ARTICLE VII.

CHURCH HISTORY AS AN AID TO CHRISTIAN UNITY.

BY PROFESSOR ALLEN DUDLEY SEVERANCE.

THERE is no necessity of insisting upon the evils of denominational rivalry. It has been fitly termed "the sin of schism."[1] We are all too familiar with the sad spectacle. On the fine avenues of our large cities there are elegant church edifices of different denominations every few blocks, sometimes on the same block,—altogether too much money locked up in brick and mortar. In the rapidly growing suburbs it is even worse. The denominations seem to act as though possessed by a haunting fear that *their* chance to preach the gospel would be forever lost if they did not hasten to plant a chapel, totally regardless of the needs of the little community; and, on what we are accustomed to call "home mission territory," the state of affairs is even worse. In town after town in the West, there are half-a-dozen weak, struggling churches where one or two would suffice; their pastors underpaid, their accommodations pathetic in the extreme, and their expenses defrayed in large part by home missionary boards in the East, themselves already deep in debt. And what are the conditions on foreign missionary ground? Take Japan as an illustration. Dr. Amory H. Bradford says: "I have seen in one place after another in that country Presbyterians, Baptists, Anglicans, American Episcopalians, Methodists North and South,

[1] "The Sin of Schism," by E. Benjamin Andrews, in Lectures on Church Unity.

Wesleyans from Canada, confusing natives by different names, insisting on insignificant details of their own organizations, when an impression had hardly been made on surrounding heathenism."[1] Do not such things justify the indignant words of Bishop Maret? "If, after eighteen centuries, idolatry prevails over the greater part of the globe; if Mahometism desolates once flourishing Christian countries; if a thinly disguised atheism ravages even the Christian world, doubt not that one of the most powerful causes of so many moral and social miseries, so many shameful humiliations, lies in the many unhappy internal divisions of Christians, which constitute schism and heresy."[2]

I. Deprecating, as all must, this sad state of affairs, cannot church historians do something to help put an end to it? Let us face the fact that our divisions arise in large measure from (1) ignorance of one another, (2) prejudice, and (3) mistakes. Cannot the study of church history do something to remove all three?

1. *Ignorance.*— One of the arguments commonly urged in favor of the study of general history is "that the limitations of the man who knows nothing of the past are similar to the limitations of him whose observations have been confined to his own country or his own town."[3] If there is a need of knowing the history of other nations and of other times than our own, does not the same argument apply to the history of other communions? Our denominational consciousness is too much magnified. The political jingo is the man who knows nothing about the achievements of other peoples. Is not the spirit of the ecclesiastical jingo essentially the same? What

[1] "The Unity of the Spirit," by Amory H. Bradford, in Lectures on Church Unity.

[2] Quoted in preface to Döllinger's Reunion of the Churches, p. xiii.

[3] Adams, Manual of Historical Literature, p. 3.

would be thought of an army corps which fancied itself to be the entire army?

We do not have to go back to the Reformation times to find illustrations of the fact that ignorance of one another's ways keeps churches apart.

On April 22 and 23, 1903, the representatives of four denominations—the Congregationalist, the United Brethren, the Methodist Protestant, and the Christian Connection—met in Pittsburg to take steps toward their union into one body. Dr. William Hayes Ward, of New York, who was present on behalf of the Congregationalists, describes the gathering in a recent number of the *Independent.*[1] Concerning these denominations he says: "No two of them have ever been in close historical or geographical connection with each other. Where one denomination strongly prevails the others are weak. Accordingly they have lived apart without much mutual knowledge. . . . . To form a plan of union between bodies so alike, yet so diverse, and so ignorant with each other, was no easy task. The first work must be that of acquaintance. The first long general session . . . was spent in learning each other's ways and views. Many were the questions asked." As a result of the conference, the first step—and that a hopeful one—was taken toward Christian union. Three of these denominations have decided, while retaining their present names and their autonomy in respect to all local affairs, to add to their official title the following: "In affiliation with the General Council of the United Churches." Does not this achievement in recent church history support the truth of the statement, made above, that ignorance of one another is one of the prime reasons for denominational separation?

