

# The Christian Messenger.

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## Poetry.

### Alone with Jesus.

By MRS. E. R. DUNBAR.

Alone with thee, dear Jesus,  
We wrestle and we rest,  
Through weakness we're victorious,  
Through suffering we are blest.

Alone with thee, our visions  
To loftier heights are led,  
While down among the shadows,  
Heaven's clearer light is shed.

Alone with thee, earth heartaches,  
Its conflict and its pain,  
Sink into soft-veiled blessings,  
And we rejoice again.

Alone with thee, dear Jesus, flow  
When wreck and storm sweep past,  
There comes no fear, no terror,  
Thy hand will hold us fast.

Alone with thee, dark mysteries  
Take angel forms, and bear  
Fond messages, assuring  
A Father's constant care.

Alone with thee, life's pathway  
Seems far less steep and wild,  
Thine arm to help, so ready,  
Thy weak yet trusting child.

Alone with thee, the coming  
And the going feet of time,  
Seem but as joyous marchings  
To a fairer, brighter clime.

Alone with thee, dear Jesus,  
We feel, how deep, thy love;  
Wasteless through all earth's needings,  
Ceaseless in realms above.

Alone with thee, the crowning  
We see, beyond the cross,  
And all the eternal glories  
Make fleeting ones, as dross.

Alone with thee, triumphant  
We cross the narrow sea,  
Our latest song, and sweetest  
Is "Evermore with thee."

## Religious.

### Christian Union: Real and Unreal.

By REV. T. ARMITAGE, D. D.

An address by Rev. T. Armitage, delivered at a meeting held in the Dutch Reformed church, Fifth Avenue, New York, to promote the objects of the Christian Union enterprise. The various denominations were represented by Dr. Smith, Episcopal; Dr. Rice, Presbyterian; Dr. Vermilye, Reformed Dutch; Dr. Armitage, Baptist.

Concluded.

IV. Where open communion at the Lord's table does exist, either among the different Pedobaptist denominations or between them and Baptists, it is never made the test of Christian union by any one of the parties interested.

Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Reformed Dutch brethren, and Methodists, are open communion, so far as that they may all sit down together at the supper table spread in each other's congregations. But are they any more united among themselves, in consequence of this species of open communion, than they are with the Baptists? Nay, indeed, isolated individual cases excepted, do they commune together at the Lord's table at all? It is notorious that as denominations, they never think of such a thing. Who ever heard of Dr. Cotton Smith presiding at the Lord's table in Dr. Gardiner Spring's church, or of Dr. Vermilye breaking bread in Dr. Tyng's church, or Dr. Rice administering the supper in Dr. McClintock's church? Well, why not? Do they not recognize each other as regenerated men? Certainly they do. Do they not regard each other as baptized? Most certainly they do. What is the trouble then? I do not know. I know that my Episcopal brethren do not regard my Presbyterian brethren as properly qualified to administer the ordinance. But I cannot see how that should be in their way as regenerated men, with their views of Baptists and baptism. A number of these brethren are here, they must answer for themselves. They are able. Some years ago, many members of various denominations celebrated the supper in a public hall in Philadelphia, as an illustration of good will towards each other, but there was no denominational or even church union about it; so far from it, indeed, that they could not meet in the church edifice of any one denomination for the purpose, but were compelled

to meet on neutral ground. I wonder that they did not regard the Philadelphia Baptists as very "exclusive," for not opening one of their church edifices for the service when they would not open their own. It may be said that these various bodies can meet together at the Lord's table, as churches, if they please. But the fact that they do not please so to sit down with each other shows, either that they do not consider this act to be a test of Christian union among themselves, or else that, after all, they have but little concern for Christian union itself among themselves as Pedobaptists—so little, that they feel quite guiltless when they utterly neglect to apply the test. The fact is, the various Pedobaptist bodies find it a moral impossibility to commune with each other, till they can settle the points upon which they predicate their several existence as distinct bodies. If this is not correct, let me ask why Dr. Rice, a Presbyterian, Dr. Smith, an Episcopalian, and Dr. Vermilye, a member of the Reformed Dutch church, are here this evening, all pleading for Christian union among Pedobaptists.

