

THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

NO. 30.—OCTOBER, 1894.

I. DR. DRIVER ON THE AUTHORSHIP OF ISAIAH XIII. AND. XIV.

As shown in the first part of this paper,¹ the validity of Dr. Driver's conclusion as to the non-Isaianic authorship of these chapters hinges upon the validity of the minor premise of his argument. That premise is embodied in the proposition, *the prophecy of these chapters has no intelligible relation to, or bearing upon, the interests of the contemporaries of Isaiah*. We have already noticed one of the propositions laid down by Dr. Driver, presumably in support of this position. We will now ask attention to some others which are laid down, presumably for the same purpose.

I. The first of these is expressed thus: "The circumstances of the exile—while the Jews were still in bondage, and the power of Babylon seemed yet unshaken—constitute a suitable and sufficient occasion for the present prophecy, an occasion of exactly the nature which the analogy of prophecy demands; on the other hand, the circumstances of Isaiah's age furnish no such occasion." Now, in reference to this proposition, there are several points that can scarcely fail to arrest the notice of the thoughtful reader: (1), The first is this: The sting of the proposition, if it has one, is in its tail. In other words, we may admit that the circumstances of the Jews, while still in bondage, constitute a suitable and sufficient occasion for the present prophecy, and the admission will be without prejudice to the position of those who maintain the Isaianic authorship of this passage, and without profit to those

¹ *Presbyterian Quarterly*, April, 1894.

IV. THE LAMBETH ULTIMATUM.

THE “dissenting” religious press in the United States is much exercised over “the historic episcopate,” as one of four essentials to organic union. I am so ardent an advocate of that dogma that the agitation of these good brethren impresses me as groundless. The Book of Acts is, beyond question, history, and confessedly inspired. The epistles of St. Paul, also, contain much historical matter. In these venerable documents we find the primitive Christian churches provided with rulers called *episcopoi*, or *elders*, and hundreds of these *bishops*, which is the English for *episcopoi*, were ordained by the apostles and their assistants. I am, therefore, as sure that the primitive church was *episcopal*, as that the Bible was from God.

The “historic episcopate” is impregnable, and the wonder is that so many have the hardihood to call it in question. But a still greater wonder is, that a corrupt church, in alliance with the Roman empire, succeeded so well in abolishing this apostolic institution, and substituting a hierarchy of prelates in its place. The episcopate of uninspired history, or tradition, is a priestly aristocracy, as unlike the elders of Paul’s churches as an elephant is unlike a mouse. The episcopate of *inspired* history was a body of select men in a congregation of believers. See Paul’s epistles to Timothy and Titus, and his address to the elders of the church of Ephesus as “bishops.” (Acts xx., Revised Version.) The episcopate of uninspired history, on the contrary, is everywhere the investiture of an *individual* with authority over many parishes and many local ministers. Under the former system each congregation or city was provided with a number of primitive bishops. Under the latter, a whole state or province is subjected to a diocesan, who itinerates from parish to parish to supervise his subordinates.

As a consequence of so great a change after the apostolic system was introduced, the relative number of so-called bishops be-

came smaller and smaller, and the church was subjected to an episcopate held by clerical princes appointed over large populations.

The apostolic church was thus, beyond dispute, *more episcopal* than its successors. We are confronted in our day with a strange scene. The corrupt majority in nominal Christendom insists that a system of church government shall be accepted as historic and fundamental which *excludes* episcopacy from the parish or congregation, and converts it into a rare and exclusive office of superintendency over large areas. The Protestant bodies which adhere more strictly to the scriptural models are denounced as schismatic, because they cleave to the original, historical episcopate founded by the apostles, and object to a bishopric which is interdicted to the local parishes of the church. Thus the non-episcopal denominations are manifestly more zealous for the historic episcopate of the Bible than those bodies which boast most loudly of their devotion to the system. I maintain that the most consistent Episcopalians in the world are the Presbyterians, who have about one bishop for every hundred or two communicants, whilst the prelatical systems provide less than one per cent. as many. I do not pretend to exactness, but the reader knows that a Presbyterian church has several bishops, and the prelatie bishop has many churches.

