

1861 Jan. 8.

THE

AMERICAN AND FOREIGN

CHRISTIAN UNION.

VOL. XI.

FEBRUARY, 1860.

No. 2.

ADDRESS BY THE REV. WILLIAM AIKMAN.

The Rev. WILLIAM AIKMAN, pastor of the Hanover-street Presbyterian Church, in the city of Wilmington, Delaware, delivered the address in behalf of the AMERICAN AND FOREIGN CHRISTIAN UNION before the Synod of Pennsylvania, at its sessions in October last. We were not present at the meeting, and were unable to procure a copy of it until very recently. With great pleasure we now submit it to our readers.

If the *thousands* of our CLERICAL readers only, will read it carefully, muse upon its facts, and the clear and well sustained statements it contains, and allow them the influence which their importance justifies, we cannot avoid the conviction that a new and beneficial impulse would soon be given to the work of evangelization among the vast multitudes of the now deluded Romanists, for whose souls but few, comparatively, seem to have any care. But we trust that *thousands of others* will also read it, reflect upon its teachings, pray over them, and learn their duty in regard to the cause they commend, and encourage their pastors to preach about it, to allow it a place in the services of the *monthly concert*, and to give it its due share of attention and support, at all times and in all proper ways.

Let any one think of the things which the speaker has comprised in this address, till his understanding fully comprehends them, and we see not how, if piety has dominion of the heart and a proper sympathy is felt for the wandering and the lost, and especially if a desire is cherished for the recovery of the true church from her apostasy and deepest reproach among the heathen, he can indulge a feeling of *indifference* toward the work of missions, to which the address relates. *It is impossible.* And we rejoice that there is rising on every side evidence that the various branches of the one true church of Christ are every year becoming more and more interested and anxious to enlighten and redeem the victims of Papal error and superstition, and to propagate through the lands in which they dwell a pure and evangelical Christianity.

Twenty years since, but here and there a minister of the Gospel in all our national territory gave the subject a place in his ministrations in any service of the year. A most hopeful change has taken place in this respect since that date. Scores now, for one then, think, pray, preach, and otherwise labor to promote the good work. They are studying the

Bible in respect to it. On its sacred pages is the record of that state of things which now obtains and for long centuries has prevailed in Papal lands. Its first beginnings, progress, continuance, and final annihilation are clearly foretold and frequently alluded to in the Scriptures in the most impressive language. It was revealed to the prophets, both of the Old and New Testaments, and they have spoken of it as the direst evil which the cause of truth was ever to suffer, and have bewailed it as the heaviest calamity that should ever fall upon the church. It was to "wear out the saints" of the Most High. But it was not always to prevail. By the diffusion of the truth, through agencies symbolized by the apocalyptic angel flying through the midst of the heavens, "having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth," it was foretold that it should be removed, and give place to a pure and evangelical Christianity.

Here, then, as all can see, is *ample encouragement* for missionary labor, for apostolic zeal, and for all the outlay necessary for the accomplishment of the work to be done by the members of the true church. And here there is no danger of disappointment, as to results, for God has spoken in regard to it as he has spoken concerning no other work. *Babylon shall fall.* THE "MAN OF SIN SHALL BE DESTROYED." The church shall be redeemed from her Papal captivity; and with her simple rites, divinely appointed ordinances, and pure Gospel restored to her, she shall shine forth upon the moral darkness of the world around her, clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and (to her enemies) terrible as an army with banners.

