

The Episcopal church proposes as a bases of Christian union the acceptance of the Bible, of the two great historic creeds, of the two sacraments, and of the historic episcopate. It proposes, in other words, that other churches shall surrender something both of their sacred traditions and of their sacred beliefs, in order to secure church unity. The Quaker must accept water baptism and a visible communion in bread and wine. The liberal Christian must accept as authoritative the theological definitions of the fourth century. The Congregationalists and the Presbyterians must accept as essential what neither believes, and what the first certainly regards as hazardous, if not injurious to the well-being of the church. We have heretofore pointed out the reasons why we do not think church union can be secured on such a basis as this.

The Congregationalists propose, by action taken at their national council, (reported in another column), four articles as a basis of Christian union. These are the acceptance of the Scriptures as the only authoritative revelation of God to man, of Jesus Christ as the Divine Saviour and teacher, of the Church of Christ as the body commissioned to preach his gospel, and of liberty of conscience in the interpretation of the Bible and the administration of the church; and on this basis is proposed a confederation of all Christian churches to aid in establishing the kingdom of God in the world. The plan of the Congregationalists differ from that of the Episcopal church in that it does not ask for any surrender of religious convictions or any abandonment of religious traditions. The liberal Christian if he accepts Christ as the Divine Saviour and teacher of the world, may still refuse to accept the Nicene definitions of theology. The Episcopalians may still continue to enjoy the oversight of bishops, the Presbyterian that of the General Assembly, while the Congregationalists may enjoy their freedom

from all supervision. The Baptist may baptize by immersion, and receive only the baptised to the communion table; the Episcopalian may baptize infant children by sprinkling, and receive all who are in love and charity with mankind to the communion table; and the Quaker many maintain neither baptism nor a communion table. In short the union which the Congregationalists propose is, first, a union of spirit, a mutual respect for each other's views and each other's work; a recognition that the end in view—namely, the kingdom of God—is more important than the means employed—namely, the bishopric, the independency, the sacrament, or the creed; and, growing out of this mutual respect, a cordial co-operation in promoting that kingdom of God by these different methods.

It is hardly necessary to say that of these plans that of the Congregationalists appears to us more hopeful of results, more immediately practicable, and more in accordance with the spirit of the New Testament. One thing, at all events, is certain, this plan can be adopted even by those who hope eventually that another plan will be adopted. While we are waiting for all Christians to accept the historic creeds, the two sacraments, and the historic Episcopate, we can fellowship as Christians those who are loyal to Jesus Christ as he is revealed to us in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and can co-operate with them in work and worship.—*The Outlook*.

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Our unconscious influence, that which goes out from our real character, is more potent for good or evil than our public words and deeds. Here is the perfect impartiality of God in His rewards for service. We aspire to be widely useful. God puts us in a place seemingly so hedged about that we feel powerless to do anything for humanity. But the silent influence of a pure character is a mighty force in the moral world.—*Canadian Churchman*.