There is no reason whatever for rejecting the "historic episcopate" if *sacred* history is allowed its due weight in the scales. The observant inquirer will be astonished to find that prelacy is, in the light of the New Testament, nothing less than an abandonment of the parochial episcopacy so carefully instituted by Paul.

It is hard to deal gravely with some of these priestly pretensions, however sincerely entertained. Millions of Chinese burn bogus paper money, in the belief that somehow their dead may use the smoke as currency. Millions of papists, and some Anglicans, who are educated and rational, accept the dogma of transubstantiation, being ready to swear that our Lord, when he instituted the supper, held between his fingers his own entire person, one Christ being held in the hands of another, which was yet the same. And now we find a large body of pious and learned pre-

lates proclaiming their belief that "historic episcopacy" is an essential feature of Christianity, whilst the Baptist denomination, with equal fervor, and equal reason, plead for "historic immersion." It is difficult for Bible Christians, who believe that "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation," but is mainly "within" us, to contend with these frantic parties who are so earnestly vociferating, "Lo, here! and lo, there!" If we understand the prelatist, he wishes to convey, by the terms he employs, the notion that his episcopate is "historic," in the sense of original and permanent. But, with the exception of the word itself, the whole institution is the fruit of a development. *Stat nominis umbra*. "Bishop" means different things in different times and localities, and "historic" belongs to events, rather than institutions. The episcopate of these gentlemen is no more historic than the pyramids. It is a fine specimen of *lucus a non lucendo*. It was one thing under St. Paul, another under Constantine, another under Hildebrand, another under Cranmer, and still another under Laud. It is of one type in Abyssinia, of another type in Russia, of another at Rome, of another in South America, and of still another in the United States.

The advocates of the institution propound it as a part of an ultimatum for organic union with other Protestant sects, and seem to assume that it is perfectly definite and intelligible. But, on inspection, it is found to be a vanishing quantity, presenting occasion for unlimited difference of opinion. And yet its advocates treat it as a fundamental article of religious belief, no more to be surrendered than the sacraments!

With due respect, we must say that this exaltation of a *form* to the dignity of a fundamental dogma of the religion of Christ, appears to us as irrational as paper money for the dead, or the material presence of our Lord in the eucharist. We are not rationalists, and admit the truth of many religious propositions, however mysterious, when proved from Scripture. But this proposal is, that all Christians shall accept in faith the inexplicable mystery of a spiritual pedigree descending to us through eighteen centuries of ecclesiastical evolution, as validly in Abyssinia, Russia, Italy, and Spain, as anywhere else, but totally wanting among

those Christians who respect the Bible most, and are doing most for the kingdom of Christ.

The fruits of the Spirit are confessedly associated with Christian institutions, but here is one special gift that flows in a different channel, from hand to head, of corrupt and debased hierarchies, with all the greater assurance of purity in the transmission, according to the *impurity* of its channels. Copts, Jacobites, Armenians, Nestorians, Greek Catholics, Roman and Spanish Catholics, are all, according to the assumption of these high church Anglicans, in full possession of the so-called historic episcopate, which guarantees the continuous enjoyment of the Spirit of God flowing steadily through the hands of their bishops. The fruits of the Spirit enumerated by St. Paul, in Galatians v. 22, should especially abound in populations so highly privileged, and be conspicuously wanting under an unauthorized ministry, such as is generally found in Britain, Germany, Scandinavia, and the United States. Current history, however, testifies that the territories that bask in the full blaze of the "historic episcopate" cannot compare in Christian morals with those chiefly served by a schismatic ministry. Travellers are unanimous in declaring that the Turk is an honorable, dignified gentleman, compared with the Catholic sects that habitually quarrel and fight, under his supervision, in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and over the Saviour's manger at Bethlehem.

The reader can now comprehend our meaning when we say that this theory of the historic episcopate is as hard to believe as transubstantiation, or the ashes of a paper currency devoted to the dead. If reason is to decide upon its claims, as the mode of argument generally pursued in its behalf would indicate, common sense must dispose of it at once as an absurdity of the lowest grade.

But one of the strangest phenomena is the unwillingness of Christian men, who thus appeal to history, to give its due weight to the only history that is infallible. The meagreness and obscurity of the early fathers, on whom they rely, are proverbial. So far as they contradict the New Testament, they are an impertinence. When they confirm its testimony, they are little needed.

