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CHURCH UNION.

I. IS IT POSSIBLE?

OUR question refers not to the invisible but to the visible Church. In the case of the invisible Church, union is not only possible, but exists and always has existed. It exists, too, independently of us or of anything we can do or undo. Our question is practical, not theoretical. It is concerned with human effort, with our present duty and responsibility. It asks whether the present divided state of Christendom is the normal, right, and only possible condition; whether churches now divided, rival, even hostile, should not meet on ground common to them; also, by what methods, along what lines, and to what extent, efforts for union should be made.

Admittedly the Church was normally one for the fifteen centuries between Moses and Christ, though society then was disunited by tribalism, slavery, and other causes that no longer exist, and political tendencies encouraged the formation of small states. Israel departed from Egypt as a united body; they left not a hoof behind. Had there been no union, there would have been no Exodus. Their invisible unity would have availed nothing.