desire to teach us this) that we exemplify our religion by narrowing our activities to a lessening circle, and not, rather, by carrying the Spirit of Christ and the endeavour to serve Him into all the circles—domestic, social, and political—in which

we move. We ask, then, both in the name of justice and the interests of Christian charity, that we should be frankly believed when we say that the present relations of the Church to the State form a most serious offence to us as Christ-honouring, Bible-reading men, that they oblige us as Christians to take lawful action to remove that which we honestly think injurious alike to the State and to the Church. I have no defence to make of any acrimonious and unjust things which have been said on either side in the controversy. Let them be unsparingly condemned. But let high-minded spiritual men be credited with the pure motives and the religious spirit by which they not only claim to be, but actually are, inspired. I fear you will think, my lord, that with this two-edged sword of theological and ecclesiastical objection I have been cutting away the chances of reunion for which many are anxious. Clearly enough, while we have some most precious things in common, and while there have been some approximations to one another, there remain such solid differences between us, that until you convince us or we convince you there cannot be the visible corporate Reunion which you desire. But here, my lord, let me ask why lay such stress on the Union being corporate and visible? As we read our New Testament we understand that the word "Church" is used in two senses: in the smaller sense, of a company of Christian people meeting in one place for worship and edification; and in the larger sense, of the whole body of believers in Christ of all ages and lands in heaven and on earth. To this great company we claim to belong, and rejoice to count all spiritual men of all Churches members also. But we do not see that there is anything in the Scriptures which indicates that it is the will of the Lord that there should be one, and only one, organization comprising all Christians on the earth or in the land. Our Lord said that He had "other sheep which he must bring," that "there might be *one flock* (*ποιμνῆ*) and one shepherd;" but He did not say anything about there being one fold. One flock may be distributed in many folds. He prayed that all His disciples might be one. But what unity did He desire? "That they may all be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us . . . that they may be one even as We are one, I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one." Is not this a spiritual and not a corpo-

rate unity?—a oneness like to that between the Divine Father and the Divine Son, and the direct consequence of the indwelling of the Saviour in His disciples?—a unity of spirit, of sympathy, of character, of fellowship of heart, and not a mechanical and corporate unity? What the Scriptures say thus to us in word, they say in symbol: we take the seven-branched candlestick of the Old Testament, all the branches welded on to the same stem, to be a picture of the unity of the Jewish Church; but the symbol of unity in the Christian Church we see in the seven golden candlesticks, not mechanically fastened to the same stem, but standing each on its own basis—all united, however, together by the presence of the Son of Man moving in the midst of them. Moreover, we do not read in the Acts of the Apostles or in the Epistles of any efforts made or any directions given, for after use, to form the Churches of Galatia, or of Asia Minor, or Greece, or Syria into any national or universal body. We do not read any injunctions except to cultivate a peaceable, charitable spirit, and the walking in love and unity, between the members of the particular Church to which a letter was being addressed. Much we read about the unity of the spirit, nothing about oneness of organisation. We therefore ask whether there is not another way, and a possibly better way, in which the Saviour's prayer may be fulfilled than by a corporate reunion of the different Christian Churches? We believe there is "a more excellent way." We see no reason why all the Churches of Christ should not live and labour side by side in the exercise and exhibition of a loving spirit, having cordial fellowship with one another, exchanging services with one another, co-operating together in all Christian and philanthropic work in which they can unite. So the Nonconformist Churches now do, with much benefit to themselves and to those outside. They are most willing to include the Episcopalian Churches, when these are willing on their part to join them, when they can do so on the same doctrinal basis, and will do so on equal terms. Of course, while we hold our views (and we think we hold them intelligently as well as firmly), we cannot give priority to those who, in our judgment, are less scriptural than we are ourselves. To do that would be to forfeit our self-respect. But, just as between one another as Nonconformists, we know nothing of proselytism, and esteem the members of

another Church as highly as any of our own, preaching in one another's pulpits, sitting down at the Lord's table in one another's chapels, joining together in common evangelistic work, so shall we be ready to join, in all these ways, with ministers and members of the Episcopalian Church.

I fear, my lord, that this is impracticable whilst the present relations between the Church and the State remain as they are. Whilst there is one Church occupying a position of special privilege, regarding itself as the authorised and chartered institution of the kind, it is morally impossible that there should not be an amount of assumption of superiority on the part of its members which is fatal to free and full fellowship on equal terms. We argue thus, my lord; we think the time has come when there is no Church in the country which can rightly expect all Englishmen to join its ranks,—those who profess some other Christian body being regarded, and, I must add, being *disregarded* as Dissenters. If there were any such Church, it must be a Church with a claim either on the ground of antiquity and universality, or of numbers. If of the former, that Church would assuredly be the Church of Rome; but in any company of Christian Englishmen that needs no discussion. If of numbers, we contend that there is, now, no Church of such preponderating numbers as justifies such a claim. The Church of England counts, as its adherents, about one-half, more or less, of the worshipping part of the population, about one-third, more or less, of the whole population. But this half or third is again broken into three parts or parties which differ from one another more seriously in doctrine, than one at least of the three differs from those outside. We think, therefore, that there is an injustice in the position of privilege and honour occupied by the one, and of privation and disparagement suffered by the others. This is not mere theory, my lord: Here in England it is only too painfully clear that society is divided in twain by this distinction. Every one knows that the word Dissenter carries with it a certain stigma and a certain disadvantage. We are quite prepared to pay this price, as I hope any other price that may be exacted, for the possession of our principles. But it is a question whether it ought to be exacted, and it is a question most pertinent this evening and worthy the attention of our noble chairman and those with whom he is associated in the Home

Reunion Society, whether they should not regard this as one most serious hindrance in the way of arriving at their desired haven. And what of other countries? I do not like to place myself in direct conflict with the noble lord, but in candour and I hope in courtesy, I am compelled to do so here. His lecture contains the remark that disestablishment has not helped the work of Union either in the United States or in our Colonies. My belief is that it will be found on full enquiry that where there is no dominant Church the path to Christian Union is far less steep and stony than in this country. There are statements made by high Church authorities and high State authorities also, by Bishops and Statesmen, which might easily be adduced showing that not only do the Unestablished Episcopalian Churches in themselves flourish and grow and rejoice in their freedom and self-government—a prosperity (let me say) which we Nonconformists are most sincerely glad to know—but that in virtue of their disestablishment there is a better and kindlier feeling between all the churches in the country. In South Australia, Mr. Anthony Forster tells us, that since the abolition of the State grant, jealousies and animosities have entirely disappeared, and “the tone of Christian society has been improved and elevated,” while the Bishop of Adelaide mentions as an instance of the removal of all sectarian feeling among the religious denominations that he was invited by a number of ministers of all sects to arrange with them for a day of prayer for the removal of the lasting drought—that he felt proud to see himself surrounded by such men—that he thought it right that all party prejudice should be cast aside, and that they should recognize all who bore the stamp of Christ. The Bishop of Ontario says “I candidly confess that I would not exchange the present condition of the Canadian Church for her condition as an Endowed Establishment. “Better a dinner of herbs (he adds) where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.” And Mr. Sullivan, the able and eloquent Member of Parliament for Louth, in his “New Ireland” says, “the Episcopal Protestant Church of Ireland has lost nothing and has gained much, especially in its freedom of action by Disestablishment. . . One of the best and brightest changes visible is the almost total disappearance of sectarian animosities and the kindly mingling of creeds and classes on the duties of every day life. Even in Ulster these incensate feuds are steadily giving way.

Such passions do not suddenly subside. On the whole the painfully sharp distinctions and classifications of old times have softened down and the different social classes and denominations no longer resemble so many warring tribes encamped upon the land." This, I venture to think, is strong testimony, and I respectfully ask the attention of the noble chairman to it. I know, of course that, in Ireland feeling ran higher than it does here, but that which is working such good in the way of reconciliation there surely would do much to level what an impartial outsider of all our churches calls "the wall of ecclesiastical privilege which divides English citizens."