The *argumentum ad ignorantiam* has had altogether too

[1] April 30, 1903.

prominent a place in church histories of the past. Saintine called history "the lie of the ages." [1] One has but to read certain church historians to feel that the reproach is almost justified. "Eusebius openly avows his intention of relating only those incidents in the lives of the martyrs of Palestine which would reflect credit on the Church, and Milner constructs his whole history on the principle that he will omit all mention of ecclesiastical wickedness, and record only the specimens of ecclesiastical virtue." [2]

In the interest of polemics, church history has been perverted. "Its sources," says Henry B. Smith, "are buried in the dust of alcoves, and when exhumed, it is seldom with the insignia of a resurrection. They are investigated for aid in present polemies, not to know the past but to conquer in an emergency; as if one should run over American history only in view of incorporating a bank or passing a tariff-bill." [3]

Protestants have been fond of telling the story of Luther's finding the Bible—"a rare book, unknown at that time" [4]—upon the unknown shelves of a dark room" [5] of the University of Erfurth. One has to do considerable searching to find in a Protestant history the statement that "this was partly his own fault, for several editions of the Latin Vulgate and the German Bible were printed before 1500." [6]

On the other hand, Roman-Catholic historians have not been at all backward in repeating the calumnies of Bolsec and Audin concerning Luther and Calvin and the other Reformers.[7]

[1] X. B. Saintine, Picciola the Prisoner of Fenestrella, p. 13.

[2] A. P. Stanley, "Introduction to the Study of Ecclesiastical History," in his History of the Eastern Church, p. 55.

[3] "The Science of Church History," in Faith and Philosophy, p. 52.

[4] D'Aubigné, History of the Reformation, p. 41.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[6] Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol. vi. p. 111, note 1.

[7] Cf. Paul Majunke, Luther's Lebensende (Mainz, 1891).

The history of D'Aubigné doubtless needs correction; but Luther was not the demon incarnate that he is painted by Archbishop Spaulding.[1]

2. A more fruitful source of our divisions even than ignorance is *prejudice.* Prejudice may be defined as willful ignorance. We are glad to believe ill of those from whom we differ, and we do not take the trouble to inform ourselves of the good that is in them. We do not try to see things from their point of view.

The illustrations referred to under the head of "ignorance" might also be used here; for it is often hard to tell where ignorance leaves off and prejudice begins. The controversies between Romanists and Protestants—and to a lesser extent polemics between Protestant denominations—have been too much conducted along these lines. Church historians, whose motto ought to have been that of Ranke, "Ich werde es nur schreiben wie es eigentlich gewesen war," have too often added fuel to the flames by their misrepresentation of the practices and views of their opponents.

Take, e. g., the average Protestant presentation of the question of Indulgences. In the recent handbook on "the Reformation" by Professor T. M. Lindsay, of Glasgow, we read: "The money was to be got by the sale of pieces of stamped paper or tickets declaring that the purchaser had received pardon for the commission of sins which had been named, valued, and paid for."[2]

No wonder that our Roman-Catholic friends object to this presentation of the subject. Not a word in the manual from which the quotation has just been made as to the scholastic distinction between the eternal guilt and the temporal punishment of sin, and that the indulgence was the commutation

[1] M. J. Spaulding, History of the Protestant Reformation, pp. 71-101.
[2] T. M. Lindsay, The Reformation (Edinburgh, 1884), p. 3.

of the temporal penalties imposed by the church, while the guilt of sin was absolved by the priest on confession and contrition of the penitent.[1] Why does it not suffice to say that the doctrine of indulgences is one that easily lent itself to abuses?—abuses which were recognized by the Council of Trent.[2] Why do not ecclesiastical historians leave to politicians the joy of "putting the other party in a hole"? All honor to President E. Benjamin Andrews when he says: "The ordinary denominationalist now has no feeling for the old Catholic Church. Usually he hates and despises it. He remembers that it bred Leo X., but forgets that it raised up Luther, Calvin, and Knox..... Yet, with all its errors, that old Church was God's Church, and the net influence of it was not evil but gloriously good..... Still it is very easy, as it is very usual, to underrate the evangelical excellence of the church in which Luther had his spiritual birth.[3]

3. *Mistakes* often keep churches apart. It is the duty of the faithful teacher of church history to call attention to these mistakes and their disastrous consequences. In this way the present can learn from the past.

In 1675 attempts were made in Germany to bring about the reunion of Romanists and Protestants. On the Protestant side was the great scholar Leibnitz. The attempts at reunion lasted for about thirty years; but they made shipwreck on the rock of mistaken exegesis of Scripture. The first demand on the part of the Catholics was that the Protestants should no longer regard and designate the Pope as Antichrist. Said a contemporary theologian: "All Protestants are so bewitched with this conceit about Antichrist that they fly from Catholics as from snakes in the garden, and think they see a dragon

[1] Cf. Catholic Dictionary, art. "Indulgence."
[2] Concilium Tridentinum Session of December 4, 1563.
[3] Lectures on Church Unity, p. 73.