Concerning the doom of the Papal antichrist and manner of its accomplishment, we are happy to know that many more sympathize with us now than formerly, and every year adds to their numbers. In many ecclesiastical bodies (and it is a promising omen) the usage now obtains, of discussing topics connected with the vital points of Romanism, and also of appointing one or more of their members to represent at some subsequent meeting the operations and claims of the AMERICAN AND FOREIGN CHRISTIAN UNION, as a *Missionary Society devoted exclusively* to the work of evangelizing the corrupted parts of Christendom. Let the usage continue. Let it spread from one body to another till it becomes universal. We see in it much good. To say nothing of other things, we see in it a hope for the revival of the spirit which animated the Reformers of the sixteenth century, a result most devoutly to be desired in behalf not only of our common Protestantism, which has long mourned the absence of the Luthers, and Calvins, and Knoxes, and other great lights, but of the world at large and all its interests. Let pastors investigate the subject, collect the facts, and set forth the truth before the people in relation to Romanism and the Gospel, as is done by the pastor of Wilmington in this address, and incalculable good will necessarily follow the effort. Let the people be interested in the work by their religious and spiritual guides, and their charities will soon be directed toward it in an effective form; and soon the Board will be required greatly to augment the number of its missionaries, and be enabled to enter the many large fields already "white to the harvest," but from which they

have hitherto been excluded, by want of the necessary means for the proper support of the laborers requisite to reap them. Encouraged by past experience in this matter, we will hope for the future without impatience or distrust.

But we must cease to write, and submit the

ADDRESS.

Here it is. Mr. Aikman said :

“ In classifying religiously the population of the world, we find that some two hundred millions of men, or one-fifth of the population of the globe, are under the spiritual sway of the Pope. While we may believe, as we must, that here and there throughout this vast multitude there are those who truly apprehend Jesus Christ as the Savior of sinners,—for the name of Jesus is a name of fragrance and of power, and it cannot be spoken without shedding them forth; an apostle could rejoice that Christ was preached, though ‘ *in contention*,’—yet the moral condition of this world of immortal men is such as to awaken the deepest solicitude of a Christian heart: they are ‘ without God and without hope in the world.’ And more, they are under the sway of a false religion, which effectually shuts out the light from their souls. It is a superstition gross as some of the worst forms of heathenism, of which it is in many cases merely a copy. Morally no better, spiritually as bad as the heathen, the Papal world stands before the church of God. It is a part of the field. It cannot be shut out. It does not belong to the kingdom of God; it is a part, and a chosen part, of Satan’s kingdom, and it must be conquered for Christ and by the church. The church cannot ignore it, cannot act as if it were not there. There it is, and the church of God has something to do with it.

“ The Papal power stands in the way, as the grand force opposing the progress of the Gospel in the world. There is no other which for a moment can be compared with it, either in activity, intelli-

gence, energy, or universality. It is, indeed, the only actively opposing, as it is the omnipresent element. It is found everywhere, going side by side with every effort which the church makes to extend the domain of truth. Wherever the church of God goes to do her work for the Master, there closely treading in her footsteps goes the Papacy. It matters not on what secluded island, on what far-off shore, in what populous city, in what newly discovered land the missionaries of the cross go, they scarcely fix their home or begin to tell the Gospel tidings, when the tonsured priest is at hand with his mummeries. The letter which brings home the tidings that the church has planted her foot and set up the cross on some distant point, is the signal for the departure of Papal emissaries, and sometimes the ship which carries the missionary, bears with him the priest.

“ Nor is this power simply universal; it is as malignantly active as it is far reaching. It seeks to build up itself by breaking down the work which the church is doing. We need not speak of its efforts in Christian lands, or dwell on its subtle, persevering, and often successful endeavors to grasp the control of education or the reins of political power; it works as well abroad. To point out the instances where the Papal hierarchy is standing in the way of missionary labors, would be simply to name the missions of the church all over the earth: whether it be the islands of the South Pacific, or Africa, or India, or China, or Turkey, it is the same ever-present, vigilant foe.

ELEMENTS OF ITS POWER.

“ Many in the church innocently think that it will come to an end of itself. They see in it so much that is absurd, puerile, and contrary to the common sense of men, that they believe that, with the advance of intelligence and enlightenment, it must of course die out from the earth. They do not seem to see that it is making prodigious strides, not simply in the dark places of the earth, but its most boasted triumphs are where the light is strong-

est, where education and refinement are greatest.