Allow me, my lord, to anticipate the answer which I know would be made to this argument. Your lordship evidently thinks, and the Home Reunion Society thinks, that this would be paying too great a price for unity. I find it stated in one of their papers that "the eyes of many Protestant Nonconformists are being opened to the importance of the Established Church as a sure bulwark against the attacks of the Roman Curia." I cannot imagine who are the Nonconformist authorities for this statement. So far as I know the minds of my co-religionists, our hopes and fears look in an exactly opposite direction. We consider that the present action of the Established Church is the one hope of Rome in this land. The young people of England go regularly to the churches which are known to be national and presumed to be Protestant, and there they become familiarised with nearly all the distinctive doctrines and practices of the Roman Church : thus they are led up to the border, and one step takes them across.

Archbishop Manning says : "The clergy of the Established Church have taken out of the hands of the Catholic clergy the labour of contending for the doctrines of Transubstantiation and the Invocation of Saints. The Catholics have been left the much more happy and peaceful task of reaping the fields." The *Weekly Register* says : "From every ritualistic congregation in London there is a continual stream of converts drifting towards us, and the number would be increased had we priests sufficient to look after those who are hesitating." In our sober judgment—but to our keen regret—that very thing, that very Establishment, to which we as Englishmen involuntarily belong, is not

only a formidable bar in the way of Christian union, but also a strong lever in the hands of superstition.

To bring this lecture to a conclusion, and my arguments to a point, I am persuaded that before any corporate Reunion can be effected between Church and Dissent there must be great searchings of principles and great changes of view: you, my lord, and your friends must convince us, or we must convince you in the doctrines concerning human priesthood, and the sacraments; you must convince us, or we you in the matter of Church government, and the relation of the Church of Christ to human law. At present, union of societies would mean surrender of principles on the one side or the other. We have, and can have, no thought of compromising our most sacred convictions. Meantime it is a great advantage—which both sides owe to you, my lord—that for once, at least, our differences are stated face to face in the calmness and courtesy of friendly feeling, rather than in the fierce heats of agitation. I have stated truly and freely, I trust without offence, what our divergencies are, how far we go together, where we part, and how wide apart are the lines along which we move. We may, from friendly intercourse, learn to respect one another the more without respecting ourselves any the less. We offer, if I may speak for my friends, the most sincere respect for their zeal, for their liberality (witness the restoration of our Cathedral here), for their devotedness to their work, for their preparedness to suffer loss on behalf of the freedom and self-government of the Church of Christ, to those farthest removed from us in doctrine whose view of Christian worship and Christian ministry is in sharpest conflict with our own. We ask to be regarded, in return, as those who follow the lead of their convictions, not blindly but intelligently, not in a spirit of antagonism but in loyalty to our Common Lord. The judgment of charity will in these as in most matters be found to be the righteous judgment of equity and truth. We may well agree to act together in those great moral and social reformations which spring from a Christian source and are Christian in spirit if not in form. We may be as men in Christ Jesus, not tossed about with every wind of doctrine, steadfast and true, and yet we may carry ourselves with that openness of heart which becomes men walking in the twilight of time

and not in the noontide brightness of Eternity, which becomes those who are still students of the Great Teacher, and who remember that

“ God hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from His Word.”

than that which we have yet acquired. And whether, as with you, my lord, we look forward hopefully to the time when all separated bodies shall be united in one comprehensive Church, or whether, as with us, we anticipate the hour when many Churches shall still exist side by side, teaching substantially the same Christian doctrine with various shades of view and forms of government, honouring one another, loving one another, none claiming priority over the other, but each serving the other ; there being no strife between them, but a healthful and faithful emulation to do the best work for the Master and mankind ; all showing in their charity and their fellowship how honest differences may dwell together in the spirit of Christian unity, we both believe that the Son of Man is walking still in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and that by His purifying and renewing Spirit He will purge us of our errors, on which side soever they shall be found by Him, and will nourish the life which he sees in us both, and will, at length, establish His Kingdom of Righteousness on the earth while He guides all His faithful followers of every name to their home in “ the all-reconciling world.”

The noble CHAIRMAN admitted that Mr. Clarkson had thoroughly followed out the different points that were more or less opened out in his own lecture ; and knowing the strong views which the Reverend gentleman entertained upon some of them, he was bound to admit that he had restrained himself very greatly indeed, in a desire to state those views clearly in a spirit of Christian love. As to an answer to the lecture on behalf of the Church, he should prefer that to be given in a separate address, and after mature and careful consideration. There were one or two points, however, which might be touched upon at once. He was perfectly aware that there were many essential differences between Churchmen and Nonconformists, but as he pointed out the other day, those differences could be discussed in

a spirit of Christian love, without any compromise of opinion on one side or the other. If clearly understood, some, at least, of those differences would be found to be more apparent than real; and his desire was that they should be considered in conference, after due preparation and prayer.

He was most thankful to hear Mr. Clarkson's decided statement that the great mass of the Nonconformists held the great creeds of the Church which Churchmen regarded as so essential. He would not just then be led into any lengthened discussion respecting the Athanasian Creed, but he begged to remind the rev. gentleman that at a time when the Church had no dissent in it, the Reformers actually increased the number of recitations of that creed, for the purpose of putting down heresies which the Nonconformists of the present day objected to quite as much as the Reformed Church of England did then. In regard to the question of antiquity, he thought Mr. Clarkson had made a mistake in claiming it for the Church of Rome. The Roman Church in this country had, it was true, a succession of bishops, but he believed that, if critically tested, it would be found to be a Spanish succession. It was certainly not the old Church of England succession, the bishops of which by ordination inherited the succession of the ancient bishops of the Church of England long before the time of the Reformation. That ought to satisfy Nonconformists that the Church of England had a claim to antiquity, even if it had not the claim of numbers to put forward. He merely mentioned these things in passing, and not with the view of raising any present discussion upon them. He had learnt much from the statements of Mr. Clarkson, and, like him, did not expect to see anything like a speedy reunion. One step towards that invisible unity which Mr. Clarkson had stated his desire to encourage might be effected by a discouragement of the use of unkind words or exaggerated statements respecting one another, in whatever direction their influence might extend. If they considered themselves followers of Christ, they were bound to walk in love one with another. They should do everything in their power to increase the spirit of Christian love, and to discourage and put down anything like a spirit of political animosity. When he used

the term "political dissenters," the other day, as opposed to religious dissenters, he did not mean that he expected to find such amongst the Nonconformist ministers, but that there were men who might be tempted to use a party cry for the sake of raising a semi-religious one. He did not for a moment intend to refer to those religious men who conscientiously considered that a Church establishment was a wrong thing; but he thought he could prove to them in conference that even that was not so wrong a thing as it was supposed to be, and that it was altogether free from those exaggerated evils by which it was supposed to be accompanied. At the same time he felt very strongly that it was not a Christian thing to care too much about political position, either in defence or in attack.

The Rev. Canon MORRICE, in proposing a vote of thanks to the lecturer, said he did not agree with everything that had been advanced, but he was convinced that reunion was much nearer than he thought it was when he came into the room.