or an evil spirit if they meet a Catholic." According to the views of the time, the harlot mentioned in Rev. xvii. 3–6 as seated on the beast and drunk with the blood of the saints, and "the man of sin" in 2 Thess. ii. 3–4, were thought to refer not to pagan but to papal Rome. This matter of calling the Pope Antichrist was not the only difficulty that kept Romanists and Protestants apart; but it engendered a state of mind that made all negotiations futile. The learned Dr. Döllinger wrote in 1872: "Even during the last century these views have had an enormous influence, and have built up a brazen wall between Catholics and Protestants. At this hour they are still deeply rooted and powerful in England and America, and supported by a copious and constantly increasing apocalyptic literature. But in Germany they have long since disappeared from the popular belief, ... and thereby, as it seems to me, one of the most serious hindrances to a reunion of the two religions is removed." [1]

If any one desires other illustrations as to how mistaken views of Scripture have kept Christians apart, let him peruse the eloquent and scholarly pages of the late Dean Farrar's "History of Interpretation," and he will read therein of "controversies waged with a fierceness in proportion to the entire doubtfulness of the question at stake." Of the post-Reformation period, the same author says: "There never was an epoch in which men were so much occupied in discovering each other's errors, or in which they called each other by so many opprobrious names." [2]

II. But, if the study of ecclesiastical history shows the causes that have kept churches apart, it also has a nobler mission to perform, viz., the engendering of a state of mind that will bring Christians together in mutual love and admiration.

[1] The Reunion of the Churches, p. 92.
[2] History of Interpretation, p. 363.

1. The study of history has been often likened to travel in its broadening effects. Why should we be ignorant of the good in other communions? Will not a knowledge of the beneficent results of practices on the part of other churches toward which we have been brought up to look askance induce us to regard and treat them as brethren?

In this respect we owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Henry C. Lea for the way in which he has opened the eyes of some of us, and pointed out the good existent in many of the usages of the Mediæval Church—an institution in which the average Protestant finds it difficult—partly owing to ignorance and partly to prejudice—to talk fairly.

Take, for example, the Penitential Books, composed by such men as Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, Bæda Venerabilis, and others. In these books, according to the legal notions of the Barbarians, the canonical penance for sins might be compounded by a sort of spiritual *Wehrgeld.* The pamphleteer throws up his hands in horror at this. But Mr. Lea is more just. He says: "Crude and contradictory as were the Penitentials in many things, taken as a whole their influence cannot but have been salutary. They inculcated on the still barbarous populations lessons of charity and loving-kindness, of forgiveness of injuries and of helpfulness to the poor and the stranger as a part of the discipline whereby the sinner could redeem his sins. Besides this, the very vagueness of the boundary between secular and spiritual matters enabled them to instill ideas of order and decency and cleanliness and hygiene among the rude inhabitants of central and northern Europe. . . . . It was no small matter that the uncultured barbarian should be taught that evil thoughts and desires were punishable as well as evil acts."[1]

[1] Confession and Indulgences, Vol. ii. p. 107.

In another place, speaking of the Penitentials, Mr. Lea says: "There was a distinct gain for morality in the attempt to enforce in practice the gospel precept that sin may be committed in the heart as well as by the hand, and that he who desires to commit a crime and is unable to execute it is liable to one-half the penance due for an accomplished act. As civilization commenced to dawn again, the Church sought to regulate the relations of man with his fellows by a higher law than that of the crude and often unjust customs of the early middle ages. Whatever might be its self-seeking, it at least kept before mankind a loftier standard of conduct than the prescriptions of secular legislation, and it inculcated, in theory at least, the scriptural injunctions of peace and good-will. As the sole custodian of morals, its precepts for ages were the only influence leading the vast majority of Christians to a conception of something truer and better than the law of the strongest." [1]

The mind cannot but be broadened by a study of (e. g.) the noble lives of the missionaries of other communions. Such a study will lead us not to unchurch those whose labors have been so abundantly blessed. Who stops to inquire to what denominations belonged William Carey, "the consecrated cobbler"; David Livingstone, the missionary explorer of Africa; Henry Martyn, the translator of the Scriptures into Hindoo, Persian, and Arabic; Adoniram Judson, who opened Burmah to Christianity; John Williams, who laid down his life for the gospel in Oceanica; Robert Morrison, the translator of the Bible into Chinese; John Eliot, "the Apostle to the North American Indians"; and countless others whose names are blazoned high on the roll of missionary heroes? We would gladly do honor to these men, were they still in the flesh. Why

[1] Confession and Indulgences, Vol. ii. p. 412.

refuse to fellowship with those bodies who sent them out and supported them in their labors?

