

Symposium.

WHAT MAY BE DONE FOR THE MUTUAL APPROACH OF CHRISTIANS OF DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS.

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IN offering my humble contribution to your Symposium, and endeavoring as far as possible to avoid repeating what already has been well said, permission may be asked to endorse and thereby emphasize for the sake of a reasonable completeness, points already made. The Symposium, as I take it, is itself a step in advance of the position that denominationalism is to be justified in its continuance. Some stirring history and genuine heroism are to be found in the geneses of our leading denominations, but the history would be the grander by the blending of the records which would then witness to the development of Christian life, and not to its distraction. With Prof. Campbell, I heartily wish that we could bury the inter-Protestant hatchet, and thus far let the dead past bury its dead.

Our denominational nomenclature is adverse to mutual approach. It is not by any means certain that in popular estimation a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, names have their influence. I do not know of any child named Judas. Even the heroic tradi-

tion set to grand music in Judas Maccabeus has not redeemed the name from the traitor taint. There is power in a name, and Paul realized this when with such emphasis he rebuked "the Church of God which is at Corinth," for specifying their divisions. Our names are badges of distinction, and alas! of distinction among those whose rule of faith and practice requires of them that they "be perfected together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." The Presbyterian is thereby set to defend his Presbyterianism, the Anglican his Liturgy and orders, the Methodist to exalt John Wesley, the Independent his individuality, the Baptist his exclusive baptism. Even "the brethren" are set for the defense of their brotherhood, which is as difficult to find as the whole of a shattered glass. Supposing we were to agree to assume the name "the Church of God" of the Anglican order, of the Presbyterian persuasion, etc., we should at least get at the first principle that the Church of God is over all our isms, and declare it. I would not ignore names as historic landmarks, but we