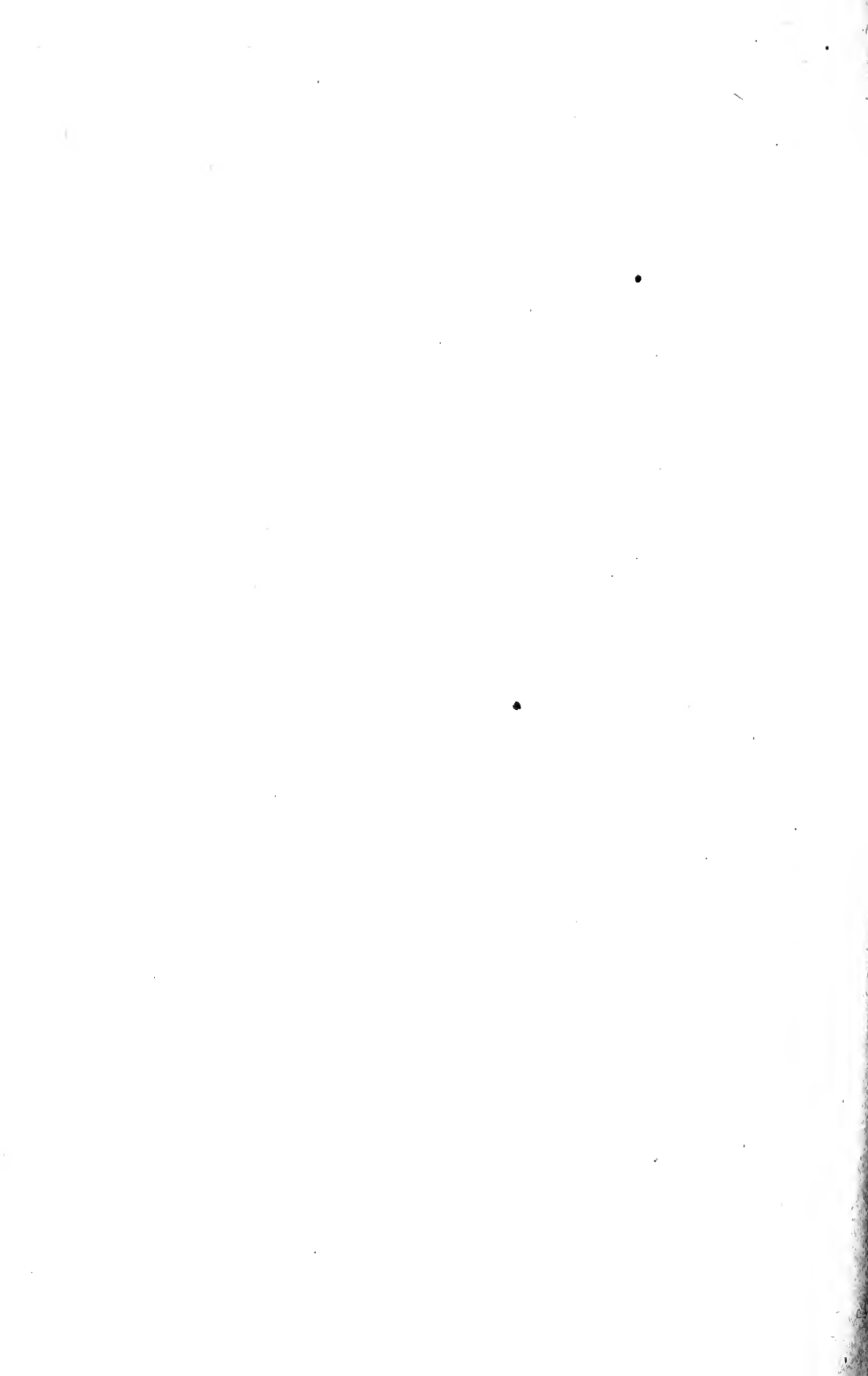
The Rev. G. SHORT, in seconding the vote, claimed the same liberty as the Rev. Canon Morrice in not agreeing with the whole of his friend Mr. Clarkson's statement; but at the same time he thought they must all admit that the lecture was an extremely able one, and that by his control of language the lecturer had shown the possession of great catholicity and eminent Christian love. Earl Nelson had evidently shewn a similar spirit, not only in his lecture but also in the correspondence which had since taken place between the noble Earl, Mr. Clarkson, and himself. The continued manifestation of such a spirit could not but achieve great results, and, if the noble Earl's numerous occupations would admit of it, he assured him that it would afford the Nonconformists of Salisbury much pleasure to listen to his own reply to the lecture which they had just heard, at a Home Reunion Meeting to be subsequently held.

Mr. NEW, speaking from the body of the room, supported the motion, and said such meetings could not but increase kindness of feeling between the Church of England and the various Nonconformist bodies.

The Rev. W. CLARKSON, in acknowledging the vote, suggested that, in any future discussion, one or two points only should be

taken, instead of covering the whole ground, which was too vast to be dealt with in one evening.

Mr. S. R. ATKINS proposed, and the Rev. F. RAIKES seconded, a cordial vote of thanks to Earl Nelson for presiding; and the noble Earl having briefly acknowledged the compliment, the proceedings were brought to a close.



HOME REUNION MEETING

HELD AT THE

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, SALISBURY, FEB. 25, 1878,

S. R. ATKINS, Esq., (Nonconformist) IN THE CHAIR.

A PAPER BY

EARL NELSON:

ON

“The Teaching of Holy Scripture on the Unity of the Church of Christ,”

IN ANSWER TO THE REV. R. W. CLARKSON.

ALSO

AN ADDRESS BY REV. G. SHORT, IN ANSWER TO LORD NELSON.

The large Assembly Room was again filled to overflowing.

The Rev. Canon Morrice having opened the Meeting with prayer:—

The CHAIRMAN said the duties which he had been asked to fulfil that night were not at all onerous. If they had been so he should have been far more reluctant in accepting them. If light they were to him extremely agreeable. He felt that they, the citizens of Salisbury and the neighbourhood who took an interest in Christian work, were deeply indebted to Lord Nelson for the initiation of the movement, one of the results of which was the meeting that night—for, to bring men together holding different religious convictions, and to get them to state and to examine and to discuss those differences, as men, as gentlemen, as Christian men, was an immense gain. And he ventured to think that if no further result than this was secured by the movement it perfectly justified the existence of the movement itself. For if they could get these differences discussed in the spirit he had indicated, the result was that they were gradually dispelling ignorance, relieving prejudice, and thus assisting to create a healthy public sentiment. In regard to that association,—the Home Reunion Society—which Lord Nelson and a number of other distinguished men, cleric and lay,

were attached to and were promoting, he had to ask himself what was its purport, what its scope? As he had gathered from the noble Earl's former admirable lecture, (which, if it had been more duly advertised and more fully known, would have filled that room rather than the small one), the great object of that Home Reunion was to re-unite in this their home, their fatherland, the dissevered portions of the Christian Church holding the great cardinal doctrines of the Church such as the doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement. He had to put to himself a question which he should not answer,—indeed, it would not be his province to attempt to answer it. It was this. Was reunion practicable; was it desirable? He had no doubt that before they left that room they would have had many important contributions of thought and opinion on both sides of the question, helping them to form an opinion of their own upon the matter. But if he felt it was not his province to express an opinion; he could yet express with all his heart, the most sincere and hearty approval of the means used in order to secure that end. He had gathered from the address that the means were more prayer, the delivery of lectures on the history of the Church and the doctrines of the Church, greater intercourse, both private and public, between Churchmen and Nonconformists, and finally the holding of such conferences as they had that night. With all his heart he said Amen to each one of these propositions. The history of the movement, so far as it had gone in Salisbury was this: they had had an admirable lecture from the noble earl setting forth in the most graceful terms his own opinion as a churchman. They had next an able and exhaustive manifesto on the opinion of the Nonconformists by Mr. Clarkson; and that evening they had arrived at the third meeting in which Earl Nelson was about to give an address, and Mr. Short would follow.

Earl NELSON then proceeded to deliver the following address which was listened to with marked attention:—

MR. CLARKSON, in his able paper of the 14th of January, has put forth two, as he believes, impassible barriers to that corporate union of all true Christians which certainly existed for the first twelve centuries after Christ, which, I maintain, was specially prayed for by our Blessed Lord, which I therefore consider every Christian should strive after, and which, if striven after in a

true spirit of Christian love, of humble faith and of prayer, will, as I believe, most assuredly be attained. His first barrier is the fact of the Church being established; his second, the existence of High Church or Sacramental Doctrine within the Established Church. As to the first, I propose later on a Home Reunion meeting, at which the whole question of the relations between Church and State should be calmly considered in a spirit of Christian love; but I am not careful to hurry on such a discussion of the merits of so-called establishment or disestablishment, because it never can be considered a vital question between fellow Christians, from the simple fact that, although the corporate union of all Christians has existed for many centuries side by side with a union between Church and State, the temporal position and temporal wealth of a Church are, after all, accidents, not essentials, and may at one time of the Church's history be proved to be very pernicious, at another time very beneficial for the true spiritual interests of the Church on earth. I allow that there have been great evils from this union which Nonconformist action in time past has greatly helped us to remove. But it is quite open to us to maintain that that, which under certain circumstances has worked many evils, is, under amended relationship, capable of much good; and we may further attempt to show that some evils which still undoubtedly remain, may be far easier to remove by the co-operation of those who are now Nonconformists, acting within rather than outside the pale of the one National Church. On the other hand it is perfectly open to the Nonconformists to argue that the evils will always preponderate, and that it is better to remove them at once by severing the connection between Church and State altogether. And in answer to Mr. Clarkson's earnest appeal that we should do justice to the religious conscientiousness of Nonconformists in this matter, I at once state that those with whom I have no sympathy are politicians, who evidently care little for religion, who take up the question of establishment or disestablishment as a mere party cry likely to revive effete party organizations. But, however much I may differ from him, I must ever respect and honour that man who, from purely conscientious motives, from an earnest desire for Christ's honour and glory, and without any secondary thought of personal aggrandisement or of party

triumph, fights for the freedom of religion from all semblance of State control. However, whether in attack or in defence, we, as true Christian men, must be careful, in dealing with this as with other questions, not to exaggerate evils, not to mistake historical facts, and not to draw too hasty conclusions from an existing state of things, when the true action and consequences of them cannot be fully understood by those that are not directly living under the influences of them. Mr. Clarkson, looking upon these evils from without, appears to me quite unintentionally to have greatly exaggerated them.