“It has elements of vast power. It appeals to human nature as no other religion ever appealed. It addresses the inner and the outer man with equal force and success. See how it comes home to the crying wants of a human soul, and seems to meet its unuttered longings. Here is a man consciously guilty before God, in need of pardon and asking for peace. It has something for him. It tells him of a sacrifice for sin which has been made for him; it speaks of the Son of God dying in his behalf, and that he may be pardoned through that cross of the Redeemer. But what is more, it tells him the story and presents the means of forgiveness in such a way as falls in precisely with his own pride and self-seeking. It speaks of penance, and good works, and alms-deeds, as the way in which a man may make out the price of his own salvation. While with the one breath it meets the demand of a wounded conscience asking for something above man, with another it soothes the opposition of a proud spirit refusing to accept of the righteousness of Jesus, by the long array of deeds by which he gains a righteousness of his own.

‘Its tremendous power consists in the fact—and here it stands forth as the most subtle and wonderful scheme which the devil has ever devised or used, and which immeasurably transcends all others—that it seizes the great truths of God, and *uses them in such a way as that they shall fall in with and not rouse the opposition of the natural heart.* See how the trinity is held in its purity, the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, of a vicarious atonement, the life of God in the soul—indeed, almost every doctrine which the church holds fundamental is here, yet see how they are wielded and made welcome to a soul unrenewed. The church has, in her efforts to influence men, always to contend with the opposition of a soul at enmity with God: she rouses his pride and calls out his wrath: the Papacy

yields to both; and while she tells him that God is doing the work of his salvation, and so puts conscience to rest and stills the better voices of his soul, at the same time see that he himself is paying the price and purchasing the boon of eternal life.

“It appeals to the soul through the eye and ear, with the same power as that which it exerts upon it through its recognized necessities. Those who look carelessly and negligently upon the ritual of Rome, fail utterly to understand its character. They see the dimly burning candles on the gaudy altar, they hear a little tinkling bell, they see a curiously arrayed man with his back to the people going through his genuflections, and hear him in a foreign tongue murmuring over his service, and they smile with contempt: What folly is here! how weak! and they turn away only ridiculing the pretensions of Rome.

“But Rome knows better than they, for she is very wise. That service which you despise, is the most powerful and universally powerful that the world has ever seen. I say, universally powerful. You acknowledge its influence over the ignorant and the superstitious, you see them kneeling in the vestibule, in the aisle as well as the pew, and in their faces you read but too truly what are its effects; but you do not see how that same service appeals with a mightier, because more secret, refined, and intelligent force, to the cultivated and the learned who kneel with them there. Each one is affected by it according to his capabilities. The one sees the outward forms and hears the outward voices, and receives their impressions, sensuous but strong; the other sees beneath their forms the living truth: the one is satisfied with the symbol and does not think it a symbol; the other welcomes it not for itself but for something better. Before him is the *Altar*, the *Tabernacle* and the *Crucifix*: if he be an ignorant and an unlettered man, the last perhaps holds the chief and it may be the only place in his thoughts; the

others are impressive accompaniments of it : if he be one capable of other thoughts, they all have a deep and solemn meaning. There is the *Altar* ; it is another Calvary upon which a sacrifice is made, 'the clean and unbloody sacrifice of his body and blood,' fit emblems and more than emblems of the death of Jesus ; there on the altar stands the crucifix, not to be worshiped, indeed, but for me 'to have before my eyes during the sacrifice the image which puts me in mind of his higher sacrifice of which he speaks.'

"The devotee comes into church and he dips his fingers into the '*holy water*' at the door, and forms on himself the sign of the cross : you smile at the humble man, but wonder as you see the elevated and the intelligent do it too. But they both have in their measure felt its power. The one may not be able to tell you why ; the other will bid you see in the water purity and innocence, which the worshiper is reminded he should have when entering the house of God ; in the sign, the cross of Christ, on which hangs all a sinner's hope ; in the words which accompany it, the unity and the trinity of God !

