

feetly with persons holding such views about the Christian Ministry, Union is impossible. The same writer condescends to an argument, which one had thought to have met with only in a collection of Logical Fallacies. It is this,—“We Presbyterians, admit the validity of Episcopal orders, but they, Episcopalians, will not admit the validity of ours, Ergo, etc.” It is of a piece with the occupant of a schooner inviting one travelling by a powerful steamer to come try the schooner, “For we are quite sure that we in the schooner can cross the Atlantic safely, and we do not believe that you can do so in the steamer, Ergo, etc.”

But a truce to these matters. There are three bodies between which, with a little “give and take” on any part, union might be effected. These are the Congregationalists, the Methodists and the Presbyterians. “The five points,”—well, are they not as good as buried, if not actually dead? Methodism, ecclesiastically, is certainly first cousin to Presbyterianism, and, practically, nothing in the shape of a serious barrier separates us except our respective traditions. So, again, as regards the Congregationalists, doctrinally, etc., we are one—*viz*, practically in all respects save the name of our form of church government. But, as remarked at the outset, whether we can afford the lack of stimulus due to our rivalry with each other is an important question. We might, however, co-operate, it seems to me, more freely, frankly and abundantly than we have heretofore done—meaning by “we,” the three bodies mentioned—especially in missionary work. And as to the Episcopalians, I, for my own part, have not the slightest objection to Presbyterians appointing men to work, in the doing of which they may be most truly called Bishops in name, as they most truly are in reality. Take, e. g., our Superintendent of Missions in the North-West, and our travelling missionary (we call him) in this Presbytery, to say nothing of the Episcopal functions common to all of our Presbyteries.

What I do object to, and even resent, is the assumption that any body of men so called possess exclusive, mystic powers and privileges. As a basis for considering union, faint as is my hope of it, I know of nothing better than the “Resolutions of the Langham Conference,” a copy of which is subjoined:—

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

“We agree—1. In recognizing the Bible as Divine authority, and as the sole ultimate test of doctrine in matters of faith, as is expressed in the sixth article of the Church of England.

“2. In accepting the general teaching of the Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed, including of necessity the doctrines of the Holy Trinity, the incarnation, and the atonement.

“3. In recognizing a substantial connection between the resurrection body and the ‘present body of humiliation.’

“4. That saving faith in Christ is that self-surrender to Him which leads a man to believe what He teaches and to do what He bids, so far as he has opportunities of knowledge.”

THE CHRISTIAN MORALITY.

“We agree 1. In the conviction that it is the duty of the Christian society to consider in the light of the principles, motives and promises of the faith, the problems of domestic, social, and national morality, with a view to concerted action.

“2. That progressive sanctification is essential to the Christian life, so that without it neither professed faith, nor conversion, nor sacraments, nor worship can avail for the salvation of the soul.

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE.

“We agree 1. That the divisions among Christians render the due administration of discipline, in the case of those who openly deny the fundamental truths of Christianity or offend against Christian morality, extremely difficult, and that greater caution should be used in admitting to the privileges of membership those who leave, or are expelled from, the Christian community to which they have belonged.

“2. That, while it is most desirable that this caution should be exercised in all cases of members of one Christian society seeking admission into another, by careful inquiry being made and adequate testimony being required as to their Christian character, this is especially important in regard to those who desire to exercise the ministerial office.”

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

“We agree—1. That Congregationalists can accept and use the treasures of devotion—hymns, collects, liturgies, etc., accumulated by the Church during the Christian ages; and many Nonconformists think that in certain circumstances it is desirable to do so.

“2. That churchmen can accept the use of extempore prayer in public worship; and many churchmen think that in certain circumstances it is desirable to do so.

“3. That rigid uniformity in public worship is undesirable; and that to enforce it by civil penalties is a mistake.”

THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS.

“We agree that, although it is desirable that everyone should seek to know the true doctrine of the sacraments, yet their efficiency does not depend upon such knowledge, but lies, on the one hand, in the due administration of the sacraments “in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same,” and on the other in the use of them with a true desire to fulfil the ordinance of Christ.”

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND MINISTRY.

“1.—We agree—1. That the Catholic Church is a society founded by Christ, the members of which are united to Him and to each other by spiritual ties, which are over and above those that attach to them simply as men.