He says, "The Church is now at the mercy of parliamentary majorities;" "The faith once delivered to the saints is now largely in the hands of the Legislature," and he points to the depressing influence from State appointed Bishops and political church patronage, as rendering us unscriptural in our organization. But on the other hand, he gives noble testimony "to the existence of tens of thousands of spiritual men in the Church of England," and offers "the most sincere respect for their zeal, their liberality, for their devotedness to the work, for their preparedness to suffer loss on behalf of the freedom and self-government of the Church of Christ," to many members of this state-ridden Church who otherwise differ widely from his views. These admissions go far to throw doubt on the correctness of his view of the present relations between Church and State and of the evils consequent thereupon. Surely those tens of thousands of earnest spiritual men would not rest quietly under State shackles if they were so real in their effects as to make her a mere "dependency of the State and very far indeed from resting on a scriptural foundation." The renewed life, the improved services, the increasing liberality of churchmen, the good works, which we are assured the Nonconformists are so glad to reproduce, and the successful growth of High Church principles (certainly not patronized by the State), are all clear evidences that the evils of establishment cannot really be at the present time so overwhelming or so destructive of all spiritual life as they appear to be to Mr. Clarkson, viewing them from without. It is also possible that in any discussion on this subject at a subsequent meeting, many Nonconformists will see, not only that the evils of the connection between Church and State have been

greatly exaggerated, but that there are many advantages to them as well as to us, which can only be cast away at our joint peril and loss. I will only hint at one—the whole foundation of the Protestant succession, which is based on the existence of an Established Church to which our Sovereign must belong, might be undermined by disestablishment. Again, in reference to the second great barrier—the increase within the Church of sacramental or High Church teaching—I would remark, first, that if this teaching has increased notwithstanding and in direct opposition to State influences, it would be magnified rather than lessened by disestablishment.

Secondly, that here again there must surely be much unintentional exaggeration, partly in Mr. Clarkson's own views, partly in his own quotations from Roman Catholic publications. To the Nonconformist I would commend the well-known proverb—"Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes." It is at least suspicious to find the Romanists so earnest against the Ritualists, and militates greatly against the idea that they really do find them such helps to them as they profess. Abbé Martin, in the *Nineteenth Century* review, though he tries to show they are such helps, is obliged to allow that his brother Romanists do not think so. Inquiries among the High Church clergy would show that as a rule (at all events) the facts are by no means as alleged, and the exceptions are most rare.

I ought to know something of the teaching of that great party in the Church to which I belong, and I fearlessly state that, though, with John Wesley, they hold a real presence in the sacraments, they do not accept the doctrine of consubstantiation with the Lutherans, or of transubstantiation with the Romanists. Upon these matters I would say to the Nonconformists, as the Home Reunion Society (composed as it is of High Church, Broad Church, Low Church, and Ritualists) says, "Let us meet together in a spirit of love, as they met at Bonn under the presidency of Dr. Döllinger—Old Catholick, Orthodox Greek Church, Anglicans of all kinds, Lutherans, with representatives from English Nonconformity, all seeking after unity—and you will find when you do come together, not to magnify differences, but to seek for points of agreement, that much of the teaching now giving offence because so entirely misunderstood, will be accepted by all. I

quite agree with Mr. Clarkson's suggestion that the time has come when we should go into more distinctive discussions, and I am willing to enter upon the special subject proposed for to-night, and to maintain, I hope successfully, that external unity is the scriptural idea of the Church, so soon as I have made good the ground already gained towards greater and more cordial union.

And first, let me remove some manifest misunderstandings, the clear explanation of which will at once tend to bring us more nearly together.

In reference to extempore prayer, I say advisedly that the Church has no right to restrict the liberty of her members by denying them the privilege of extempore prayer. I should like to see in every parish services conducted in the church and in the chapel, under the sanction of the Bishop, and with carefully-drawn safeguards to meet every want and lawful desire of professing Christians ; and, over and above the regularly-authorised services, short services with hymns and sermons, and Bible readings with extempore prayer, are already becoming more frequent in the churches and school-rooms of many of our parishes.

Again, Mr. Clarkson asks, " Are we (the Nonconformists) prepared, in our desire for unity, to sink preferences and to surrender institutions of our own ?" I desire distinctly to state that in the contemplated reunion with Nonconformists who hold the teaching embodied in the three Creeds, that if they only saw their way to accept the corporate unity of the Church, under the headship of an apostolic bishop, I, for one, should never ask them to sink preferences or to surrender institutions, but to continue them as duly-organised brotherhoods in communion with the Church of Christ.

As to the Creeds. I have only to remark that we who believe in the Church as a visible reality cannot consider them as of mere human invention. So far as they embody the teaching, deduced from the holy scriptures, of the duly-summoned Councils of the Universal Church, we accept them as proceeding from the direct guidance of God the Holy Ghost.

I was unfeignedly pleased with the avowal, at once so clearly and boldly made by Mr. Clarkson, that in the teaching of the divinity and incarnation of our blessed Lord—and, indeed, of all the doctrines contained in and taught by the three Creeds—we,

with the great majority of the larger Nonconformist bodies, "do stand on common ground." This admission immediately brings us together again on a point upon which there would appear to have been some difference. The Creeds are direction posts to guide us from error, and the daily repetition of such formulas have often been found among us of the greatest benefit to individuals, to families, and to congregations. When comparing scripture, and searching God's holy word, as it is at once the duty and privilege of Christians to do, there can be little danger of going astray under the safeguards of such teaching. And though the Tractarians did good work in drawing attention to the works of the early fathers of the Church, and translating them into English (as members of the Evangelical school have subsequently done), we never meant to press their casual interpretation of different passages, however beautiful some of them may be; but only directed attention to the benefits of their general and united testimony as to the belief and practice of the early Church.

And now, having thus cleared the way, I venture in all humility and love to put forth my views of the teaching of Holy Scriptures as to the corporate unity of the Church of Christ. To true history and to the critical interpretation of the sacred text we must appeal, putting aside the popular fallacies which have for some years overclouded the one, and all the fanciful interpretations which have so frequently obscured the other. The contrast between our views is thus put by Mr. Clarkson: "A unity of spirit, of sympathy, of character, of fellowship of heart, and not a mechanical and corporate unity." A short comment upon this view will make more clear our position, for these supposed contrasts are not so directly opposed as might be imagined. No doubt there must be unity of spirit, "for there is one spirit"—of sympathy, "for there was one heart of the multitude of those that believed, nor did anyone say that anything of his possessions was his own"—of character, "for there is one faith and one hope of your calling"—of fellowship, "for there is one baptism and one God and Father of all Who is in you all"—of heart, "for the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind glorify God." (Rom. xv. 5.; Eph. iv. 4.) But there is also "one body" as well as "one spirit," an "outward unity" as well as an "inward one,"

a "corporate unity" as well as a oneness of "heart and soul." "By one spirit are we all baptised into one body." The inward part of the sacrament uniting us to the inward and spiritual unity, the outward and visible part uniting us to the same one body in its outward and visible unity. Baptism is externally a visible act of admission, but a visible admission into an invisible body is unmeaning. The Nonconformists acknowledge baptism to be an outward admission into a visible society or corporate body, so that if there is but "one baptism" and "one body," there can be but one such visible society into which baptism admits. But let us now consider those portions of scripture upon which Mr. Clarkson relied as teaching a spiritual and invisible as opposed to a corporate and visible unity. And first. It is perfectly true that the authorised translation is not exact, insomuch as the Greek *ποιμνη* has been translated as "fold" instead of flock. I confess that to me this seems to be a distinction without a difference. "And other sheep I have (*i.e.*, the Gentiles) which are not of this (Jewish) fold; these also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd." Now, if, as Mr. Clarkson proposes, this really points to the possibility of the same flock in different folds, we should have found this to have actually been the case with regard to the Jewish and Gentile Churches to which our Blessed Lord is here particularly referring. And yet this is the very thing that St. Paul is resisting in all his Epistles. The desire being clearly to have no distinction between Jew and Greek, but to have not only one flock, but one fold, in every place under Jesus, the head, the door, the shepherd of the sheep.