The inspired pages are incomparably more explicit and satisfactory. But their testimony is habitually slighted, in comparison with the vague and dubious testimony of tradition, by nearly all the champions of the historic episcopate.

If one of their own prelates should ordain elders as bishops in every parish in his diocese, the act would be denounced as an outrage by the whole hierarchy; and yet it would be in close conformity to apostolical example, since Paul instructed both Timothy and Titus to do so. The elders of Ephesus were *bishops* (see Acts xx. 28, Revised New Testament), but this fact is *too* historical for the hierarchy. They refuse to recognize an episcopacy fifty or a hundred years older than their own, not only as improperly ordained, but as not historical! They positively forbid the Christian congregations under their care to be organized after the model of Paul's churches, and require them to be governed by an episcopate of later date and far more extensive jurisdiction.

This episcopate, of inferior antiquity and exalted pretensions, now proposes union with other Protestant denominations on condition that the latter shall practically accept the more modern and more princely type of episcopacy derived from tradition, and renounce the more historical and scriptural system so clearly revealed in the word of God. And the absurdity of the demand does not consist altogether in dictation by a small minority of Protestants, of insular origin, to the great majority of their brethren, equally acquainted with the Scriptures, and comprehending many nationalities; nor in the superstition that exalts the outward form of ordination to an importance far superior to that of an actual fellowship of faith by the Spirit. Its chief feature lies in the amazing notion that an episcopate whose institution or germination occurred sometime during that night of horrors that followed the destruction of Jerusalem, and covered up as with a pall the infant church of Christ, rendering all satisfactory history almost impossible; that such an episcopate, conjectural, traditional, mutable, indefinable, should be called *historical* in a præeminent sense, and urged as a *necessary substitute* for another episcopate of higher antiquity, revealed in the inspired oracles of Paul and Luke, and put upon record for the benefit of all future ages!

All this seems to us palpably inconsistent with the letter of the Bible and with plain common sense. We bring no railing accusation. Great respect is due to the English and American hierarchy. But many great and good men adhere to transubstantiation, and many learned and devout ecclesiastics believe in the Holy Coat of Treves and the carpal bones of St. Anne. The most puerile conceits are sometimes entertained by the most august personages.

We have sufficiently exposed the antagonism of this high church fetich with the explicit, undeniable letter of the New Testament. Its significance is tremendous. The courtesies of society render us blind to the immense gulf it creates between the hierarchy and other Protestants. They appear very gracious towards ministers of other sects, and doubtless often breathe a fraternal spirit; but when it is proposed that they shall *officially* give some sign of recognition, a polite rejection never fails to come. It is always maintained that ordinances administered by Lutheran, Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist, Baptist, and other evangelical ministers are not altogether valid. A small minority of those who profess a supreme regard for the Bible accuse an overwhelming majority of their brethren of *schism*, on the ground that this majority cannot exactly concur with the insular minority in substituting a traditional episcopate for the more historical episcopate of the other Reformed churches.

I propose now to exhibit the contrariety of this theory to the *spirit* of the gospel. It offends us very grossly by its sharp contrast with the primitive type of Christianity. But that is nothing, when compared with its presumptuous antagonism to the fraternal spirit enjoined upon us by our Lord. We are astonished whenever we receive a summons to *union* from parties who have done more to promote division than all their opponents. Parochial episcopacy was undeniably instituted by the Apostle Paul. From the time of the English Reformation, a governmental party in that country, always associated with the court and the aristocracy, has maintained a desperate controversy against this form of episcopate, seeking, by every device of priestly ingenuity, to substitute for it the opposite hierarchical system. So

far as Protestants are concerned, it is a purely English idea, as little countenanced by continental churches as any other insular peculiarity. But it has been fighting ever since, not only against the *letter* of inspired history, but against the sacred fellowship of the gospel.