"He passes into the church and engages in worship : there is the *Tabernacle*, which holds consecrated particles, the body and the blood : and so in them all Jesus is present, 'truly present within,' and he bends the knee, not to material fixtures, but to the present Christ.

"He sees the priest at the altar : the many robes and vestments catch the eye and fix his attention, and if nothing more, he is to the worshiper one who appears before God for him ; but he who rises above the vulgar crowd, sees in every robe and vestment a solemn meaning. A white cloth (*amice*) hangs behind the neck of the priest ; ah ! it tells of 'that cloth or rag with which the Jews muffled our Savior's face : ' the long white robe (*the Alb*) covers him to his feet ; it is the 'garment with which he was vested by Herod : ' a scarf (*the Maniple*) hangs from his left arm, another long and

narrow (*the Stole*) is round his neck, and its fringed ends are crossed over his bosom ; they speak of the cords and bands which fretted his sacred flesh on that mournful night : a vestment (*the Chasuble*) is before and behind ; as he stands the embroidered cross is on his back, a pillar is in front ; that is the purple robe, the pillar to which in his shame he was bound, and the cross which his shoulders bore : upon his head is the *Tonsure* or crown ; no covering is indeed needed here, but that tells of the crown of thorns which pierced his brow.

"Nor is this all that these meaning emblems speak : still within, to him who can hear, they have other voices. The folded cloth first placed on the head of the priest and then hung round his neck is 'the helmet of salvation,' 'the divine hope' of the believer ; the white robe is 'the innocence of the life' of the faithful ; the girdle 'with which the loins are begirt' are 'purity and chastity ;' the scarf on the arm is 'the patient suffering of the labors of this mortal life ;' the fringed one on the neck, 'the sweet yoke of Christ ;' the vestment which covers all the rest, is the 'virtue of charity.'

"The worshiper sees upon the altar the lighted candles. Their light is not needed, except to tell the victory and triumph of our 'great King,' and to betoken our joy and his glory, and to speak of 'the light of faith with which we are to approach to him.' He hears the tinkling of the bell, he sees the floating incense ; the one calls home his wandering thoughts and bids him lift his heart with greater devotion, the other tells him of the prayers which float upwards as incense to God.

"Now, who shall deny the power of all this over any mind which once has yielded itself to its sway ? To such an one the air of the place grows hallowed, the visible things are lost in the overshadowings of the thought which they suggest : there in the very presence of Christ is one who offers sacrifice—nay, it is the Lord himself who is here, the suffering Lamb of God !

THE ONLY FALSE RELIGION THAT HAS LIFE.

“There are but two living forms of religion on earth—true and false Christianity. Besides the true church, Catholicism stands the only form which has vitality. All forms of heathenism are dead or stricken with death; they struggle to keep themselves alive; not one among them all pretends to propagate itself, whether it be Mohammedism, or Buddhism, or Brahminism: however vast their sway or mighty their former power, they feebly endeavor to defend themselves; the decay and recognized doom is upon them all. Not so this. It stands erect, full of conscious life and strength—life enough to exult in its power, and put forth aggressive efforts, and on every side to reach out to get a world. It lives and it grows.

“I do not fear, indeed, its growth. It was a mightier power once. It is pervasive now, but once it girdled continents. How flourishing were its missions on Western Africa once! how once it mastered and held the southern shores of Asia, yet it holds them no more! But it still is a living, an aggressive, and a mighty power. No thoughtful man will dare to think lightly of it; none but an indifferent one will be unsolicitous about it.

ITS DOOM.

“The word of God has sealed the doom of the Papacy, and the common thought of the Protestant church looks forward hopefully to the time when it shall be destroyed. Yet there is danger that this expectation, well grounded as it is, should turn away the sympathies of the church from the *millions of souls* who are under the dominion of Rome. It is easier, as it is more natural, to embrace this almost unnumbered company in one vast mass and under a name accursed by the word of God, and think of it as a thing which by-and-by the power of God shall sweep from the earth. It falls in with one's indolence. But so must not the church of God think of the Papal world.

