

### The Denominational Spirit.

The *Vermont Chronicle* publishes an extract from the Rev. Dr. Skinner's sermon at the opening of the Mercer street church in this city, under the appropriate head of "Sectarianism and Christian Union." It contains a just, forcible, and admirable vindication of that spirit of true catholic Christianity which we have endeavored to practice and commend.

"There ought," says Dr. S., "to be no sectarianism among Christians, notwithstanding their differences. Let them, if need be, have their differences, but let not their differences develop themselves in sectarian divisions and parties. I fear this is an observation which some will be disposed to resolve into a visionary cast of mind, but I must beg them not to disparage their own claims to superior judgment, by discarding it before they have dispassionately reflected upon it. My position is, that there ought to be no sectarian divisions among Christians on account of differences among themselves."

"There is, I aver before heaven and earth, no justification of things like these, and no one should on any ground attempt to justify them. No matter, I repeat, what the differences may be, the fact that they are differences among Christians is decisive that they form no sufficient basis for sectarianism. They are differences among persons who agree in such and so many respects, that to divide on the ground of differences is so unnecessary, so unnatural, that I can think of nothing which, in these respects, can be compared to it. It is worse than if a man should part from a friend, dearer to him than life, simply because of some almost imperceptible dissonance in the tone of his voice."

Again, the Dr. says :—

"There ought, I repeat, to be no such thing as sectarianism among Christians, and this sentiment should be henceforth, and in every appropriate way, inculcated by all the churches until it comes to be thought heresy and schism, not to believe and practically acknowledge it."

The true denominational spirit, as we understand it, is here described and vindicated. A consistent Christian will always seek and strive to bring out, in himself and in his associates, those traits in which all disciples of Christ resemble him, and to remove those which he did not possess. This is the spirit which as properly belongs to Presbyterianism as to anything, and which has been long and nobly displayed by our Congregational brethren and ourselves, in our mutual adherence to the Plan of Union, which is one of its best practical displays to be found on record.

Dr. Skinner, so long ago as the time of preaching the sermon above quoted, deprecated an evil sectarian spirit, as heretical and schismatic; and they who, for sectarian objects, excite discord among brethren, and disturb the peace of churches, should always be rebuked. A proper rebuke will not be soon forgotten.—*N. Y. Pres.*

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