2. The impartial study of church history will make for the advantage of no one church or denomination. It will enforce the lesson "*Ubi spiritus Dei, ibi ecclesia.*" It will present in a sympathetic light the saints of the church universal—characters too large to be monopolized by the sect to which they belonged when on earth, and in the legacy of whose influence and example all Christians are glad to claim a share.

Lecturing to the students of Oxford in 1857, that broad-minded churchman later to be known as Dean Stanley uttered the following golden words as to "The Advantages of Ecclesiastical History": "We learn that every church partakes of the faults, as well of the excellences, of its own age and country; that each is fallible as human nature itself; that each is useful as a means, none perfect as an end. To find Christ *or* Antichrist exclusively in any one community is against charity and against humility, but above all, against the plain facts of history. Let us hold this truth firmly, and we shall have then secured ourselves against two of the worst evils which infest the well-being of religious communities, the love of controversy, and the love of proselyting."[1] If this advice had been heard and heeded, the realization of Christian unity would be nearer than it to-day appears.

In 1850, Dr. Ferdinand Piper, Professor of Theology in the University of Berlin, proposed in a church-diet at Stuttgart, the following thesis: "The whole evangelical church in German lands is interested in forming a common roll of lives for all the days of the year, to be settled on the foundation of our common history, and thus to be made a bond

[1] History of the Eastern Church, p. 73.

of union of the churches in all the countries."[1] In imitation of the "Acta Sanctorum" of the Romanists, eminent scholars of Germany, France, Great Britain, Holland, Switzerland, and Scandinavia collaborated in writing the lives of "Die Zeugen der Wahreit." All branches of the church were included in the biographies. To mention only a few names, the Greek writers were represented by Justin Martyr and Athanasius; the Latin writers by Ambrose, Augustine, Boniface, Anselm, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Thomas Aquinas. Huss, Wyclif, Peter Waldo, and Savonarola stood forth as Reformers before the Reformation. As Protestant Reformers, Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, and Coligny were presented. In post-Reformation times Gustavus Adolphus, Paul Gerhardt, Zinzendorf, Baxter, John Wesley, and others appeared. For twenty-one years these biographies were published in a periodical established for the purpose, and met with great acceptance in Germany. The Imperial Government officially commended the roll of names. In 1879 a selection was made from the German work of the lives of those "Leaders of the Church Universal" which it was thought would interest readers in America. To these were added by American scholars the lives of "Leaders" in America, Asia, Africa, and Oceanic. Denominations were amongst these "Later Leaders" represented according to numerical strength and geographical location. The significant fact is that the book, which had for its title "Lives of the Leaders of Our Church Universal," was issued simultaneously by a large portion of the denominational publication houses of this continent. Thus, to quote the words of the American editor, "Each of these houses courteously introduced to its own communion the

[1] See preface to Lives of the Leaders of Our Church Universal, by Ferdinand Piper and Henry Mitchell MacCracken, p. iii.

leaders of the other churches not as 'strangers and foreigners' but as dear brethren."[1] The study of church history need not always be pursued in a divisive spirit.

We do not have to go as far back as the year 1879 to find an illustration of the statement that the impartial study of church history makes for no one denomination. In 1902 about forty of the womens' foreign missionary societies pursued a united study of missions, using as a text-book "Via Christi," by Louise Manning Hodgkins, formerly of Wellesley College. As may be inferred from the title, "Via Christi" is in reality a history of the Christian church from apostolic to modern times, especial prominence being given to missionary activities. The spirit in which these societies are undertaking the study may be seen from a quotation from the preface to the text-book on India, "Lux Christi," which is being used for the year 1903–04. The author, Caroline Atwater Mason, urges an interchange of denominational literature, "in order that each may know all, and that we may see henceforth not Methodist India, or Presbyterian, or Baptist, but *Christ's India.*"[2]

Says Dr. Schaff: "The older historians, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, searched ancient and mediæval history for weapons to defeat their opponents." But the same authority also declares: "Genuine history is being rewritten from the standpoint of impartial truth and justice..... The early Lutheran abhorrence of Zwinglianism and Calvinism has disappeared from the best Lutheran manuals of church history. The bitterness between Prelatists and Puritans, Calvinists and Arminians, Baptists and Pædobaptists has given away to a calm and just appreciation."[3]

[1] See preface to Lives of the Leaders of Our Church Universal, by Ferdinand Piper and Henry Mitchell MacCracken, p. viii.

[2] Lux Christi, p. x. [3] The Reunion of Christendom, p. 34.