Again: many Baptists are open communion, but does that bind them closer to other Christian denominations than the strict communion Baptists are bound? The Freewill Baptists of this country are open communion. They number over 50,000—and an excellent people they are, too—but what Pedobaptist denomination takes special interest in them on these accounts? I have been a pastor in this city for seventeen years, and have watched with great interest the little Freewill Baptist Church among us struggle for an existence. Those brethren have one small meeting-house, immediately in the rear of the elegant edifice, in Twenty-eighth street, and they have been deliberating for years as to whether or not they could pay their debts, and keep it. Well, how many of you Pedobaptist brethren, who feel deeply about our "close communion," have helped them, in order that you might enjoy Christian union with them? Yet you can sit down at the Lord's table with them whenever you please. I have never heard of any of your churches so much as taking a collection, to save that edifice from the hammer of the sheriff. Does this show that open communion is the bond of Christian union? Another question. Does open communion promote the prosperity of Freewill Baptists? Are other Christians so enamored of their Baptist principles, aside from that, that they gladly embrace them, and unite with them? Let us see. In 1844 they numbered 61,372 in the United States; in 1865, twenty-one years afterward, they numbered 55,676, that is 6,000 less, while in those years our strict communion Baptists in America have increased more than 300,000. According to Bro. Chambers' views of Christian union, what prospect is there of the millennium?

But my Pedobaptist brethren say: "Yes, but they are Arminians, and it is this that interrupts our Christian union with them." Well, so are that glorious people, the Methodists, yet they increase more rapidly than any of us, and every new convert is as unyielding a Methodist as the old ones, and they are all open communion too; but you have no Christian union of a denominational character with them, for all that, which you have not with the Freewill Baptists. All this goes to show that open communion has nothing whatever to do with Christian union, and that you so consider it when the Baptists are counted out of the question.

Now, let me ask you, to look in another direction. For the most part, the English Baptists are open communion. Well, does that system work differently in Great Britain from what it does here, in the matter of Christian union? Not at all. Who is so lusty a defender of open communionism as Mr. Spurgeon? But does that endear him to other Christians? Let facts speak. Recently he has very boldly attested that infant baptism, so called, is unscriptural, and injurious to the church of God; in consequence of which

the bitterest war has been waged against him by Christian people in Great Britain that has been waged against any London pastor for the last century. True, he loves to belabor his own strict brethren, but does that render him more acceptable to his brethren, of other churches? Not one jot or tittle, so long as he chooses to remain a Baptist. If he chooses to abandon his Baptist principles they will love him well enough. Are the other religious bodies more closely bound to the open communion Baptists of England than to their strict communion brethren there? Not a wit. Scarcely a week passes that the English papers do not publish some scandalous act on the part of clergymen of the established church refusing to bury infants of Baptist parents in consecrated ground; because, forsooth, they are unchristened. The honest truth is, that where other Baptist principles are held, it is a matter of no consequence with Pedobaptists whether Baptists are open communion or not. So far as appears to the contrary, you might annihilate strict communion today, and it would not inaugurate Christian union among the various sects. And this simply because communion at the Lord's table is not and cannot be made Christian union. Why, then, should those who plead for Christian union feel themselves at liberty to perpetually ring the changes of disunion over the heads of close communion Baptists with a sort of holy horror, as if they were the scape-goats to bear away the sins of all the religionists in the world? A man that does that may assume great pious complacency, and may cherish his own views of his manliness, not to say meanness, nevertheless. I do respect a man who sincerely attempts to show that our baptism is not Scriptural, and meets us in a fair square, manly way, upon the real differences between us and others, namely, What is Bible baptism, and Who are the proper subjects for it. But when an otherwise respectable man creates a false issue by attempting to show that my views of the Lord's supper are wrong, when he knows them to be his own to a shade, he must excuse me if my frankness will not allow me to respect him, as I otherwise would, if I could believe him to be honest.