Again, our Blessed Lord does not say another flock I have which are in another fold, but "other sheep" "which are not [as yet] of this fold," of which fold "I am the Door"—one door, therefore, one fold. They were not a "flock," but merely "sheep," a diffused, disintegrated, not corporate number. They were not actually but potentially and positively His sheep, for they shall hear My voice, as yet they had not heard it, and His sheep know His voice. At present they were as "sheep having no shepherd." "These also," he said, "I must bring." Bring? Whither? Surely to the fold where the folded sheep were already within the door; and these shall become (*γενήσεται*) one flock by the union of the scattered sheep with the folded sheep, one shepherd, one door, one fold.

The unity of the fold is assumed by the unity of the flock intimated by the unity of the door. The true rendering "one flock," is indirectly even more cogent for the unity of the fold than the English version "one fold," which might be thought to imply that the one fold might hold more flocks than one. Mr. Clarkson's view of one flock in many folds seems to me to be contrary to the idea of the whole passage. St. John xvii. But Mr. Clarkson next refers to our Blessed Lord's Prayer. That all that believe in Him "may be one, even as He and the Father are one," and would seem to argue that as God is a spirit, and this unity is especially spiritual, and not visible, we are to take such spiritual invisible unity as that for which our Lord prayed. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for those that shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one." These are the same as are called above the other sheep not of the Jewish fold; but there is no word of separate folds here, they are the natural converts and firstfruits of the Christian Church resulting from that preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles to every creature "in obedience to the commands of the One Shepherd," "Baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" and if there is any meaning in words, the unity prayed for must be a "visible unity." I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me." The world might know that they were one by a unity of spirit, of sympathy, of character, of fellowship, of heart, as well as by an outward corporate unity. But history, too, surely shows that so soon as the outward corporate unity ceased the unity of sympathy and heart ceased also.

Mr. Clarkson complained of the fanciful interpretation of the fathers as alien to the critical acumen of the present day, nevertheless it is a tempting thing to indulge in, and Mr. Clarkson's deduction from the vision of the seven candle-sticks is, I venture to think, rather too fanciful to form a solid Scripture proof in favour of a spiritual union as opposed to that corporate visible union of the Church of Christ, which I maintain has been clearly revealed to us in Holy Scripture. In speaking of the symbolical teaching of Holy Scripture, he says, "We take the seven-branched candlestick of the Old Testament, all welded together on one stem, to be a picture of the unity of the Jewish Church, but the symbol

of the unity of the Christian Church we see in the seven candlesticks not mechanically united in one stem, but standing each on its own basis, all united together, however, by the presence of the Son of Man moving in the midst of them." Surely when a symbol is directly interpreted by Holy Scripture itself, we are not justified in interpreting it in any other way ; and we are here distinctly told that the seven candlesticks are the seven Churches of Asia known to exist, and to whom the seven epistles were directly addressed by name, and the seven stars are the angels or bishops of the seven Churches." Those surely pointed more to the existence of a visible Church than to a so-called spiritual or non-corporate one maintained as an alternative proposition. Besides, I should consider that the Jewish Church was a direct symbol of the Christian Church, and that the symbol of the candlesticks is the same in both cases. And, lastly, Mr. Clarkson relies on the statement that we do not read in the Acts of the Apostles or in the Epistles of any efforts made, or any directions given, for after-use to form the Churches of Galatia or of Asia Minor, or of Greece or Syria into any national or universal body."

We have evidence in our mission Churches now of the growth of a Christian Church in the early stages of its work. These are but scattered missions here and there, all teaching the same creeds and organizations ; then a diocese is formed, then a province or national Church, the natural outcome of their first independent unity. But what analogy do the different churches of Ephesus or Corinth, or Rome or Colosse show to the Nonconformist churches of the present day, even if they were not at that early stage of their existence formally organised in one corporate union, they were entirely one in each place. When St. Paul wrote to Ephesus, where Timothy was the first angel or bishop, there was only one Church there. No other body of Christians out of communion with the Bishop would ever have been recognised by St. Paul. And when at Corinth some dissensions began to arise, St. Paul immediately put them down with no sparing hand, rebuking them for saying "I am of Paul or I of Cephas, &c.," and threatening to exercise his authority as apostle over those who depraved, if not repudiated it, and on that very account. But I cannot allow that the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles are so barren as Mr. Clarkson would suppose, of witnesses

to an organised corporate unity. It would be curious if it was so, for we are met here by the great historic fact so little realised by many of us "that His Church was the one visible legacy which the Lord Jesus Christ left to the world." It is a common error to set the Holy Scriptures in opposition to the Church of Christ as a visible organization ; but, as a fact, the earliest book of the New Testament can hardly have been written until some 30, and the latest until some 70 years after the Ascension, while the whole canon of Scripture was not collected together and generally received for at least 100 years after the Ascension. Hence it arises that during the first great century of suffering and of triumph the faithful were held together by that one visible Church in which, according to our Saviour's promise, the Holy Spirit dwelt. From this visible Body the same everywhere, some in times of persecution fell away. To this visible Body were added daily fresh converts. Through this visible organization, by means of an Apostolic ministry carrying on the oral tradition from the Apostles, the blessed promise of the free forgiveness of sins to all true penitents, was preserved and made known to all. And by this visible Church, under the direct guidance of God the Holy Ghost, all the Holy Scriptures were at last gathered together, verified and authenticated, and given to the world, thus showing the Church to be the witness and keeper of Holy Writ. It would indeed, be curious if the Holy Scriptures were really silent about the formation of that visible Church, by the testimony of which their authenticity can alone be fully established. Our Blessed Lord had led us to expect this by His frequent mention of the Church under the term of "the Kingdom of Heaven ;" he had pointed to it as a visible body not only when He told them that they were to be "the light of the world as a city set on a hill which cannot be hid ;" but when he said "if any man neglect to hear the Church let him be unto thee as a heathen man or a publican." When He promised that "the gates of hell should not prevail against it," when He appointed baptism as the outward sign of admission to the one body. And thus we find in the Acts the unity of the Church from the very first was very simple but very real. "Those who were saved from the corruptions of outer heathenism, and who were to be guided by faith unto Salvation, the Lord added daily to the Church, added them by the

public profession of their faith, and by the solemn baptism of water." They continued steadfastly "in the teaching or doctrine of the apostles." "The one faith once delivered unto the saints;" "and in the fellowship," which we hold to be maintained by the apostolic succession; "and in the breaking of the bread," the celebration of the holy Eucharist; "and in the prayers," either the hours of prayer in the temple, or an early Christian liturgy duly appointed. The use of the definite article in all these cases pointing to the distinctive and specific signs of an outward unity of faith and practice in all essential things.

Then we see the Church at Jerusalem until the destruction of the city accepted as the common centre and honorary head. The alms of all the different Churches were sent there; St. Paul and others report all their work there; the first council is held there under St. James's presidency; when orders were given for regulating the infant Church, the order of deacons was appointed. The churches were so intimately connected that St. Paul frequently proposes an interchange of his letters. There is clear proof in the pastoral epistles of the appointment of bishops, of an order of widows or sisters for the whole Church.