Comparatively recently there was published a "History of American Christianity," written by a Congregational clergyman.[1] In it such full justice was done to other denominations, that, from internal evidence, it would be impossible to determine to which section of the Christian church the author belonged. Such books show that "there is a unity of Christian scholarship of all creeds, which aims at the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."[2]

3. The study of church history will inculcate a due denominational modesty.

No one division of the church can claim for itself a monopoly of all the virtues. In the history of each denomination there are pages that the scribe would gladly leave unwritten.

Take, e. g., the matter of persecution. "Nearly all churches have acted as persecutors when they had the chance, if not by fire and sword, at least by misrepresentation, vituperation, and abuse."[3] It will not do for the Protestant to rail against the Romanist in this respect. If the one cites Augustine and Aquinas as good men who advocated the death penalty for heresy, the other can retort with the names of Calvin and Melanchthon. The argument for toleration has been urged for the most part by persecuted sects, or by those who lacked the opportunity to persecute. Even the Pilgrim fathers of New England sought freedom of worship for themselves, but denied it to others. Religious wars and persecutions have been called the "Satanic chapter in church history."[4]

Intolerance and exclusiveness is the spirit that would persecute, if it had the chance. We do not have to go back to mediæval history for illustrations. Let the self-satisfied denomina-

[1] Leonard Woolsey Bacon.
[2] Schaff, The Reunion of Christendom, p. 3. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[4] Schaff, Church History, Vol. vi. p. 57; and vii. p. 693.

tionalist read the minutes of the last heresy trial in his own church, and he will bow his head in shame at the vituperation and bad blood displayed by professed disciples of the Master.

Both Romanists and Protestants, and even our New England ancestors, must take their part of the blame for the Witchcraft delusion—a belief which persisted for fifteen hundred years, and cost the lives of tens of thousands of innocent victims.[1]

The perusal of certain church histories shows that the study of ecclesiastical history does teach lessons of denominational modesty. Take up a little book entitled "The Coming of the Friars," by Rev. Augustus Jessopp, D. D., and see the lesson that he reads to the Church of England, of which he is a priest, *à propos* of the treatment accorded the Mendicant Orders by the Church of Rome, and that given to the Wesleyans by the English hierarchy. Says he: "St. Francis was the John Wesley of the thirteenth century, whom the church did not cast out."

"Rome has never been afraid of fanaticism. She has always known how to utilize her enthusiasts fired by a new idea. The Church of England has never known how to deal with a man of genius. From Wicklif to Frederick Robertson, from Bishop Peacock to Dr. Rowland Williams, the clergyman who has been in danger of impressing his personality upon Anglicanism, where he has not been the subject of relentless persecution, has at least been regarded with timid suspicion, has been shunned by the prudent men of low degree, and by those of high degree has been forgotten. In the Church of England there has never been a time when the enthusiast has not been treated as a very *unsafe* man. Rome has found a place for the dreamiest mystic or the noisiest ranter—found a place and

[1] Lecky, History of Rationalism, Vol. i. p. 28.

found a sphere of useful labor. We, with our insular prejudices, have been sticklers for the narrowest uniformity, and yet we have accepted, as a useful addition to the Creed of Christendom, one article which we have only not formulated because, perhaps, it came to use from a Roman bishop, the great sage Talleyrand—*Surtout pas trop de zèle!* .... Rome absorbed them all [the Mendicant Orders]; they became the Church's great army of volunteers, perfectly disciplined, admirably handled; their very jealousies and rivalries turned into good account. When John Wesley offered to the Church of England precisely their successors, we would have no commerce with them; we did our best to turn them into a hostile and invading force."[1]

The same lesson was administered to the Church of England by one of her most illustrious sons, the great Macaulay, in 1840. Speaking on precisely this point, he says: "The ignorant enthusiast, whom the Anglican Church makes an enemy, and, whatever the learned and polite may think, a most dangerous enemy, the Catholic Church makes a champion..... Place Ignatius Loyola at Oxford. He is certain to become the head of a formidable secession. Place John Wesley at Rome. He is certain to be the first General of a new society devoted to the interests and honor of the Church. Place Joanna Southcote at Rome. She founds an order of barefooted Carmelites, every one of whom is ready to suffer martyrdom for the Church."[2]

4. The study of the history of doctrine—a legitimate part of church history—need not be pursued in a divisive spirit.

Says Dr. Schaff: "If we examine and compare the most elaborate systems of Greek, Roman, and Protestant theology, ... we shall find that the heads in which they agree are far

[1] Jessopp, The Coming of the Friars, pp. 47, 49.
[2] Essay on Ranke's History of the Popes.