The prayer of our Lord for his people, that they might be one, is constantly brandished as a sword in the hands of this Anglican party, to compel Christians of other principles and nationalities to abandon their convictions and become prelatists after the Anglican order. Religious indifference, and wealth, and social prestige, are always operating in furtherance of their purpose; but conscience, intelligence, and the spirit of liberty, continue to array an immense majority of Protestants in opposition to the scheme. This majority appeals not only to the inspired testimony of the New Testament, but to its spiritual principles. Peter, in his First Epistle, chapter v., exhorts his fellow-elders to exercise their episcopate (see Greek) over their respective charges (see Revised Version) in a meek and humble spirit, as examples rather than lords. If he and Paul teach the same order, they both refer to the "parochial episcopacy" of the elders, like those of Ephesus and Philippi. The injunction plainly condemns all individual and arbitrary exercise of the functions of an elder over a local congregation. This precisely accords with the Saviour's own precept, that office in his church was to be a *service*, and not a distinction of rank: See Matt. xx. 26: "Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant." I use the Revised Version, but in the original the language is still stronger. Servant and slave are the words employed. Nothing could be more explicit and forcible than this prohibition by our Lord of any imitation in his church of secular rank and temporal autocracy.

All intelligent people must know that prelatical episcopacy in the oriental, Catholic, and Anglican systems violates this divine precept by a shameful imitation of the usages of the Gentiles. It can hardly be necessary to refer to the spiritual peerages in Russia, Italy, Spain, and England, or to the pomp and state of

these hierarchies in all the older countries of the world; whilst they affect or cultivate another demeanor in democratic America.

The spirit of prelacy, when unrestrained, is in glaring contrast with the spirit of the gospel. It destroys the parochial episcopate of the Scriptures, and introduces into the church that very domination, of one over many, which Christ and his apostles so earnestly prohibited. The extent to which the authority of representative bodies has been substituted in the United States for the autocracy of Protestant prelates is strong confirmation of this criticism. The prelatic theory is given up, in proportion to the influence allowed to lay representation. But this dogma is characterized, wherever it predominates, by the rule of one appointee over many subjects, and is in permanent conflict with the impression created by the injunctions of Scripture. Spiritual eminence is inseparably associated with profound humility, and true episcopacy is the function of lowly shepherds in the midst of a dependent flock, carefully feeding the sheep, and lovingly leading them in the way of life.

The spirit of prelacy, unchecked by controlling deliberative bodies, is autocratic, pompous, and adverse to the humble services of the Master. There are many noble exceptions, but the tendency is easily seen in England, and in most Catholic countries, where the bishops usually take rank with the secular aristocracy. This tendency is the natural growth of a system founded upon the false assumption that the Christian ministry is a *priesthood* like the atoning priesthood of our Lord. The Holy Spirit, under whose inspiration the New Testament was written, so carefully guided the several authors that not one of them ever applied the title of "priest" to the preachers of the gospel, as they would naturally have done had the notion been true. A more significant omission cannot be conceived. But this idea is so essential to the dogma that no concession of it has been allowed in the interest of peace after centuries of controversy. The hierarchy would rather hold on to *disunion* for centuries more, than abandon the title of "priest," however unscriptural.

This arbitrary error is far more than a mere verbal distinction. All perverts from other Protestant bodies to the prelatical ranks

accept a dogma which the New Testament most solemnly repudiates. The priesthood of the Redeemer was the fulfilment of the whole priesthood of the Jews. So we are forced to understand the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the temple service assistant priests were needed by reason of infirmity; but our Lord needed no assistants or successors. The chief function of the apostles was that of witnesses, and the ministers of the new dispensation are heralds of salvation. The atoning work was finished on the cross. The atoning priest ascended to heaven. The office was wholly absorbed in his one person, and other priests of like functions form no part of the provision made for the church. The very word was expressly abandoned. Ephes. iv. 10-12: "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The priesthood was evidently *not* given, which would not have been omitted if Paul had been a prelatist of the present type.

If, then, there was no such office provided for in the Christian church, there was no use for the title. We are far from higgling about mere words; but when a denomination of Christians adopts a *word* as the vehicle of an enormous error, it is the duty of Protestants to protest. Especially are we compelled to remonstrate when this error is laid down as one of four indispensable conditions of a union which is claimed to be imperative upon those addressed. This is the very reason why the Anglican clergy insist upon the word *priest* in their immutable system. It is totally unwarranted by the New Testament, as all candid readers know, but is considered necessary for the purpose of preserving a certain doctrine in the church to which most Protestants object.