There are many other passages clearly bearing upon a corporate visible unity, a body that could be separated from. (Eph. v, 24.) And to go to symbol, what say we of the "Bride of Christ," of the Holy City four square, with its twelve foundations with the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, with its twelve gates open for all, day and night descending out of heaven from God. The outward unity of the New Testament Church may be shown further from its conformity to the conditions of unity in any body corporate. *E.g.*, that society is one which has one origin, one governing body, one form of admission, one fundamental code of principles; common rites specially ordained by its founder; one charter, one object, and in which the members in right of their membership enjoy common privileges; to all which conditions the Apostolic Church accurately conformed. "The one governing body being indubitably the Apostles themselves." "One Lord" for its founder, "one faith" for its fundamental code, "one baptism" for its form of admission. The Holy Eucharist and public assemblies for its

common rites ; confirmation also and orders ; the apostolic commission for its charter ; “ The edifying of the Body of Christ ” for its one object ; and the participation in all church privileges, the common right of every member of the brotherhood in every place. If this does not constitute a visible external unity I don’t see what can. Of course the external unity of the Apostolic Church rests immediately on the external unity of the Apostolic College, as several and joint holders of the Apostolic commission and authority, a principle the full bearing and scope of which many of us have failed to comprehend. There also is a danger of confounding the distinct idea of identity and unity ; not seeing that corporate unity is quite consistent with a great degree of independent action in non-essentials and for the framing of by-laws and the upgrowth of local customs not incompatible with the fundamentals of the whole society. I have been careful to make as clear to you as I can my view of Scripture teaching as to the visible unity of the Body of Christ, because I feel that the claim for spiritual unity as opposed to corporate reunion is the very source and origin of that exclusiveness from which Mr. Clarkson prays to be delivered, for a man differing from his teachers forms a fresh sect still more exclusive than the one he has belonged to before, and consols himself that he can still worship God according to his own lights without breaking that spiritual unity because he has only started a new candlestick for himself. And if Mr. Clarkson’s interpretation of that symbol were the correct one, how very ill would it accord with the true history of the Christian Church—since that symbol was given—for 1200 years the unity was complete as if the symbol had been an one-stemmed candlestick : in our own country it was complete for 1500 years. And notwithstanding the present drawings together among many of the Nonconformist bodies, we cannot get away from the historical fact that none of them are more than 300 years old ; that for years each new sect as it arose protested bitterly not only against the Church, but against the sects that preceded it. The narrowness and exclusiveness of all bodies who have separated from the Church (now numbering one hundred and fifty-four different religious bodies which have certified their places of meeting to the Registrar-General) has hitherto been proverbial in history, and none can rejoice more than I myself to hear from

Mr. Clarkson the assurance that this bigotry and exclusiveness which he has called “the spirit, the animus—may I say the demon of denominationalism—is disappearing.” But the logical sequence of the disappearance of this demon of denominationalism must be a return to the corporate unity of the Church, not viewed as a distinct and opposing sect, but as the true Scriptural body of Christ, which has no exclusiveness, but belongs equally to all, and within which in the visible unity of one fold under one Shepherd all the Christians of this nation were once safely gathered together.

The Rev. G. SHORT then delivered the following address:—

Through the courtesy of the noble Lord I have been favoured with an outline of the address which he has just delivered, and though that outline was verbalmerely and given some time before my reply to it was even sketched, it may account for a certain resemblance in the line of remark pursued on this occasion. Before I further go, allow me again to say how much I appreciate the Christian spirit and kindness with which the noble Lord has entered on this controversy. “Controversy” it can scarcely be called, for generally speaking the word “altercation” would more fitly express the changes which have been rung on this subject of church and dissent, in which each party has tried to say the most vicious things possible to say of the other, clear judgment has been diminished by partisanship, things imputed to one another which respectively would be repudiated with indignation, and the whole affair has ended with the disputants more cordially hating than before. Only in the *Church Quarterly Review* for January, in an article to which my attention was called by the noble Earl, an instance occurs. The Baptists are confounded with the anabaptists of Germany, from whom we are said to take our rise and who “almost immediately were guilty of the most frightful crimes against religion and morals.” And in the same article, while all other Christians are ignored, we are favoured with the following choice bit from which we may draw our own inferences: “there is an invisible Church, true enough, but it consists of the *angels* and of Christians who now rest in Christ, and is part of that *one* Church which is visible here on earth. But we are told of no way to enter the invisible Church, save through the gates of the

visible Church." Now, I have no doubt the noble Earl could cull quite as interesting pieces of misrepresentation from the *Rock* newspaper, for unfortunately it is no difficult thing for any party to be a good hater. But how unlovely is all this ! How infinitely damaging to the common cause we profess to further, and infinitely opposed to the Spirit of Him Who told His disciples not to forbid another because he followed not with them. This is it, as Dean Stanley said in an address delivered lately at Westminster Abbey, this is "the offence given in the eyes of the heathen nations by the differences of Christianity ; not the fact of those differences, but the fierce rivalries, the unhallowed jealousies, the overleaping ambitions with which different phases or forms of Christianity have attacked and endeavoured to absorb each other in the race of proselytism."

It is, as he says, "these inhuman passions," "these vices of Christian society," which alienate unsophisticated consciences, give the enemy a handle, and teach the enemy to blaspheme. Now, if there is one thing more than another calculated to disarm and to diminish these accusers, it is the way in which the noble earl has met us ; without compromise of his own individual opinions or requiring such compromise from us ; without the air of patronage, a thing to which we as Dissenters are peculiarly sensitive, and which is more odious even than persecution. But as a man and a Christian, with his own decided convictions, dealing with men and Christians possessed of equally decided convictions, yet trying to get near one another. While, however, I thus thankfully acknowledge the Christian spirit and courtesy of Earl Nelson, I am not able to acquiesce in the verdict he gives on the teaching of Holy Scripture concerning the Unity of the Church of Christ. I cannot think that all true members of the Church of Christ, all those who will at last be included in the ranks of the saved, or who on earth become *bonâ fide* children of God, members of Christ, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven, will be, or were intended to be, included in one organic visible community. I cannot so think, for the following reasons : First, because of the simplicity and spirituality of New Testament Churches. They are, as Christian societies, separate from the surrounding world ; composed of men who though in the world were not of the world ; whose only basis of union was their faith, love, holiness, all

springing from their attachment to Christ, and simple repose on the merits of His work. They met and appointed their own officers, they recognised the right and the duty of the Church to regulate its own affairs according to the will of Christ, and independently of all external interference: no waiting for a *congé d'élire* from the head of the State before they could choose their presiding elder, and no fear of the Lords of the Privy Council before they could determine an act of discipline.

Then their worship was simple. As Pliny says, they met and “they sang hymns to Christ as God” they prayed, they spake according to the oracles of God, they administered the ordinances. They worshipped God in spirit and in truth, having little regard to the sacredness of time or place, and asking nothing from the great of this world excepting liberty to worship God as their consciences might dictate. Their only object was to make men holy and happy, and this they conceived they could no better do than by going everywhere preaching the word, so that by the simple evidence of truth applied by the Holy Spirit, men and women might be brought to Christ.”

“ Oh ! how unlike the complex works of man.
This simple, easy, unencumber'd plan ! ”

Next, I do not find a single trace of a visible unity in the Church of Christ ever since the days of the Apostles. There may have been some small pretence for such an assertion before they quitted the precincts of Jerusalem: previous to the persecution arising which scattered them abroad, we indeed read of “the Church which was at Jerusalem.” But afterwards the language holds, “the Churches throughout all Judæa, Galilee, and Samaria.”

Not even in apostolic times were they confederated into one visible organic body; but the Church which was at Jerusalem is spoken of in the same manner as the Churches of Asia Minor, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, &c., independently and co-ordinately. Never once is there mention of a great comprehensive inclusive society, which was local and visible, and to which the others belonged as part-components.

