

[COMMUNICATED.]
UNION VERSUS UNITY.

One of the great arguments used by unbelievers against Christianity is its lack of that unity which is supposed by them to be incompatible with a divine revelation—one intended to unify and save mankind!

The assumption is correct, for Divine wisdom must understand man's nature, his capabilities, and necessities; it also must provide the needful and exercise some control over the application thereof; there must not—cannot be any mistake about this, no haphazard administration, no uncertainty as to matter or method, no trusting to human weakness or error; it must be positive, direct, unchallenged, or if so, as invulnerable as adamant, and expressed as sentimentally or beyond controversy, as "One faith, one Lord, one baptism!"

All Christendom probably would subscribe to this fundamental idea of unity or uniformity, and a thoughtful believer looking upon the presumed mission of Christianity, would deprecate the ever present departure through the multiplication of diverse platforms, ceremonies, organizations and claims.

The observer sees that division is a stumbling block at home, and "a rock of offense" abroad; that effort is shorn of its power, and that the very fact of wasted energy and means is a libel on the Divine economy everywhere, as seen in nature, for it utilizes even the atoms, is opposed to waste, compelling all things to subservience, and "gathering the fragments that nothing be lost."

There is a vast amount of energy in the so-called Christian churches, but it is frittered away, an immense working element—teachers beyond computation, but they are pulling apart; individual truth, if compatible with a brother truth is barred of assimilation by homilies, creeds, catechisms and articles of faith; the walls of this modern superstructure built for religion, are daubed with "untempered mortar;" heterogeneous ideas were formulated in the dark ages of controversial theology, when hair splitting was the work of casuists and clerics; then mysticism became the founder of schools, until antagonism deluged mankind with oceans of critical commentary, and true religious life was stifled in the home of its so-called most loyal friends!

Finally the spirit of protest became rampant, the voice of authority was doubted and hushed, Scripture became of "private interpretation," the right of protesting private judgment developed into a mania and a mockery; for every soul could claim the same privilege until religious unity was but a rope of sand, without strength and without cohesion; it could neither tie nor be lifted; it simply fell in this attempt by its own weight, and that mischief was done ere the pretenders or their opponents realized that "there was death in the pot!"

In the promulgation of Christianity for the overthrow of heathenism and superstition, this was a fatal defect; even the unsophisticated heathen thought truth should be one; they could not comprehend the value or the beauty of controversial dogma, and every teacher, no matter what society sustained him, felt that he was working apart; that sectarianism in fact erected its own barriers, denied itself, was its own enemy, and as a consequence, lacked even the potency which a half orthodox creed and ministry could have exerted, had it been in the missionary field alone.

Millions upon millions of dollars have been spent, machinery has been multiplied, and sacrifice might have told a harrowing story in almost every land beneath the sun; but as business enterprises, are not the results question-

able at best, and could not Christendom ask loudly and earnestly the question, Does it pay? Nay, if its converts were multiplied indefinitely, until all men bowed at the name of Christ, could a divided sectarianism develop that spiritual glow of energy and character which Christianity was intended to produce and then perpetuate?

Now the mother Church by reason of its unity, its antiquity, its widespread influence and abiding faith in itself, has for ages seen these discrepancies—this waste, and Pope Plus the ninth as well as Leo, the Pope of the present, believing in the final triumph of the Christian faith, have both essayed, toiled for amalgamation with other sections of the Christian ministry and organization, that the final issue might be hastened for the benefit of the world.

Authoritative documents have followed each other in rapid succession, couched in suggestive but earnest words of hope for unity, even deeming some compromise comparatively valueless if the estrangement of the English Church mainly, could be reached and healed; doubtless thinking that any intimacy, any amalgamation of spiritual force would affect finally the recalcitrant Protestant sects in all their bewildering variety.

Whether in the order of Providence this spirit is moving generally is of interest to the Latter-day Saints, and the fact that the two great wings of Episcopalianism, viz: "Methodists and Protestants" in this country have resolved upon amalgamation, appointing a committee to prepare common text books for the whole, is surely one of the signs of the times.