“There is a distinction, radical and of vast practical importance, to be made between the system and the individuals who

are under its power. The one is to be destroyed, the other is to be saved. The system, the Papal hierarchy, is to be brought to an utter and a terrible end—the wrath of God is to be poured out upon the seat of the beast; but there are other words used in speaking of its destruction which may easily be understood, as intimating that it will be one which shall in a great degree be spiritual in its power. This foe of God and his church is to be consumed ‘with the Spirit of his mouth,’ and destroyed ‘with the brightness of his coming;’ and the language may point toward some wonderful display of the Holy Spirit's power which shall move over this corrupt Roman world, and by converting the multitudes within this false church, take away from it its life. The descending Spirit of God is the brightness of God's coming.

“But whatever interpretation we may give to the varied predictions of the fall of Rome, *the church cannot and must not forget that one-fifth of all the race are here. These millions of souls are lost without the true gospel; they are sunk in sin, they have the gloom of an impenetrable night about them. The church of God has the only word that can save them, and she may not in vague and general groupings lose the sense of her responsibility. She may not forget them, while she thinks of Rome; nor may she sit down at rest and make no effort for their salvation, because ‘the Papacy’ is to come, by-and-by, to an end. So is heathenism: but we do not think that therefore heathen are not to be plucked from their ruin. No; here is work for the church—a work which she must not neglect, and may not without guilt. The world of Romanists, by the grace of God, is to be saved.*

“The church for centuries seems to have failed to understand it; she has sent out her missions all over the earth, and labored for all men except these. It is true that her struggle has in the past been very much for her own life; but that life would have been a more vigorous life, had it

been less defensive and more aggressive. AT ALL EVENTS, NOW THE CHURCH IS STRONG ENOUGH, AND HAS LIFE ENOUGH, TO DO THIS WORK, AND THESE MILLIONS DEMAND IT AT HER HANDS.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE.

“The attention of the church must be called to this work. She has been indifferent, because she has not been looking at this part of the field of God. She must be made to see that here is a world to be conquered for Christ, and that she is to go forth to the conquest.

“Direct efforts are to be made for the salvation of souls within the pale of Rome. Romanists, as Romanists, are to be labored for. Here a peculiar, as it is a distinct, kind of work is to be done. The same labors will not do for the heathen and the Papal world. Much of the work must, from the nature of the case, be for the present a hidden work. Rome is keen-eyed and vigilant; she is the same malignant and persecuting power that she ever was, and she will not lightly let go her victims or peacefully permit their rescue. We cannot, therefore, proclaim abroad all that is done, or too plainly point out even just where the work shall go on.

“There are feeble churches, struggling in the midst of enemies, yet beacon lights in the surrounding darkness—and they must be held up. There are secret societies of enlightened men, or men seeking the light, which are to be encouraged, assisted, guided. There are men who go about distributing the Word of God, who must be sustained; and the aid which is given must not only be strong, but it must not be seen.

THE AGENCY BY WHICH IT MAY BE DONE.

“The work is distinct and peculiar, and an agency adapted to it is demanded. Such is the AMERICAN AND FOREIGN CHRISTIAN UNION. As we look over the long, bright list of Societies which have the extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom at heart, this Society is, perhaps, the only one in the land which even professedly labors for the two hundred millions of the Romish world. Some of the great societies are *prohibited* by their policy,

if not their charters, from doing anything for them. Whatever may be said of this Society, whatever objections may be made to its workings, yet this fact returns upon us:—it is the only Society through which we can reach out, and effectively do anything for, the perishing millions of Rome. It has done, and is doing, a great work: it demands our sympathies and help.

ROME FOR THE CHURCH.