The writer in the *Church Quarterly* speaks of “a visible Church with known officers and definite laws, revealed to the Jewish nation through the agency of Moses;” and from that he argues

to the visibility of the Christian Church. But of *that* we read long ago, "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Since then God has made a new covenant with the house of Israel, concerning which He says, "I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts;" that is to say, I will deal with them spiritually. Besides, was it not of that very Church Jesus said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold (that is, of this Jewish fold), them also I must bring, and there shall be one flock (not as our version has it; it is altogether a different word from that translated fold) and one shepherd?" That is, as Dean Alford puts it, "there shall not be one fold, but one flock—no one exclusive enclosure of an outward Church, but one flock, all knowing the one shepherd, and known of Him." What a beautiful idea! all following one Saviour, obedient to one voice, and comprehended in one great and distinguished community, such as the Roman Church never was, the Greek Church never was, nor any other visible Church on earth!

I am sure the noble earl, whose catholicity throughout this controversy has been so marked, will not say the Church of England was or is co-extensive with that flock, especially now when he acknowledges one-half of the people of England does not rank beneath its banner.

Thirdly, it seems to me that the passages in Holy Scripture usually quoted to substantiate a formal and external union of the Church point to a very different conclusion. Take the passage which has more than once been referred to on these occasions, John xvii. 21, "That they all may be one as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they may be also one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." The unity here prayed for by our adorable Lord surely cannot be formal and external, and in that sense visible as it is implied. "No man hath seen God at any time." How, then, can the prayer that the union which is desired among Christians after the type of the union existing between the Divine Father and Son be called visible union? Visible in the sense of *perceptible*, such as the world can recognise, say Messrs. Webster and Wilkinson (themselves clergymen of the Church of England), it will be; "but not a formal, nominal, external unity, for that will not prove the Divine origin of Christianity. The proof lies in the universal consent of all who truly

exemplify the spirit and precept of our religion, to honour, trust, and love Jesus Christ, and acknowledge Him as the sole Author and giver of salvation." "Formal difference," they add, "among Christian communions only render this spiritual unity more manifest." Take the other scripture associated with it, Matt. v. 16 : "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Which is in heaven." It may be questioned whether that refers to individual believers or to the totality, the Church. Suppose it does to the latter, does not the very text itself prove that the mode in which the Church is to demonstrate its existence, is not by visibility, but by efficiency ? How is it to make its light resplendent ? By its works. Not its corporate assembly, its imposing ritual, its solemn ceremonial, but by its works—such works as will glorify its Father Who is in heaven. Unless it be said that nothing is operative but that which is visible ; unless it be denied that there is no such thing as gravitation, cohesion, force, the soul, even God Himself, because we don't see them, I can't perceive how this text aids "the visible" theory. Take that other text, the great "crux" and "rock" of critics, Matt. xvi. 18 : "I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It has been argued, if not by the noble earl, by some of those to whom he has directed my attention, that the reference must be to the visible church, or else the gates of hell have certainly prevailed against the Church of Christ. Why ? I cannot understand, unless Christianity be a mere *vox et præterea nihil*, a voice and nothing more ; with no more effects than its visible assemblies, and no more veritable disciples than those who are enrolled episcopalians. I should rather say, if the Church here spoken of was meant to be the "visible" one, a clear case might be made out that hitherto it had not succeeded. See ! it might be said "how far the gates of hell have prevailed hitherto ; not a Church on earth, Roman or Greek, or any other, can be called universal ; and as to the Church of England, it embraces avowedly but one-half the people of the land, and that half torn with innumerable contentions." No ! ladies and gentlemen, the language of the Saviour, no doubt, points to a far-off and glorious consummation, but the gates of hell have not yet prevailed, and never shall. With its banner streaming against the wind, and its

ramparts still uncarried by the hostile of this world or the world beneath, the true Church of Christ has not yet surrendered, nor ever will. But we see not at present "all things put under Christ."

Take a whole series of scriptures. We—I mean nonconformists to the worship and polity of the Church of England—are generally supposed to be guilty of the sin of schism; and it is no uncommon thing for gentlemen recently admitted to orders, who cannot know a tithe of the reasons which we have had for taking up a conscientious, painful position, to go about denouncing us as "schismatics," outside the pale of the Catholic Church, unrecognised by respectable society, ignorant ourselves, and misleading others. Nor can we say that this unseemly and unmerited conduct is always confined to the young and inexperienced of the profession.

But what right have we to be called "schismatics?" If we are so, call a spade a spade, and by all means let us have our proper name; if not, let it be laid aside for ever. For myself, sir, I have no doubt that there are "schismatical" Dissenters, and I equally have no doubt that there are schismatical Church people. The word "schism," of which the terms schismatic and schismatical are derivatives, is a Greek word, and occurs ten times in the New Testament, either in the singular or in the plural form, and either in a literal or a figurative sense. It would be needless criticism for me to go over them to-night. The verb or the participle occurs eight times describing the rent vail, rent rocks, rent heavens, &c. In the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians are several passages to which more particularly I invite attention. In I. Cor. i. 10 we read, "I beseech you, brethren, that there be no divisions (or 'schisms') among you." In xi. 18, "When you come together into the church I hear that there be divisions (or schisms) among you." And in xii. 25, "That there should be no schism among you."

Now, as has been remarked, "it is there, if anywhere, "the sin of schism" must be found." What is it? Let us look at the context. "God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked, that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another, and whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it, or one member be honoured

all the members rejoice with it." Here, then, the corporeal system is contemplated as a whole composed of parts: these parts differ among themselves just as hands and legs differ; but they are so united and mixed up with each other that they constitute but one body. They feel as one, and have a mutual care and sympathy for each other; the want of which care and sympathy, or violation of which care and sympathy, *that* is schism. Mark you, not the fracture of an arm or the amputation of a leg, or a limb broken off, but the want of united, active, and reciprocal sympathy among the members themselves. Such as we conceive exists between Canon Ryle (*e.g.*) and Archdeacon Denison, or between Mr. Tooth and his Grace of York.

So, in the other instances, the schisms of which the Apostle complains are violations of love. "It hath been declared to me of you my brethren that there are contentions among you." And again, before he mentions altercations and riotous proceedings, he says, "I hear that there be schisms among you;" not outside you, among those heathenish Gentiles or narrow minded Jews, but among you in your Church congresses or your more hallowed meetings. Heart burnings, strifes, acrimonious disputes, factions and party feeling, these are the divisions of which the Apostle complains, and these are the things whether existing in a dissenting or any other community, which came under his scathing lash. Not dissent as such, except it has the venom of the schismatical spirit which we admit *may* exist among us, but not necessarily. There may be as much within an establishment as ever there can be outside.

In connexion with these passages may be quoted several parallel ones such as Romans xii. 5, "So we being many are one body in Christ and every one members one of another." I. Cor. xii. 12, 13; "For as the body is one, 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 we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free." &c. Passages, as Canon Westcott beautifully shows in his sermons preached in Peterborough Cathedral, revealing the intense individuality and infinite variety of the Christian life, as well as the way in which "one common spirit combines all the parts into a harmonious whole." He speaks of this individuality of gift and character as the great spring of all that is most

energetic in personal influence, a thing which no true patriot or great statesman would think of obliterating from a national character, and which no wise Christian man could think of repressing in the Church of Christ. Into all that we can fully enter, as well as into the lessons which are taught us of manifold subordination to the purposes of Christ. Are we a temple? we are composed of stones of different shapes and colours. Are we a vine? earth, air, and water are fashioned into leaf and fruit. Are we a body? a royal will directs and disciplines and uses the functions of every member. No doubt there are diversities of gifts but one Spirit. Then, however, come in our High Church friends and insist that all these different elements of character, endowment, and circumstance should be rigidly combined in one outward visible body. As if there could not be that realization, without that externality, one body. Let us see how that agrees with the invisibility of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is everywhere spoken of as the Head of the Church, the Head of the body, the Church. He is "the Head over all things to the Church, which is the Head; even Christ." Now, more than eighteen hundred years ago "the heavens received Him out of our sight," and there He has remained, and as the Scriptures say, "must remain till the time of restitution of all things." Whom has He appointed in His stead? No pope, no vicar, no Cardinal Apostolic, no patriarch, no Archbishop or even temporal Head! No one but the Holy Spirit Who is only visible by His works. Hardly likely, therefore, that "the body" should be a visible one, and the Head invisible. If so, it is a body without a head.

