

If my fellow-churchman honestly accepts the four Articles, have I any right to demand more of him? Or have I any right to limit (for this, of course, is implied in the sufficiency of the Nicene Creed) his Christian liberty of holding and maintaining whatever opinions outside that creed or as interpretations of it, commend themselves to him as Scriptural and Catholic?

12. The bearing and importance of this position might be shown at large did time permit; but let me take as an illustration one crucial question—the question which lies at the root of most, if not all, the internal divisions of the Anglican communion in our day—the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist.

The second of the Articles of Union binds all who accept it to agree that outside the Nicene Creed, all questions in controversy among Christians shall cease to be regarded as upon matters fundamental and shall be accounted within the limits of free thought. Now, the Holy Eucharist is not so much as mentioned in the Creed. It will follow that it will be open to all Christians who come into this union to hold and teach what theories most commend themselves to them respecting the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

Now, the rest of Christendom has not yet accepted this basis of union; the Anglican Church has. She has done more than accept it; she has propounded it; she is herself the author of it. Does it not, then, follow that it is now open to members of our own Church to hold without reproach any theory upon the Presence which they may be persuaded is true? (The Clergy, of course, are now bound to reject one theory.) And why is it not as absurd now within the Anglican Church as it would be if the whole of Christendom were united on this basis, for us to reproach one another as Romanizers on the one hand, or as un-Catholic on the

other, because we may be convinced that one particular theory is Scriptural, and because we use our liberty to teach it? By issuing the Basis of Union we have declared our conviction that its adoption would heal the divisions on doctrine of the Church Universal. Must not then its real acceptance by our own Church, when we come to understand what we have done, heal the bitter controversies among Anglican Christians on this great and mysterious subject?

Supposing, *per impossibile*, that the Roman Church in the United States should agree to our basis of re-union, and that the Lutheran, Presbyterian and Methodist bodies, accepting the Episcopate, should together with it come into organic union with our sister Church there, what would be the situation? Those bodies, so long as they remained separate organizations, would be free to continue to hold and teach each its own present doctrine upon the Eucharist, only not now as Catholic Dogma, the denial of which is heresy. In that case, how could it be heresy for any member of any one body to embrace as an opinion to his mind certainly true, the doctrine held and taught in any other of the organically united bodies? It is evident that in such case reproaches of treason for adopting and maintaining any of those particular theories would be absurd, inasmuch as they had been ruled out as dogmas, and had been declared as matters of opinion, all within the region of free thought.

I must here guard myself against being understood to say or think that the propounding of the Four Articles of Union by our Church made anything lawful or unlawful for us to hold in the Church of England, which was not so before. The fact is, it has always been within the rights of members of the Church of England to hold any opinion they were convinced was true respecting the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The exception is that