“The Papal world belongs to Christ and his church, and by-and-by he is to take possession of his own. Sometimes I think I catch glimpses of God’s ineffable greatness and wisdom, in permitting the world-wide spread of the Papacy. Think you that he means nothing by it? Think you that he intends to accomplish nothing by it? Has it been his way to permit the devil always to work, and he, the Master, to reap none of the harvest? Or has he not been accustomed, hitherto, in this world’s history, to take the labors of the great adversary, and turn them into the service of his church? Indeed, is not the grand tone of the church’s history this—God always foiling the devil, and turning his devices into occasions of his glory? So we may believe it shall be emphatically, in regard to the Papacy. This is the latest and the most perfect work of the devil;—perhaps in it he has exhausted the resources of his nature. It stands forth, inconceivably, the most wonderful and subtle device against the souls of men that the world has ever seen. Is it too much to believe, can we but believe, that as Satan has culminated here his power, so God shall bring from it the most signal and glorious exhibition of his wisdom and power, by making it a great instrumentality to build up the kingdom of his Son?

“I will not attempt, in the brief time that remains to me, to trace the probable manner in which this may be done. I may hint, however, that wherever Catholicism goes, there go with it essential truths of the Gospel, overlaid and made even destructive with falsehood; but after all, a triune God, a vicarious Savior are everywhere spoken of. Here are founda-

tion truths. God can make them, though dead they be, efficient in saving human souls. When his time comes, he can sweep the falsehoods away, and let the divine truths come out in their life-power.

"I would not be understood as meaning that the Romish church is to be *reformed*—it is to be *destroyed*. I mean that the fundamental truths may remain to be built upon, while the power that propagated them shall go down. The Jewish church illustrates it. The Gospel ran over the world at the first, *along the track of the synagoge*. Its best and almost its only triumphs were where the Jewish element was found. It was the far-seeing wisdom of God that scattered Jews all over the Roman world;—it was that a way might be made for the Gospel. So wherever the apostles went, they found the broad stones of truth already laid; they had but to build upon them. Yet the Jewish church was not reformed—it

passed away, but its work for Christ remained. Why may it not be so with Rome? In all heathen lands, it tells of God and of Christ. The heathen became familiar with the word, perhaps with the truth. Why should it not be, that in the good coming day these shall be made the stepping-stones of the church's triumph?

We may hope it, and, instead of trembling, look with absorbed interest on every new advance of Rome. God directs it. The general who knows his power, and is confident of final success, may very calmly see the enemy building fortress on fortress, and filling magazine on magazine; he may take even an exultant pleasure in it. He views all the work as done for him. By-and-by, having hemmed him round, when the time comes he will crush him. Then he will take possession of those well constructed forts, and fill them with his troops. The enemy built for him."

THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF THE PAPACY—REV.
R. C. SHIMEALL.

The course of the Papacy is nearly run. Such, at least, is the general sentiment of the learned in the Protestant world. The quickened activity which now, and for a few years past, has distinguished the leaders and abettors of the system, does not abate the force of the sentiment, nor the confidence reposed in it. The revived activity noticeable now, on the part of the prelates, priests, and others, in its interests, is but the fulfillment of ancient prophecy concerning its last days, and corresponds to the convulsive action which not uncommonly at a short interval precedes dissolution in the animal frame. The faith of the intelligent remains, therefore, undisturbed; and, with the developments of Providence and study of the Scriptures, is constantly accumulating strength.

Within the past century much has been written and published by learned and able divines concerning the rise, career, and final doom of the Papacy; and not a few distinguished scholars have attempted to fix the precise period when its destruction would be effected. The labors expended upon the general subject have brought out a vast amount of information, from sources sacred and profane, and imparted to the study of Popery, as contained in the Bible, a very high degree of interest. They have served in an eminent manner to strengthen the faith and hope of the members of the true church of Christ, to encourage her in her struggles, and even to fill her with joy through an apprehension of the close proximity of the time when her sufferings at the hand of this ancient foe (the