more numerous and far more important than those in which they differ.[1] The late W. G. T. Shedd, of Andover, in an inaugural on "The Nature and Influence of the Historic Spirit," gave similar testimony as to the value of church history in the following utterance: "But its wide and catholic survey, also enables the historic mind to see as the unhistoric mind cannot, that the line of orthodoxy is not a mathematical line. It has some breadth. It is a path, upon which the church can travel, and not merely a direction in which it can look. It is a high and royal road, where Christian men may go abreast; may pass each other, and carry on the practical business of a Christian life; and not a mere hairline down which naught can go but the one-eyed sighting of either speculative or provincial bigotry."[2]

Attention has been directed too much to the points on which various branches of the church disagree. The doctrine of the Eucharist has been called "the battle-flag doctrine," because it has so divided Christians into hostile camps. But, after all, the controversies that have waged about this doctrine have been fought as to the *mode* of Christ's presence in the sacrament, while all parties have agreed as to the *fact* of the divine presence.[3]

To quote again from Dr. Shedd: "But what surer method can be employed to produce and perpetuate this catholic and liberal feeling among the various types and schools of orthodox theology, than to impart to all of them the broad views of history? And what surer method than this can be taken to diminish the number and bring about more unity of opinion in the department of systematic theology? For it is one great effect of history to coalesce and harmonize. It introduces mu-

[1] The Discord and Concord of Christendom, p. 304.
[2] Bibliotheca Sacra, April, 1854, p. 389.
[3] The Discord and Concord of Christendom, p. 305.

tual modifications, by showing opponents that their predecessors were nearer together than they themselves are, by tracing the now widely separated opinions back to that point of departure where they were once very near together; and, above all, by causing all parties to remember, what all are so liable to forget in the heat of controversy, that all forms of orthodoxy took their first origin in the Scriptures, and that, therefore, all theological controversy should be carried on with a constant reference to this one infallible standard, which can teach but one infallible system." [1]

History tells us of doctrinal controversies waged between churches over matters thought to be of vast importance in their day, the very names of which are now forgotten. Such a period was the post-reformation epoch. "The air was full of burning questions that have long ago burnt themselves out. There was the Lutheran and Reformed controversy, the Flacianist and Philippist controversy, the Antinomian controversy, the Osiandrian controversy, the Majorist controversy, the Ubiquitarian controversy, the Synergistic controversy, the Adiaphoristic controversy, the Crypto-Calvinistic controversy, the Arminian and Gomarist controversy, the Calixtine or Syncretistic controversy, the Kenotic controversy, the Rathmann controversy, the Pietist controversy, Amyraldian controversy, the Karg controversy, the Huber controversy, and many more." [2] The study of such controversies leads to the hope that the differences that to-day divide Christians may find their solution in the higher unity of the future.

Attention to the history of doctrine should lead us to ask ourselves, whether we have not over-emphasized certain truths in our credal statements, and thus erected walls of separation

[1] Bibliotheca Sacra, April, 1854, p. 393.
[2] Farrar, History of Interpretation, p. 362.

between ourselves and our brethren. A distinguished writer in this department has pointed out that "The real emphasis does not always fall where we might think it would, does not always fall where the logical emphasis does; that many doctrines which stand in the forefront of our systems, and for which we have been all too ready to do battle, have been of very minor significance and influence in times when the church has most fully realized and best fulfilled its mission; and that the ignorance or neglect of them has not resulted as disastrously as the ignorance or neglect of other truths of which our systems and our preaching make far less account."[1]

In the heat of controversy and in the struggle for supremacy, sects have overstated their own views, and have misrepresented those of their opponents, and have perverted partial truths into unmixed errors. Said a Saxon court theologian at the time of the Thirty Years' War: "For it is as plain as that the sun shines at noon that Calvinism reeks with frightful blasphemy, error and mischief and is diametrically opposed to God's holy revealed word. To take up arms for the Calvinists is nothing else than to serve under the originator of Calvinism, the devil. We ought to give our lives for our brethren, but the Calvinists are not our brethren. We ought to love our enemies: the Calvinists are not *our* enemies but God's"[2]

In studying the doctrinal controversies of the past, we are in a position to judge dispassionately, and to see how much good was often on the side which was at the time declared to be wrong, and how much wrong on the side that history has pronounced to be in the main right.[3]

Thus the church, as a whole, has decided to stamp with the

[1] A. C. McGiffert, art. "The Historical Study of Christianity," Bibliotheca Sacra, January, 1893.

[2] Andrews, Institutes of General History, p. 310.