These champions of a pernicious phraseology seem willing to sacrifice, for centuries more, the unity of the church for the sake of wearing the badges of the corrupt papacy. Other denominations have been remonstrating for generations against their unnecessary imitations of Rome, but they plainly declare that they love such words as *altars*, and *priests*, and *temples*, foreign as

they are to the idiom of the primitive Christians, more than they love unity and peace.

We protest against such a sacramental use of unauthorized terms, solely on account of the error they convey. The earnestness of their advocates betrays a significance of a portentous character. Why *insist* upon a temple, an altar, and a priesthood, if the work of *atonement* was finished on the cross? We are expressly told (Heb. viii. 4) that if Christ had remained on earth *he* should not have been a priest. And, again (ix. 25), that he is not to be offered up often. Beyond question, therefore, the eucharist is not in any sense a repetition of the first offering of Christ. But the tenacity of Anglicans for this priestly phraseology, against all the appeals of their brethren, proves the charge that, as a church, they are not prepared to renounce all faith in the popish sacrifice of the mass. They prefer to retain a language that at least does not deny that Christ is repeatedly offered up on an altar, by a priest, in a consecrated temple.

The divisive character of this persistency in phrase is very obvious. It builds a Chinese wall to encircle a new celestial empire. The Redeemer himself drew a line of distinct separation around his church. It was not his will to include his enemies or shut out his friends. The so-called historic episcopate, which creates and sustains the so-called Christian priesthood, extends its fraternal embrace around millions of nominal Christians, inferior in morals to many followers of Mahomet and Confucius, whilst it refuses recognition to millions of evangelical Protestants at least as good Christians as its own members. No extravagance is intended. As individuals, they exhibit a kindly spirit towards Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, and other orthodox Protestants. But as ecclesiastics, they declare, on paper, and keep it recorded, that Abyssinians, Copts, and Syrians are their Episcopal brethren, whilst the other Protestants are schismatics.

The Chinese wall thus drawn is an extraordinary structure. It encloses multitudes of the worst specimens of humanity, the vile scum of degraded nationalities of the Orient. It shuts out multitudes of the true people of Christ, who bear the cross after him

as ardently as any of his ancient martyrs. Their ministers are generally excluded from their pulpits, always from their altars, and they are politely informed, that when they want true orders they will please strip off the false orders they have hitherto worn.

The question arises whether these church lines correspond with the boundaries of the Redeemer's kingdom. It is perhaps impossible to exclude all false professors, which, however, should be the aim of all honest administration. On the other hand, it seems very wrong to rule out any of the Lord's true disciples. A few may exclude themselves by unreasonable excuses, but, with rare exceptions, all persons who give evidence of Christian piety seek admission to Christian fellowship. We therefore challenge the right of any organization claiming to be catholic to prescribe any other than the original Christ-given terms of communion. These were simply "believe and be baptized," the latter being the confession of the former in a significant rite.

Now, the Lambeth Conference, representing the Anglican Church, summons all other Protestant Christians to a comprehensive union for the whole world, on a basis of four articles, one of which is this same "historic episcopate," that so directly contradicts the Scriptures, to be adopted in the first article. In other words, a catholic basis of union is proposed, in which all members shall concur in the maintenance of two dogmas which are irreconcilable; and, what is far worse, the member is to consent to a principle in church government as of fundamental obligation which conflicts with his honest conception of the contents of the inspired Scriptures just accepted. It is true that modifications of the last stipulation are provided for; but no intelligent reader will suppose that the characteristics of the high-church theory are to be abandoned. There is no suggestion of any such concession. The demand is clearly that all the constituents of this united church shall hereafter agree in submitting to a government, in parishes by a priesthood, and in dioceses by "historic bishops"; whereas the very Scriptures, which they have just received as the word of God, declare in so many words that the original primitive churches were governed, under the apostles, by a body of *elder-bishops* in each congregation.

We would like to know how this proposition can be harmonized with the terms of communion laid down for his church by Jesus Christ our Lord. The verbal contradiction is obvious. The jailer at Philippi was not required to assent to any "historic episcopate." He was admitted to an apostolic church on profession of his faith in Jesus Christ, and that church contained no prelates, but simply a corps of elders, called "bishops," and a body of servants, called "deacons." (See Philippians i. 1.) But the spiritual contradiction is still more repulsive. These bishops at Philippi were the appointed shepherds of one little flock, such as Paul taught to rule chiefly by example, and positively forbade to act as lords over their fellow-Christians; and all of us know how solemnly our Saviour insisted that the oversight of his church should be a lowly service, and not a rank or dominion.