Another passage of Scripture cited by the noble Earl is that of Ephesians iv. 11, "And He gave some Apostles, some prophets, some Evangelists, &c., 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 the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Well! the remarks made on diversity in unity, a characteristic of all God's works, will apply to that. There are diversities of operations answering to the diversities of gifts. Whether they are so correlated, as the noble Earl would represent, may be questioned. Whether Bishops of the Church of England can claim Apostolic status and authority may be doubted. Certainly the claim for

absolution of sins on the ground alleged in John xx. 23, will not bear investigation. That promise, whatever it involves, was given to others besides the Apostles, as the chapter proves. Besides, the dogma of apostolic succession, as Archbishop Whately proves, is one that cannot be sustained. I need hardly say that Nonconformists fail to find in Holy Scripture any proof of the three-fold order, bishops, priests, and deacons. The Apostle speaks of bishops and deacons only, and in the Acts xx. 28, addresses those as bishops, whom previously He called "elders."

And now what is the upshot of all this? I hope, ladies and gentlemen, a clearer understanding on both sides. I hope a mutual resolve not to say as hard things of each other as it is possible for our vocabulary to supply, and our imagination to suggest. I hope no longer that any of us will consciously impute to another calling himself Christian, what that other indignantly repudiates. I hope, general recognition of those whose actions and professions alike proclaim that they are Christian. And the cultivation of the spirit of love—the spirit of unity in the bond of peace. So that if still we be separate and distinct, yet all resting on one foundation and following one Lord, we shall be in the possession of a family likeness to our Great and Glorious Head,

"Distinct as the billow
But one as the sea."

The Reverend W. CLARKSON then moved that the thanks of the meeting be given to Earl Nelson and Mr. Short for the excellent papers which they had read to them that evening. He need hardly say that it was a matter of simple gratitude on his part in moving a vote of thanks to his friend Mr. Short for the way in which he had just sustained the position which he (Mr. Clarkson) had tried to establish a month ago. Mr. Short's paper, he was sure they had all thoroughly enjoyed, and, whether they agreed with it or not, thought it was one of very great fairness and ability. He might also say that he none the less cheerfully moved that their best thanks be given to the noble Earl, though he had spent considerable time in endeavouring to demolish the building which he (Mr. Clarkson) tried a month ago to put up. How much nearer the ground his little fabric was now than it was at

the commencement of the lecture he would leave them to say; but he did think that if the building had been brought down a storey or two, under Mr. Short's hands it had been very well re-constructed. The fact was, no one was so simple as to think that, as a consequence of these meetings, there would be any great change in opinion on these matters. There was one thing to his mind, which was of infinitely greater importance in the eyes of their Master than identity of opinion on religious subjects; and that was that they should do justice to one another, however much they might disagree. As a consequence of their meeting there, they would, however, understand more of each other than they did before, and they would do a larger measure of justice one to another than they were disposed to do before. Another result was that they were able to see how intelligent and earnest people might read, in a very different sense indeed, the same passages of Holy Scripture. When the noble Earl was reading his paper, he was occasionally struck with surprise that he should take those passages of Scripture in the sense he did; and they were bound to conclude that it was quite as likely for one who had investigated those subjects to come to his conclusions concerning them, as it was that he should come to his; and he hoped that Earl Nelson would treasure the same feelings towards him as he did towards the noble Earl. He had nothing to complain of with regard to the treatment of his paper, for from the beginning to end there was not the slightest misrepresentation, because not the slightest misapprehension, of the arguments which he brought forward a month ago. He thanked the noble Earl for the admission he had made respecting those who did not shrink for a moment from avowing themselves to be politico-religious Dissenters; that he had made the distinction between those who opposed the Establishment on political grounds, and those who opposed it on religious as well as political grounds. He hoped they would now hear no more about the distinctions between political and religious dissenters in this neighbourhood at least. He objected to the statement with regard to the number of spiritual minded men and women in the Church of England, that his admissions were inconsistent with his arguments, that the Establishment was prejudicial to the Church of Christ. It seemed to him he could say exactly the same thing

if he were speaking of the Church of Rome; he most willingly admitted there were thousands upon thousands of earnest spiritual men in connection with the Church of Rome; but the fact that there were so many spiritual members in connection with the Romish Church was no proof that its teaching was not contrary to Holy Scripture. Therefore, he did not see how his admission was in the least degree inconsistent with the argument which he previously brought forward. So far as he could see, exactly as the Church of England was becoming more spiritual, more active, more vital through all its members, just so it began to sigh for freedom, and for the disconnection of the Church from the State. He combated, on the part of the various Wesleyan bodies, the representation made by the noble Earl with regard to the Wesleyan doctrine of the presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament, which was very different from the teaching of the Wesleyans at the present time. In reference to the difference between the doctrines of transubstantiation and consubstantiation, he said it would take a very clever man to distinguish the latter from the doctrine which was taught by the Anglo-Catholic party, which was so near the doctrine held by the Church of Rome at the present time, that there would have to be a most serious modification in the views taught on this subject, or there would have to be a great change in their views before they could join hands. He concluded by thanking the noble Earl for the part taken by him in the matter.

The Rev. Canon MORRICE seconded the proposition, which was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

Earl NELSON, in reply, said he was much obliged for the vote of thanks. Of course Mr. Short would speak for himself. He would not occupy much of their time after the very long lecture which they had so kindly listened to. In reference to Mr. Short's remarks, there was one point which he must make good; and that was: that although they (the Church of England) claimed to be a true branch of the Church of Christ they did not in the least mean to say that there was no Salvation outside. But there was one remark of Mr. Short's about our Blessed Lord being in heaven, and not being able to be the Head of the visible body on earth (a body without a head as it had been termed) which had given him some feelings of pain. Christ had said He would

be with His Church by the Holy Ghost. They knew that in the mysterious unity of the Three Persons in the Trinity were things they could not enter into. He was sure Mr. Short did not mean anything irreverent by it. Surely it would be quite possible for our Blessed Lord to be in Heaven, and yet to be the real Head of the visible Body on earth. The noble Earl expressed a hope that they would meet again to talk about the Three Orders, Apostolic Succession, and other matters, and he had purposely omitted all reference to it to-night. If we allowed that the Nonconformists were sincere in their opinions, it must be allowed that Churchmen were equally sincere in their opinions, and equally believed they were based upon Scripture teaching. Surely there was sound Scripture proof that our Lord did really leave His Apostles as several and joint holders of the Apostolic Commission and authority to govern His Church on earth. I. Cor., 12. quoted by Mr. Short surely went far to prove the necessity of a greater Unity than Churchmen and Nonconformists had hitherto exhibited to the world. They had wanted very much indeed that perfect sympathy and love for one another, which were there named as distinctive marks of the different parts of that one Body. It was his earnest prayer that if the meeting did nothing more, they might as fellow-Christians be able to work more than they had ever done before to attain to so true a spirit of Christian love.

The Rev. G. SHORT also acknowledged the vote of thanks. He thanked the noble Earl for his initiation in this matter. With reference to the question of the visible Body without a head, he must be considered to have said what he meant, and to have meant what he said. The invisibility of Christ had always seemed to him to be a very strong argument against the visibility of the body. After dwelling upon his lordship's remarks as to the word schism, he concluded by stating that one reason why he prized those meetings was that it was calculated to suppress that schismatical spirit, whether in Church or Dissent.

Earl NELSON then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

The Rev. G. SHORT seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The proceedings then concluded with prayer.

N.B. ON THE WORD SCHISM.—Is it not true that ‘schism’ and ‘separation’ connote rather different ideas. The former, want of love and sympathy and unity within the body; the latter, departure from it?

Holy Scripture never speaks of schism from the Church, there “are schisms among you” but you are the Church; (*συνεγχομένων ὑμῶν ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἀκούω σχίσματα ἐν ὑμῖν ὑπαρχεῖν;*) and the schisms are “in you.”

N.B. ON THE INVISIBLE HEAD.—We willingly add the following from Mr. Short—

“I most thoroughly believe in the present Government of our Lord Jesus Christ, although invisible; and would reverently attribute to Him every display of goodness not only recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, but possessed by the Church at this day. My only question was concerning, not the fact of this present operation, but the congruity of the figure which represents the Head as invisible and the body, which is the Church, as visible.”





