

enemies like these it is very natural that Protestant denominations should begin to belittle their differences, and that the Evangelical Episcopalian should feel that the distance between him and the Presbyterian is a hand breadth compared to the distance between them both and Atheism or Romanism.

The desire for a comprehensive Christian union springs also, partly from taking a practical view of the mission of the Christian Church. One Christian Church has certainly a mission to discharge towards another Christian Church which it believes to be in error. It is certainly the duty of the church, which is in possession of some important truth, to lift up a testimony in its behalf in face of other churches which have lost that truth, or have never found it, just as it is the duty of a soldier that is in possession of a modern rifle, to lift up a testimony in its behalf in face of his comrade who is content to carry to the field a flint-lock gun. But as it would be foolish for the rifleman to refuse to fight under the same banner as the flint-lock man, because, though their hearts were the same, their weapons were different; so, (it is reasoned) it is foolish for the Protestant denominations to spend so much time and temper on the merits of their respective weapons when it is becoming a serious question whether, shoulder to shoulder, they can drive the enemy from the field, or even hold their own, this battle, on it. It would certainly be wrong to make *work* the only end or function of the Christian Church: just as it would be to make doctrine that only end; but as in time past, especially since the reformation, work has been held subordinate to doctrinal soundness, so (it is maintained) the time has come, to make doctrinal differences, on non-essential points, subordinate to practical business, in behalf of a perishing world.

We can well understand how thoughts like these create in intelligent and car-

est Christians a longing for the cessation of inter-denominational strife, and suggest to them the hope of yet seeing a federal republic of Evangelical churches. This longing for a broader brotherhood, good and scriptural in itself, is not, however, without its dangers.

In seeking a comprehensive scheme of union, which may be far away, men should not despise the narrower schemes which are nearer and more practical. There need be, indeed, no antagonism between the larger unions and the smaller ones. The large river that rolls its waters to the ocean, bearing on its bosom the commerce of the nation, has been formed by the union and re-union of r'ulets and streams away among the hills. Soldiers must be enlisted into companies, drilled as regiments, and formed into battalions, before they can take the field as a military division. So before the larger union can be at all practical, the smaller unions must be accomplished. In Israel of old it was the order that families should fall under the banners of their respective tribes, ere the whole camp moved forward. Let each ecclesiastical family then step into its position in its own ecclesiastical tribe, before the tribes gather in the general muster.

But further, in seeking to muster into one camp, the great Christian army, special care must be taken lest we forget to give His own place to the God of the army. God is not necessarily on the side of the greatest army. He can save by few as well as by many.

No service in itself is small,  
None great although the earth it fill,  
But that is small that seeks its own  
And great that seeks God's will.

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\* Our Work in Palestine: being an account of the different expeditions sent out to the Holy Land by the Committee of the Palestine exploration fund, since the establishment of the fund in 1865. Adam, Stevenson & Co., Toronto.

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