The Lambeth proclamation is ostensibly and honestly a proposal of union from a minority of Protestants to the vast majority, on condition of rejecting the parochial episcopate of the Bible, and practically accepting the "historic episcopate" of the more corrupt bodies of Christians. But this condition was never even hinted at by Christ or his apostles. "Historic episcopacy" had no existence when Christianity began. No claim of catholicity can be entered in behalf of a system that in one breath accepts the Bible, and then rejects its explicit testimony. Faith in Jesus Christ says nothing about the government of the church. It necessarily implies the truth of the Scriptures and reverence for their contents. But it is obvious that the converted jailer was not required to commit himself to a doctrine of polity based upon centuries of history yet to come.

The Lambeth scheme, no matter what its spirit, is directly contrary to the catholic basis of union. That basis is found in the terms prescribed to the primitive converts under the preaching of the apostles. That which the multitudes converted at Pentecost believed, was not an "historic episcopate," but a divine, atoning Saviour. The faith which saves the soul is the apostolic basis of catholic Christianity. All other terms are sectarian. The common creed which lies at the foundation of all Christian character is the line that distinguishes true disciples from the world. It

should, in design, embrace every child of grace in all sects and nations. No right is given by the gospel to any organization to say to the individual believer, It is nobler to be a churchman than to be a Christian. True Christianity, as Jesus taught it, recognizes and welcomes all who love him, whatever sectarian name they may bear, and its spirit offers fellowship freely to all who manifest the spiritual image of the common Lord.

The "historic episcopate," as a necessary condition of fellowship on a par with the inspired Scriptures and the doctrine of salvation, violates the fraternity for which it professes to plead. Beyond all question, that "love of the brethren" which St. John lays down as a test of Christian piety is independent of denominational lines. But this unscriptural, artificial, arrogant dogma fosters a spirit of alienation between its advocates and other bodies of believers. Embarrassment attends all the spiritual intercourse of churchmen, as they call themselves, with Christians of lower pretensions, and generally the Lord's table is so served by the former as to represent the isolation of a sect instead of exhibiting the communion of saints.

Of Protestant denominations, the Lutheran is the largest in nominal adherents, the Presbyterians next, and the Anglicans next. But outside of England, and especially in the United States, this body sinks down into comparative insignificance. There are at least forty millions of decided Protestants among us. The adherents of Anglicanism can hardly exceed five per cent. of them. The posture of this minority in relation to the rest would be extremely ludicrous, were it not so sincere, so solemn, so pathetic. It regards itself as in possession of a secret of vast importance to the Christian public, and longs to impart the blessing to all others. This refers to a mysterious connection between their hierarchy and the Lord, by means of which the prelatical bishops are alone authorized to confirm and ordain. Without intending it, they hold a theory of "historical" succession from his hands analogous to the electric apparatus now becoming so familiar. The storage is in the hierarchy. The power is transmitted in consecration by imposition of hands. The benefit is exclusively enjoyed by their own highly-favored communion. The

dissenting majority, voluntarily out of connection, are in darkness, and sadly in need of the holy current that imparts validity to all Christian ordinances.

The desire of this little body to distribute this wonderful agency, which is nothing less than the Holy Ghost flowing in unbroken current through the sacred fingers of the prelacy, is of course creditable to its benevolent sentiments. The majority are supposed to be in a deplorable condition, cut off from the source where the gift is generated by their blind unbelief. The Anglican society is *ex hypothesi* on the mount of privilege, but its elation is happily sobered and softened by compassion for those who are not partakers of the benefit. This yearning towards unfortunate dissent has at length led them to an offer involving great self-denial. They are willing to give up almost everything else for the sake of sharing their mysterious blessing with their less favored brethren outside!