V. What, then, is Christian Union? Ah! truly, that is a delightful question. Let me attempt to answer it. There were no sects in the apostolic church; therefore we want no union of sects in the modern church for that would be the sun total of sectarianism. But we do want a union of Christians. The prayer of Jesus is, that those "who believe on me may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Not "one" as men may be one in one ecclesiastical body, but "one in us." Jesus prays to the Father that "they may be one, as we are one." Now who would speak of the Trinity as a union? Yet all may speak of the Godhead as a unity. Then for what does Jesus pray? That all his followers may be one, precisely as he and his Father are one—not that they formed a union, but that they constitute a unity. Then his prayer contemplates that believers should attain a oneness of mind in the faith, and not merely a oneness of feeling—a oneness of heart in the obedience which they offer—and a oneness of effort in the works which they do.

And then Jesus measures this Christian unity by the standard of the divine nature. "That they may be one as we are one." If this unity among Christians consists in mere heart-kindness, there is no visible opposition in this momentous petition. The Father and the Son are one in feeling, action, counsel, name. Therefore the prayer means that Christians are to be one in the same sense; that is, one in feeling, action, counsel, name. So completely are the Father and the Son one, that the same purposes are formed by both. Such is their identity in these respects, that the eye of the keenest archangel cannot see a shade of variation. This is the real Picture of Christian unity, as Jesus hung it up in the supper cham-

ber. Perfect oneness must subsist among the people of God, and their unity must agree in agreeing, and not in differing, just as the unity of the Father and the Son agrees. We are to hold the same affections, the same doctrine, and the same ordinances, and we are to hold them as Jesus held them, or else our union is a counterfeit and a pretention. This is Christian unity, as Jesus prays for it, and it seems to me, with the open Bible before me, that nothing else is. Who would suppose that the Father holds one form of truth, and the Son another, but that for the sake of peace they "agree to disagree"—that is, that they mutually agree to suppress the varying expressions of their mind, and that they call this being at one? The very thought is offensive. Christ was exclusively one with the Father in doing his will, and our unity must be like the unity of the Father and the Son. In other words, Christian unity must be Scriptural, or it is unreal, it is nothing. Therefore, nothing but a return of all those who love the Savior to the naked teachings of the Bible, as the Father and the Son avowed those teachings, can ever result in Christian unity. Christian bodies may declare an armistice and be peaceable, but it is one thing to be peaceable and another to be united. It is a shame that one man should denounce another as exclusive, because that other more fully obeys the word of God than himself. God has expressed his will in the broadness of infinite thought, and that man who does not scruple to obey every part of it is the most catholic believer. His exclusiveness is exclusive oneness with Christ in obeying his will, and therefore he partakes of the spirit of the catholicity of God. But no man can obey that will without sympathy with the catholic God. Hence David, says, not "when thou shalt contract," but "when thou shalt enlarge my heart, I will run in the way of thy commandments."

