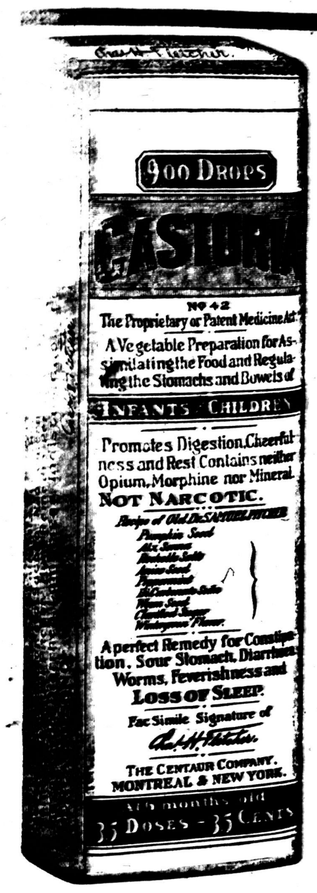

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The Recovery of Our Lost Fraternity

(By Rev. GEORGE HANSON, M.A., D.D.)

REV. GEORGE HANSON, M.A., D.D.

"THE things which divide us are temporal; the things which unite us are eternal."

These great words of Professor Rendel Harris, of England, put the question of Church Union on its proper basis, forbid all rigid theories of ecclesiastical authority or privilege, and justify every attempt at closer fellowship between churches holding the essential truths of the everlasting Gospel. What shall our attitude be? Shall we magnify our differences and minimise our agreements? Or shall we magnify our agreements and minimise our differences? The root of all sectarianism, and the foe of Christian brotherhood, is the exaltation of non-essentials to the rank of essentials. Every man should ask himself solemnly the question "Why am I opposing organic union, why do I favor ecclesiastical divisions? Is it in the interests of the fundamental unities of the Gospel or is it chiefly denominational pride that animates me?" It seems to me that, in the controversy, all that is best and most progressive in evangelical Christendom is on the side of those who are desirous of seeing the Churches renouncing their exclusiveness and uniting with one another in the closest practicable relationship. *The best scholarship of the day in the Protestant Churches favors their desire*, for it denies any church any undefeasible right or even any superior title to authority over every other church. Of course there are certain special pleaders in some churches who hold out against this conclusion, but their opinions do not weigh with educated men, and are bound, soon or syne, to be discarded. It was the evidence of historical research that compelled Dean Hensley Henson, as he tells us in his volume of cathedral sermons, entitled "Godly Union and Concord," to renounce his once cherished High Church notions and admit the validity of the titles of non-episcopal ministries. He frankly asserts that prelacy has no right to be regarded as the only, or even as the chief, channel of God's grace to mankind. What is true of diocesan Episcopacy is equally true of Presbyterianism and of Congregationalism, or of any modification of these three distinctive types of polity. None of them is of "divine rights." *Further, no reasonable man will claim for his church, as it exists, all the excellences of saintship* or of organization, or would like to see perpetuated, in its present form, to the end of time. I certainly hope and expect to see a vast change in all the churches. Only a singularly fanatical prelatist can believe that all Christendom will acknowledge one day the authority of the See of Canterbury; none but a hopelessly prejudiced Presbyterian would think that the Westminster Confession of Faith will be installed some time permanently as the final and unalterable expression of the faith of the universal church; no Congregationalist would, in his wildest imaginings, dream that all the Christian world will adopt at last his separatist views of church organization; no Baptist, however fervent, can really suppose that the day will come when all believers shall be devotedly and uncompromisingly immersionist. Every church under heaven must be changed, and greatly changed, if it is to live. The only question is, what shall the change be, and when is it to take place. The church that sits down under fixed and rigid conditions is doomed. The facts of experience, too, rebuke our sectarian prejudices.

The loudest call to us to consider organic union as an urgent duty comes to us from the intervening prayer of our Lord, recorded in St. John xvii. Twice over in almost identical language he prays on behalf of "all who should believe in Him" thus: "That they all may be one, even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be in us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me." Plainly the union of believers was a condition of His Church's successful appeal to mankind on His behalf; and equally plainly all avoidable divisions are a hindrance to the progress of the Gospel. A divided church cannot rule the world. Those who oppose organic union assure us that our Lord's words do not require more than unity of spirit, oneness of faith and hope and love, and that this inner unity of heart is quite compatible with the greatest variety of organization. But surely our Saviour's language demands the closest possible union, a union as intimate and organic as that which bound the Persons of the Trinity together as one. At any rate, if it does not demand it, it certainly does not forbid it. Those who oppose organic union ought to be very sure that, in advocating spiritual unity as against visible co-operate union, co-operation as against the unification of now separated bodies, they are doing justice to the desire of our Lord's heart and are not guilty of toning down His strong words to suit their own preposses-sions. If it is through the exigencies of controversy that they are whittling down the Lord's prayer, they are incurring a responsibility that I should not care to share.