The obtuseness of the parties so feelingly approached must appear phenomenal. The immense host remains unmoved, and seems to say that, in their view, the source of grace is within reach, without any necessity for invisible lines of connection. They think, moreover, that in experience they get along quite as well without priestly manipulation as they could with it. Observation appears to convince them that the blessing of Christ is not distributed more abundantly to the subjects of hierarchies than to others, and if any advantage is seen, it belongs to those who do not depend upon prelatical assistance, but enjoy a more direct access to God, by means of the Bible and personal communion. They contend that the alleged monopoly of valid ordinances, claimed by the prelatists, ought to bear fruit in those lands where it is most fully enjoyed. They decline to boast, but are willing that even the world shall judge whether Christian piety and activity are less conspicuous among Methodists than among Anglicans, or whether the Copts and Syrians, the Russians and Spaniards, are more heartily engaged in efforts to convert mankind than Baptists or Presbyterians. It is still true, as the Lord declared, that in religion the character of sects or parties is known "by their fruits."

In any American community it is easy to determine by observation in which sect the fruits of the Spirit are most manifest. These are stated by the inspired Paul to be those graces which mark all true disciples in greater or less degree. If any particular congregation enjoys valid ordinances derived in unbroken succession from Christ, who ordained the apostles, and other congregations around it are destitute of this advantage, the former ought to be known to the public by a marked superiority of the graces of the Spirit in its members. The first of these, named in Galatians v. 22, is *love*. If any one of these local bodies of Christian worshippers is eminent for its spirit of love towards the brethren of various names in that community, we have the word of God that it is in closest connection with heaven. We must be pardoned for maintaining that the absence of such evidence renders null and void every pretension to spiritual preëminence. Our prelatical brethren are not aware of the necessary impression of their assumptions. The outside world is absolutely indifferent to displays of church arrogance, whether Romish or English, and the secular press smiles with pretended respect and secret scorn upon high and low alike. But the intelligent Protestant public in the United States can never be reconciled to such claims of superiority, without Bible warrant, and unsustained by a corresponding sanctity of Christian character.

The Lambeth ultimatum is an expression of earnest desire for union. As far as this desire is sincere, it betrays a remarkable incapacity in great and good men to comprehend what the union prayed for by our Lord signifies. Even if their scheme were realized literally, it is obvious that the union secured would be nominal only, leaving the doors wide open for lasting dissension among Protestants, with no pope to act as umpire. The next logical step would be a reconciliation with Rome. If prelacy is accepted by all, a supreme bishop, to conclude controversy and pacify a distracted church, will become an absolute necessity. But in our judgment the ultimatum does not contemplate *union* at all. It proposes assimilation, and nothing more. The Swiss Confederation resembles the American; but there is no union between them. The American Episcopal Church is something like

the Anglican, but they are otherwise distinct. No organic union is suggested in the proposition issued by the bishops of the two bodies, and yet they contend that they are the leading champions of union. It is a strange allusion affecting all parties. Organic union of the whole of Christendom is an impossibility without a supreme, visible, infallible authority presiding over it. United prelacy is popery. But the Lambeth Conference means nothing of the kind. It proposes nothing but a change of dress, one uniform, pronounced to be historical and apostolical, being offered by them, its sole Protestant depositaries, in the place of the prevailing diversity. A number of great denominations is to continue in existence, all having the "historic episcopate," but all as distinct as the English episcopacy is distinct from the American. We contend that this is not union, but mere assimilation in one point. But the prayer of our Lord for the *oneness* of his disciples was *not* that they should be alike in church polity. He meant oneness of spirit, as he and his Father are one. He meant for them to be so absorbed in one faith and purpose as to dwell joyfully together in the bond of peace. But putting on a uniform never yet formed an army. The absurdity of the ultimatum is conspicuous. It is like a proposition from Germany to France to secure future union by adopting one uniform for both armies, and continuing those armies on a war footing! Christian unity is surely something entirely different. It contemplates a state of harmony in respect to ideas and feelings.

