

of Jesus Christ, the one Church of Christ, and liberty in the interpretation of the Scriptures, are the basis of mutual fellowship, cooperation in missions, and the prevention of unwholesome rivalries.* This is, perhaps, as wise and satisfactory a basis as any proposed, yet it embraces no confession of the Holy Spirit as the only source of regeneration, and "discipleship of Jesus Christ" is a vague term, easily perverted, which in these days would be held by twenty different sects in as many different senses.

One noticeable feature about this movement toward outward if not organic unity, which will be objectionable to many, is the widespread tendency to embrace if possible not only the Greek, but Roman Church in the alliance; and, in the popular cry for "charity," there is a new difficulty created—viz., the risk of appearing disloyal to love, in seeking to be loyal to the Lord Himself. Sometimes one is compelled to speak out plainly, at risk of being misunderstood, for a politic silence may be tacit consent to error, or even treason against truth. We may at least venture to ask a question or two. First, of what use is an external formal unity with internal division and dissension? The Roman Catholic Church is nominally one, but it represents beliefs widely differing, from the practically Calvinistic Jansenists, to the Jesuits who believe most of all in their own infallibility. The Anglican Church is nominally one, but there is within it a ritualistic High Church, a rationalistic Broad Church, and an evangelical Low Church, and the fiercest war is waging within the ecclesiastical landmarks. Is not a nominal division, with real sympathy and amity, more the unity for which our Lord prayed, than a nominal union covering a real division?

Some schemes of Church unity would never embrace all Christians. Some, who must be reckoned among the truest and holiest believers, cannot conscientiously join hands with Romanism; for to them this is a question not of forbearing with minor differences, but of tolerating fundamental errors in doctrine and practice. To ask them to countenance, even indirectly, the worship of the Host in the mass, the intercession of saints, penance, purgatory, the abominations of the confessional, the idolatry of the Virgin and Joseph, the infallibility of the Pope, the surrender of the right of private judgment, and the withholding of the Scriptures from the people, is to ask them to wink at ten of the deadliest errors ever known in Church history, and they simply cannot do it. To them, moreover, the papal power represents not only a *church*, but a *kingdom*. A church has

* The Committee on Christian Unity, consisting of Rev. Drs. W. H. Ward, S. W. Dike, A. H. Quint, and George E. Hall reported, recommending as a basis of union:

1. The acceptance of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments inspired by the Holy Ghost to be the only authoritative revelation of God to man.
2. Discipleship of Jesus Christ, the Divine Savior and Teacher of the world.
3. The Church of Christ, which is His body, whose great mission it is to preach His Gospel to the world.
4. Liberty of conscience in the interpretation of the Scriptures and the administration of the Church.

Such an alliance of the churches should have regular meetings of their representatives, and should have for its object among others: 1. Mutual acquaintance and fellowship. 2. Cooperation in foreign and domestic missions. 3. The prevention of rivalries between competing churches in the same field.