“2. That these ties depend upon a special union with the person of the one Mediator and a special indwelling of the one spirit.

“The Nonconformist members of the conference are unable to admit—

“1. That the reception of visible sacraments is essential in ordinary cases to the establishment of these ties.

“2. That through the reception of the visible sacraments these ties may subsist, though not forever, in those who not believing and living as Christian people should.

“II.—We agree—1. That Christ has established a perpetual ministry in the Catholic Church.

“2. That no one can rightly exercise this ministry unless he be ordained to it by Christ Himself.

“3. That there is a divinely appointed distinction of office in this ministry.

“The Nonconformist members of the conference are unable to admit—

“1. That there is a divinely appointed three-fold distinction of orders in this ministry.

“2. That external ordination by the laying on of Episcopal hands is necessary for its rightful exercise.”

From Right Rev. Andrew Hunter Dunn, Lord Bishop of Quebec.

SIR,—In reply to the question, I can only refer you to the letter signed by all the Bishops of Canada who were able to take part in our recent General Synod. In the course of these letters you will read as follows. “Many Christian bodies separated from us are working by our side, some in advance of us, both in the foreign field and in the Dominion. We yearn for union with them.

“The General Synod has set forth the position which the Church of England occupies in her desire to recover and restore all Christian bodies that organic unity, which Christ prayed might ever distinguish His Church. The language adopted by the General Synod is as follows:—

“We desire her to make it known, that we adopt and set forth as forming a basis for negotiation with any bodies of our separate Christian brethren, with a view to union, the following articles agreed upon by the Lambeth Conference held in London in the year of our Lord, 1888.

“(1) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things needful to salvation, and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.

“(2) The Apostles’ Creed as the Baptismal Symbol, and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of Christian faith.

“(3) The two sacraments ordained by Christ Himself, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, ministered with unfailing use of Christ’s words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.

“(4) The Historic Episcopate, locally adopted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.”

Now these are exactly my own personal sentiments. I yearn and pray for union with the various Christian bodies, that have separated from us in time gone by. But since we, in the Church of England, have in the Historic Episcopate a sacred trust, which we may not betray, even if we would, the whole question of the possibility of organic unity turns upon the acceptance by our separated brethren of the Episcopate from those who have it from the first for the government of the Church, for the ordaining of the ministers of the Church, and for the administration of the sacred rite of the laying on of hands. If those, who have separated from us, would accept the Historic Episcopate as being of the essence of the constitution of the Church of Christ from the beginning or as being necessary in order to union, if, in fact, they would but accept the four articles agreed upon at the Lambeth Conference, the Church of England would meet them with open arms, and would make, I believe, the very largest concessions as regards Forms of Service and the like. It is not uniformity that we seek, it is Christian unity, so that we may be able, without betraying any principle, to work shoulder to shoulder in the great battle of the Lord.

A. H. QUAKES.

From Rev. Dr. Reid, Ex-Moderator.

SIR,—I may state that at this season of the year, I am incessantly occupied with matters in connection with the General Assembly. My reply, must therefore, be very brief and of a very general character.

You ask first, Whether it is desirable that there should be a union of the various Protestant denominations of Canada? In reply, I would say that no doubt it would be most desirable that there should be a union of the Protestant denominations of Canada, if brought about on the proper basis.

In your second question you ask “Whether a basis of union fairly acceptable to the leading churches could be devised?” Your first question refers to a union of the various Protestant denominations; your second refers to a union among the leading churches. It would be necessary to specify what you mean by the “leading churches,” and I really could not give an opinion as to whether a basis of union fairly acceptable to the leading churches could be devised. My opinion is, that judging from past attempts, it would not be very easy in present circumstances, to agree on a basis of union, fairly acceptable.

Your third question, “As to what extent and what direction, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, would be justified in making concessions for the sake of such a union?” This question is of too great importance to warrant me in expressing any decided opinion. Referring to union generally, my individual opinion is that however desirable it may be, and although I look and long for the union of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, it will not be brought about by ecclesiastical negotiations, or attempts to frame schemes of union, but rather by the growth of spirituality in the church, and a more abundant outpouring of the spirit of God.