[3] Zenos, Compendium of Church History, p. 9.

name of Orthodoxy the theology of Athanasius. Nevertheless, one of the leading ecclesiastical historians of England has these good words to say for Arius, who has often been branded with the title of heresiarch: "His aim was not to lower the person of the Lord or to refuse him worship, but to defend that worship from the charge of polytheism. . . . . Arianism was at least so far Christian that it held aloft the Lord's example as the Son of Man, and never wavered in its worship of him as the Son of God. Whatever be the errors of its creed, whatever the scandals of its history, it was a power of life among the Northern nations. Let us give Arianism full honor for its noble work of missions in that age of deep despair which saw the dissolution of the ancient world."[1] With equal justice, Professor Gwatkin, from whom the above quotation has been made, points out the intriguing, violence, and self-seeking of the champions of so-called orthodox views.

Will not the study of such instances lead us to the belief that there may be much of good in the views of those churches and communions from which we are to-day estranged?

5. The study of hymnology—a legitimate part of church history—should bring Christians of different denominations together in mutual love and admiration. If the study of creeds and confessions tends to become polemic, the hymnal is the church's irenicon. All branches of the Christian church sing with fervor and spiritual uplift hymns composed by members of communions with which they might hesitate to fellowship. It is a great thing to write a hymn that shall voice the religious aspirations of one's fellow-Christians, irrespective of creed or confession. The "Art thou weary, art thou languid?" of our hymn-books was suggested to John Mason Neale by a few words of an old monk

[1] Gwatkin, The Arian Controversy, p. 3.

of the Greek Church; but who stops to inquire? "Lead, kindly Light," is a great favorite with Protestants, though composed by one who a little later entered the Church of Rome, in which he became a Cardinal. It is said that at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, representatives of every creed known to man found two things on which they were agreed,—they could all join in the Lord's Prayer, and they could all sing "Lead, kindly Light."[1] Many Protestants derive help from the singing of

> "My God, I love Thee; not because
> I hope for heaven thereby,"

in blissful ignorance that it is attributed to a Jesuit, the heroic Francis Xavier.

"O Sacred Head once wounded" has done duty in three languages, and in more than three confessions. The hymns of Isaac Watts, the Dissenter, and of the Wesleys, the founders of Methodism, are included to-day in the collections of the Church of England. Forgetful of past quarrels, Calvinists to-day sing Luther's grand, old hymn "A mighty fortress is our God." "Nearer, my God to Thee" and "In the Cross of Christ I glory" were written by devout Unitarians, and yet to-day they are found in every trinitarian hymnal. "Lord of all being, throned afar," also written by a Unitarian, is similarly honored. The Quaker poet, Whittier, has contributed "Immortal Love, forever full. "Jesus, still lead on," comes to us from the saintly Moravian Zinzendorf. In fact, the more we study hymnology, the more we realize the invidiousness of our division into sects and denominations.

Among English-speaking people "Rock of Ages" is acknowledged to be the favorite hymn. Yet it was composed under peculiar circumstances. Its author, the Rev. Augustus

[1] W. T. Stead, Hymns that have Helped, p. 107.

M. Toplady, an uncompromising Calvinist, was very much stirred up over the Arminian teachings of the Wesleys. Of Toplady, John Wesley wrote in 1770, "Mr. Augustus Toplady I know well; but I do not fight with chimney-sweepers. He is too dirty a writer for me to meddle with; I should only foul my fingers." He finally entered into a regular controversy with Toplady, who retorted by calling Wesley "Pope John"; spoke of his "hatching blasphemy"; said that his forehead was "impervious to a blush"; and accused him of writing "a known, willful, palpable lie to the public."[1] At one stage of the controversy, Toplady, resorting to verse, published in *The Gospel Magazine* of 1776, the hymn that was to render him famous. This hymn was entitled "A living and dying prayer for the holiest believer in the world," and the lines "for the holiest believer in the world," and the lines

> "Not the labors of my hands
> Can fulfill thy law's demands.
> .....
> Nothing in my hand I bring;
> Simply to thy cross I cling,"

were especially aimed at the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification.[2] The controversy between the Wesleys and Toplady has been forgotten. But "Rock of Ages," by Toplady, and "Jesus, Lover of my Soul," by Charles Wesley, will continue to illustrate the truth that "sects meet in hymnology."

6. The study of church history should, above all things, teach charity and catholicity. A knowledge of the history and antecedents of other communions should lead us to make allowances for the views of other men that we ourselves cannot accept.

In lecturing to the students of Andover Theological Sem-

[1] S. W. Duffield, English Hymns, p. 466.

