

probably for some time forbid any steps being taken by the church as a body, towards such a desirable object. But in the mean while some good may be effected by discussion, and by preparing the minds of people in both communities to receive such a proposition favourably.

With these preliminary remarks we commend to the thoughtful perusal of our readers, the following important and interesting document.

At the close of last year a meeting was held at St. James' Rectory, Piccadilly, at which the desirableness of union amongst christians was discussed. The result was that a few of the clergymen and gentlemen present were requested to consider and report "what measures it may be expedient to take for promoting union with the Church of England on the part of christians not at present in active communion with her." The following committee was appointed, including four names which were added subsequently:—

CHAIRMAN—Rev. J. E. Kempe, Rector of St. James', Westminster.

Rev. A. Burgess, Prebendary of St. Paul's and Rector of Upper Chelsea.

Rev. Dr. Hessey, Preacher to the Hon. Society of Gray's-inn, and Head Master of Merchant Taylor's School.

Rev. Ernest Hawkins, Prebendary of St. Paul's, and Minister of Curzon chapel, Mayfair.

Rev. Lord C. A. Harvey, Rector of Chesterford, Essex.

Rev. J. W. Ayre, Incumbent of St. Mark's, North Audley-street.

Henry Hoare, Esq., 14, New-street, Spring-gardens.
T. Chambers, Esq., M.P., 7, Cumberland-place, Hyde-park.

Rev. Henry Alford, Minister of Quebec chapel.

Rev. J. Lawrell, Incumbent of St. Matthew's, City-road.

Rev. W. H. Hoare, Oakfield, Crawley, Sussex.

Rev. J. Paul, Incumbent of Twizworth, Gloucester;
and Rev. A. C. Smith, of St. Andrew's, Holborn, Hon. Secs.

The committee who were requested to consider "what measures it may be expedient to take for promoting union with the Church of England on the part of christians not at present in active communion with her," beg leave to present the following report:—

"The field proposed to the committee being a large one, it seemed desirable to select for consideration one body of christians only, in order to make a commencement.

"The body so selected was that of the Wesleyans.

"They were induced to make this selection by several considerations.

First, because the Wesleyans generally disclaim the designation of Dissenters.

Secondly, because, so far as the committee understand Wesley's own sentiments, he expressed himself to the last most strongly against any separation from the Church of England.

Thirdly, because the apathy of the Church of England herself during the eighteenth century having been, in a great measure, the occasion of that gradual estrangement which has resulted in the present state of things, the Wesleyans appear to have an especial claim upon the church.

Fourthly, because it has been represented to them that there exists on the part of divers excellent Wesleyan ministers, not only a willingness to receive, but a wish for, Episcopal Ordination.

Fifthly, because the Wesleyans have under their influence a large class of persons with whom the influence of the church is comparatively powerless, and to whom they (the Wesleyans) consider that they have a distinct mission, so that the reconciling of a body thus influential seems to be an important first step towards general religious union.

"Having thus determined that the case of the Wesleyans was the case to which their attention ought to be turned in the first instance, the committee had next to consider whether the effort to be made should be an attempt

to conciliate the Wesleyans as a body by means of direct offers to the conference, or,

to clear away difficulties which hamper the consciences of individual ministers, or other members of the Wesleyan body, or otherwise discourage their movement towards the church.

"The former of these courses, after having been fully debated, seemed unlikely to produce any result:

For,

The Wesleyan system, having now become thoroughly organized, and as it were hereditary, appeared incapable of being wrought upon, as a system, except in one of the four following ways:—

"*First*, by formally admitting Wesleyan ministers to officiate co-ordinately with the clergy of the Church of England without having received Episcopal Ordination.

But this, of course, the committee could not entertain, bearing in mind the fundamental principles of the Church of England, as set forth in the Preface to the Ordination Service, and in the 19th, 23rd, and 36th Articles of Religion.

"Or, *secondly*, by inviting all Wesleyan ministers to receive Episcopal Ordination.

But this the committee believed would be met by so much opposition, as would defeat at once any scheme of comprehension.

"Or, *thirdly*, by inviting all Wesleyan ministers to connection with the Church of England, as lay members indeed, but as holding a missionary office. The conditions of such holding would be, that they should resort to the church for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and refrain from ministering it themselves; limiting their functions to the evangelizing of districts or classes which have not been reached, or cannot at present be reached, by the church.