I take it, then, that the only way in which we Christians can be united is to agree that we will mutually obey whatever is positively enjoined in the New Testament, and insist upon nothing beyond that. Let each man appeal to the Bible only, and he will need to ask for no concession from his brethren. Opinion will then give place to Christian faith, convenience, and preference, and expediency to divine authority. How common it is for Christians to retain their distinct peculiarities, because they are not forbidden in the word of God. This is a dangerous principle; it is one of the rocks on which Christian sects split. The things that are specially required are the things that are to be done, and not the things that are not specially forbidden. Luther fell into this trap. Carlstadt demanded of him, "Where has Christ commanded us to elevate the host?" "Where has he forbidden it?" Luther retorted. So, because it was not positively forbidden, Luther concluded that it must be done. Our trouble springs largely from this false position. If we should only ask that each other's tastes and preferences should yield to God's word, we would soon begin to respect each others views of it, and to grow into real unity. Do you wonder that when a man asserts, for instance, that my views of baptism are Scriptural and apostolical, and then adds, that for some reason aside from their Scripturalness, he prefers something else, and requires me to give up my views in order to accommodate him, that he may unite with me—do you wonder that I resent it as an insult to my convictions? I am tempted to say: "Rather give up what is a matter of indifference to you, be baptized with what you confess to be Bible baptism, and we are one in a moment." So far as I know, no denomination of Christians hold an immersed believer to be an unbaptized man. All say, that is gospel baptism. They sacrifice no conscience in recognizing it. We hold that your sprinkling and pouring, either of a child or a believer, is not gospel baptism, and of course we should sacrifice conscience in saying that it is, and

in acting towards you as if it were. Who sacrifice conscience, then, and break the "unity of the faith;" we, in not submitting to a baptism that we think contrary to the gospel, or you, in refusing to submit to one which you conscientiously believe to be taught in the gospel? If you want union, submit to what you hold to be according to the gospel in this thing; we have done that already, and your act will at once restore the primitive "one faith, one baptism."

These are my views of Christian union, and the method of attaining it: I can see no other in harmony with the word of God. And if this be Christian union its profound sanctity overwhelms me; its infinite tenderness moves my whole being. The delicious conception of its purity and preciousness, and power makes me tremble with holy awe. I remember that when my Redeemer bowed beneath the ponderous load of my sins this holy thought soothed his bleeding heart, and just before the purple blood-drops forced their passage through every pore of his body he breathed out this intercession for every ransomed disciple, and for me—"That they all may be one, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

### The Devil dead at last.

The Spanish papers narrate a fact of some gravity which occurred at Cervera, province of Rioja, on the 9th of the current month, and which we reproduce. A rich proprietor, well known in the country for his advanced opinions, refused spiritual aid on his death-bed notwithstanding the supplications of his family and the pressing of his friends. There was a moment, however, when it was thought the patient would modify his resolutions. The cure of the parish then presented himself at the bedside of the dying man, but he persisted in his refusal; the father retired precipitately, saying, in a loud voice to those around, that after the death of the reprobate the devil would come in person to search for him and lead him to hell. The family watched for two days, by the corpse of the loved one they were to lose, and in a few hours he would be buried, when the door of the mortuary house opening suddenly, an indefinable being clothed in red, armed with a pitchfork, smelling of burning brimstone, dragging a long tail, presented himself. At once fear and fright produced an effect. The women fainted and the men ran away or followed the women's example. However, one of the men-servants, occupied in an adjoining room, hearing shrieks and a great confusion, thought there was an attack of thieves. Seizing a loaded revolver, he went to the mortuary house. Entering there, he was terrified at the sight of the devil, but thinking it better to kill him than to be killed by him, he fired three shots at him. The howling of the apparition was changed at once into lamentations and groans, and then followed a profound silence. After some minutes the family of the dead man returning, found the sacrarist of the church transformed into a demon, with three bullets in its breast and death foam on its lips. The authorities entered and made an enquiry, which gave reason for four priests being sent to prison. The corpse of the sacrarist was buried next day, and the servant was set at liberty after a short detention.—Letter from Spain in English Paper.

### Force of Example.

"What kind of house will we play?" asked one little girl of another. "Oh, play calling," replied the other. "Mary, here, she can be Mrs. Brown and sit on the step, and me and Julia will call on her and ask her how she is, and how her husband is, and if the baby's got over the measles, and tell her how nice she looks in her new wrapper, and hope it won't hurt her much when she has that tooth filled. And then we'll say, 'good bye, Mrs. Brown come and see us some time or other,