All know that the time has passed for compulsory uniformity. All do not seem to know that the time of *shams* has also expired. Unity of spirit is the need of Christendom, and it will never be realized until men agree upon some standard for the settlement of religious differences. Nominally, Protestants appeal to the Bible, but on the subject of church government too many are unwilling to abide by it. The Lambeth bishops appear to give more heed to the traditions of popery than to the positive testimony of Holy Writ. Nine Protestants out of ten, who consult the Scriptures, have an irresistible conviction that prelacy was not the polity indicated in the New Testament. Some of these hold that the parochial episcopate should be closely imitated. Others regard

the system of government as a matter left to discretion. But the Anglican party, in its zeal for *union*, convincing themselves that the episcopacy of the New Testament was *not* parochial, but prelatic and obligatory, propose to the vast majority of the Protestant public to unite upon four essential propositions, of which prelacy is one. In other words, the one-tenth aforesaid invites the nine-tenths to an *imaginary* union on a basis of three terms already for centuries allowed, and one term long controverted. It would savor of disrespect to intimate that any concession of principle is intended. No concession of any important matter is embraced in the offer. They will allow non-liturgical worship to proceed at the will of the worshippers. But this is a mere recognition of the rights of the people already enjoyed. The stipulation proves that *union* is not expected. The sacrifice is altogether on the side of the nine-tenths, who must all submit to be governed by priestly rectors and diocesan bishops succeeding the apostles. It is assumed that no principle is in the way, but only an unfounded whim or prejudice. But here is the astounding feature of this unparalleled movement: The one-tenth regards its own darling fiction as a divine *principle* never to be questioned, whilst the convictions deeply graven in the minds of the nine-tenths by centuries of controversy and investigation are treated as *trifles* that ought to be easily given up for the sake of a visionary union. Now, if the people may decide between one form of worship and another, why may not so large a majority of the whole decide between prelacy and liberty?

The objections of a vast majority of Bible Christians to this system, are strangely misunderstood, because they are not held as vital articles of faith. They are far more worthy of the name of principles than the unwarranted notions of a small minority. The Anglican brotherhood is deeply affected by its isolation, and labors hard to obtain relief. But a grave mistake is made when a minority among equals regards its own views as unchangeable principles, and the honest convictions of all the other evangelical bodies as mere prejudices. Such one-sidedness closely resembles fanaticism. The isolation so much lamented is their own handiwork. A small faction of insular Protestants, with Bibles in their

hands, but in close sympathy with arbitrary sovereigns and a fawning aristocracy, entrenched themselves, three hundred years ago, within a gulf of sectarian peculiarities, by which they have been kept ever since, in bitter antagonism towards a large majority of brethren equally devoted to the truth. They are now weary of the conflict, and desire to escape from their chosen isolation. But such a device as they propose was never known in human affairs. They warmly invite their outside friends to cross over the enclosing gulf, and enjoy their minor peculiarities within the pale unmolested. A single ship in conflict with a fleet becomes tired of battle, and, under a flag of truce, offers to contend no longer, if the opposing vessels will surrender and place *her* flag at their mastheads.

Now this is a war of opinions among Bible-reading Christians. It ought to stop. Three hundred years of unbecoming strife are surely enough. All parties long for peace. Sects should be as reasonable as nations or armies. What shall be done? Plainly and unquestionably they should cease firing and consent to negotiate on terms acceptable to the common sovereign. Jesus Christ is Lord, "yesterday, to-day and forever." His will is not conveyed from the Vatican, but from his written word. It is not found in the so-called "Fathers," but in the canonical Scriptures. The Anglican brethren would be wise to approach the majority at least as *equals*, and consent to refer the matter in controversy to the inspired oracles, which were completed before the history of the Fathers began.

This course would not only be prudent, but eminently pious and Christian. The Lord's prayer for *unity* in his church is worthy of all acceptance on such an occasion. It unquestionably relates to unity of spirit. The parties must confer as brethren in Christ if peace is to follow. Every attitude of superiority ought to be abandoned. Everything unfraternal should be given up. Those who meet in conference might well *pray* together and *commune* together as loving brethren, as the very first step to be taken. The ecclesiastics could imitate the Lord on the night when he was betrayed, and humbly serve one another with girded loins, "in lowliness of mind, each esteeming others better than himself."

We can conceive of no objection to such a beginning, except from Satan and his dupes. The lip of prelatical pride might curl in scorn, but the angels would clap their wings for joy, and the King of kings would smile approval, according to his word. The question, "Who is my brother?" is as plainly taught us as, "Who is my neighbor?" He is every child of God. "*As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*" (John i. 12.)

J. A. WADDELL.

Roxbury, Va.