[2] Stead, Hymns that have Helped, p. 140.

inary upon the "Value of the Study of Church History in Ministerial Education," a former professor in that institution used these words: "I would like to suggest the value to the preacher of learning to think other men's thoughts after them, and so gaining the power fairly to state opinions different from his own. Lawyers gain a breadth and fairness in discussion which ministers need discipline in order to secure. . . . We do not, moreover, understand any man, until somewhat sympathetically we have lived through his history. We are not at our best in helping him. History trains us in going beyond ourselves and entering into other lives. Especially is it through the right study of History that the narrow theological prejudices, the partisan strifes, the sectarian controversies, which have disfigured our religious history, are to be abated. Nothing, indeed, but the might of the Holy Spirit can remove these great evils. But among the agencies which he employs, in addition to that of the written word, no one is more powerful and hopeful than the broad and faithful study of the History of the Church—a study begun by the ministyr of the land before opinions are fully formed, and prosecuted even amid the shock and raging of the battle."[1]

Said a former President of the American Historical Association: "Surely it is a high office to fulfill—that of rescuing from unmerited reproach the men of the past whose names have been clouded by defamation, and who can utter no word in their own defense. It is a high office, not less, to strip from the unworthy the laurels which they have no right to wear."[2] Such occupations cannot but instill a spirit of justice and fairness in dealings with our present-day brethren.

[1] Egbert C. Smyth, Value of Church History in Ministerial Education, p. 28.

[2] G. P. Fisher, "The Historian as a Judge of Historic Persons," in Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1898, p. 33.

The only personal controversy in which Charles Kingsley indulged was one with John Henry Newman at the time of the Oxford Movement,[1] when so many clergymen of the Church of England went over to Rome. Kingsley used some severe language about the Church of Rome, and yet no one could say more appreciative things about the mediæval church than his utterances concerning "The Clergy and the Heathen," and "The Monk as a Civilizer," in his lectures on "The Roman and the Teuton," delivered at the University of Cambridge. Professor F. Max Müller says that these lectures extorted even from unfriendly critics the admission that certain chapters displayed in an unexpected way Kingsley's power of appreciating the good points in characters otherwise most antipathetic to himself.[2] Shall we not learn a lesson from Kingsley's treatment of another confession? Also, may we not attribute his charity and catholicity in large measure to his historical studies?

That venerable church historian, the late Philip Schaff, was a wonderful example of the charity and catholicity that come from historic studies. From the perusal of his histories came the suggestion for the title of this article, as well as many of its illustrations.

Dr. Schaff's knowledge of the good in other churches was so extensive that, in the last public address ever delivered by him,[3] he welcomed to the reunion of Christendom "all denominations which have followed the divine Master and have done his work." "Let us," he said, "forgive and forget their many sins and errors, and remember only their virtues and merits." After passing in review the glorious services rendered by various branches of the Christian church, he concluded: "There

[1] Cf. Charles Kingsley, Letters and Memories of his Life, p. 258.
[2] Charles Kingsley, Roman and Teuton, p. xii.
[3] The Reunion of Christendom, pp. 40, 45.

is room for all these and many other Churches and societies in the kingdom of God, whose height and depth and length and breadth, variety and beauty, surpass human comprehension."

May historic studies contribute somewhat toward bringing about that good understanding and mutual appreciation between the various divisions of the Christian Church for which he so labored. They will not be fruitless, if pursued in the spirit that animated dear, old Dr. Schaff, and which lead him to say: "Let our theology and our charity be as broad and as deep as God's truth and God's love." [1]

7. The scientific and impartial study of the Middle Ages is already beginning to create somewhat of a *rapprochement* between Protestants and Roman Catholics. An illustration will suffice.

President E. Benjamin Andrews received the historical training of the German universities. Inspired by the impartiality of the historian, he could utter these brave words before the faculty and students of a Presbyterian theological seminary: "Nor did the reformers export from that old Church all the good it contained. Men as holy as they preferred to remain in it; men as holy as they have been in the old establishment ever since. I am a strong Protestant enough not to be afraid to admit that there are at this moment multitudes of true and faithful Christians in the Romish communion. It is a part of that Holy Catholic Church in which we all believe. I would speak and think respectfully even of the Pope. He is head pastor of one of the oldest, noblest, and most useful congregations on earth, the one to which St. Paul directed the epistle reproduced in our Bibles." [2]

[1] The Discord and Concord of Christendom, p. 310.

[2] "The Sin of Schism," in Lectures on Church Unity, p. 74.

8. If a knowledge of church history makes for Christian unity, is not this an added reason why the study of ecclesiastical history should have a place in the curricula of our colleges and universities as well as in those of our theological seminaries? Should not the educated young men and women who sit in the pew be taught something about the history of other churches as well as of the one they attend? Will the laity, who provide the sinews of war, be content to continue contributing to the propagation of sectarianism, when once they learn how small and trivial are the differences that divide the various branches of the church of Christ? Is not this one way to help remove the divisions that are the scandal of our common Christianity?