The opponents of organic union are not consistent with themselves. They pronounce themselves in favor of federation and co-operation with other evangelical bodies. But if these bodies, with whom they would allow such federation and co-operation, are worthy of so much confidence and regard, why should they not be counted deserving of still greater trust and affection? Why do the advocates of unity and co-operation balk at organic union? Whatever justifies unity and co-operation justifies organic union. If co-operation is desirable, it can only be because those with whom we are willing to co-operate hold the essential truths that we hold. If they were radically unsound or even seriously defective in their faith, co-operation with them would be wrong. Co-operation with them is right only if we regard them as fundamently right, essentially one with ourselves. Willingness to co-operate with them is a proof of our confidence in their evangelical soundness.

Can we trust and esteem them enough to walk, talk, work, and fraternize with them, and not be ready and glad to go further? Whatever justifies the fellowship of co-operation justifies the closer relationship of organic union.

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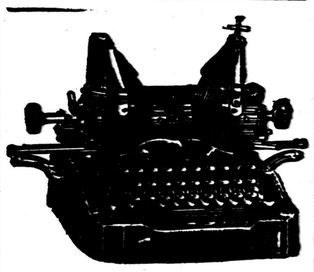

C. Rodgers is agent for the Oliver. Ask for information

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This is merely to tell the women that we have further large shipments of New Spring Suits and Separate Coats — Suits $15 to $35 — Coats $5 to $35

We have just had to enlarge our women's Suit, Coat and Garment department, and there's no room to spare

Men's Auto Gloves, large full Gauntlet style, soft, comfortable and serviceable, tan or black the pair $2.75 to $3.50

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New Hammocks for baby are shown for the first time, very dainty colors each $2.50

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The Prettiest Plain and Shot Taffeta Petticoats we ever offered—Colors of Navy, Cerise Paddy, Rose, etc. Prices $3.90, $4.90 and $5.00

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Linen Table Cloths and Napkins, Large Stock here—Cloths $2.98 to $15.00 each. Napkins $2.50 to $15.00 doz

English Bed Spreads light in weight "Aerel" Quilts they are called, the designs are very good each — $2.00, $2.50, $2.75 and $3.00

In the Furniture Department may be seen certain new Walnut, Oak Dining Room Suits
—Walnut Suits $145.00 to $250.00
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They are really fine

People who want upholstering work done will consult our Mr. Cobley, Carpet, Rug and Drapery Department.

To know how good an easy chair can be, Visit the Upholstered Furniture Display $5 to $35—3rd Floor

Not only do we carry large assortments of the "Nemo" Corset you will also find in our Corset Deptment all the desirable kinds in "Gossard" and C. C. a LaGrace $1 to $8 a pair. Our expert corsetiers will fit every purchaser to her individual model of Corsets at $2 a pair and up.

For your choosing hundreds of patterns in new Wash Goods, we have arranged them all on Tables in the Staple Department, where women may the easiest compare and choose them, the yard 12½ to $1.50

The Women's Underwear Stocks include Glove-Silk-Underwear in Combination, Vests and Tights, white, flesh and black, -Tights the pair $3.50 to $5.50—Combination Suits $4 to $6.50—Vests each $2.50 to $3.50

The Boy's Bank Account

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We have made a particular study of Boys first long pant Suits the study begins in the choosing of good looking, good wearing cloths, the styles this year are very smart. See the Pinched Back and Pleated Back boys first long pant Suits in the Men's and Boy's store at $10.50, $11.50, $12.50 and $15.00

One of the most restful looking spots in the store is hammock land, $1.90 to $7.00 for grown-ups — $2.00 lor Kiddies hammocks

Piles of Dressing Sacks on the Tables 2nd Floor each 89c and $1.29.

Large stocks of Imported Cretonnes are ready 25c to 2.00 a yard, used for many purposes, including slip covers for furniture. Our upholstering man does very good work in upholstery and making of slip covers and the like

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