One of the most famous of American pulpit orators pointed out a while ago, the inherent weakness of division, and claimed that over forty varieties of Presbyterians exist in this country; several varieties of Methodists; the same of Baptists and those of lesser magnitude ad nauseum; he also pointed out how in many "a small village there is a Baptist church, a Congregational one, a Methodist, a Lutheran, an Episcopal and a Presbyterian church, with their six edifices sparsely attended, and their six ministers starving to death," where but one minister and one church could accommodate the whole, and do more good; these might be added to in Salt Lake City (according to the Sunday papers) materially, all catering for converts or perverts, quarrelling as to essentials and non-essentials, yet admitting time and again a certain and positive entity in regard to the cardinal principles of Christianity, differing only on points without practical bearing on the increase of soulful goodness or the salvation of a sinner.

Division is kept up in the spirit of rivalry, effort looks mainly to the aggrandizement of sect, preaching has become a profession, men "preach for hire and divine for money," they provoke enmities, sow the seeds of distrust and disunion, minister to crankiness of idea, and award by implication to every man with nerve enough, the right on some fool idea or another, to create and found a church of his own, yet all are looking for the same heaven ostensibly, where rivalry is unknown, where there is but one church, one faith, one rule, and from whence all who rebel and "invite sectionalism" will share the fate of "the Son of the Morning"—they will assuredly be cast out.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stands aloof from all this; it is satisfied with its own special mission, it is satisfied with the Gospel of Jesus Christ; it has no controversy with the world only as explanatory and in self defense; it does not expect to convert all mankind; it believes that during the millennium and in the spirit

world there will be those who "claim to be of Paul, of Apollos, of Cephas," yet they will be satisfied to be of Christ, to teach His doctrines, to honor His ordinances and commandments, and to receive that allotment of persecution, misrepresentation, and rejection, which may be their share, for "so did the fathers unto the prophets which were before them."

The Church of God prefers union to unity, but not that which comes from amalgamation with any; as much as possible they desire to "live in peace with all men," but there is no command to "receive into their houses, or to bid a God-speed" to those who in their own self-righteousness project into the true Christian life or true Christian Church, under any assumption, the "sons of Belial," but it is and ever will be the prerogative of the untiring Saints, with Luke, to testify of "those things that they know and verily believe."

Two thousand years have passed since the Gospel was revealed by the authority of its "Great Apostle," Jesus Christ, since that, emasculated, perverted, and without authority, what remained has achieved its triumphs and had its measure of success; with its re-revelment the Lord is holding that predicted "controversy" with the nations, and speedily will be ushered in "the day of decision;" the forces of good and evil will align themselves for the great day of the Lord—the battle of Armageddon; that union which is not unity, will be consumed, and the "Unity of the Saints" will be so exhibited that the two Churches—the only two—"the Church of God and the Church of the Devil," as the Book of Mormon rather abruptly designates the contestants, will demonstrate after all pretension the real value of each; yet there may and will be reward for the members of one and condemnation for the members of the other; seeing that "where much is given much shall be required, and where little is given little will be required!"

MATTERS IN MONROE.

Monroe, Utah, Jan. 22, 1898.

The climatic features of Monroe for the past month have been snow, flooded streets, snaps of cold weather reaching 12 degrees below zero, and some sleighing has been enjoyed.

A few traveling theater troupes and a few near by visiting ones tended to please the lovers of the drama and draw away money from town. Dances have been well patronized, especially when our thirty students arrived for the Christmas holidays from the educational cities of Logan, Salt Lake, Provo and Ephraim. At such times it seems like a reunion when the long pent-up feeling gives vent to sociability by way of rest from arduous studies.

With the new year came a religious reformation—a much larger attendance being had at Sabbath meeting, Sunday school, all of the quorum meetings and a heavy increase in the Improvement Associations. Brothers Nels Madsen of Brigham City, and William T. Salt of Hooper, have done an excellent work in their missionary labors in the interest of the Improvement Associations. The Young Men's Association now numbers ninety-five, being an increase of forty per cent. Possibly the Young Ladies are about the same ratio.

The great event of the season came off on the 21st, when the young folks of both associations gathered together the old folks of the town and treated them to a sumptuous repast. Three long tables were set in the meeting house and sleighs and other modes of conveyance were used to bring the honored guests together, where all