

we accept the many expressions of anxiety to be delivered from them as a sign among us of God's purpose at the present time.

'The official letter of the Bishops of the Anglican Communion, assembled in Conference at Lambeth in 1878, already suggested "the Observance throughout our Communion of a Season of Prayer for the Unity of Christendom," as well as intercession for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom. The Lambeth Conference of 1888 "commended this matter of Reunion to the special prayers of all Christian people, both within and (so far as it might rightly do so) without our Communion," in preparation for opportunities of further action. Similar desires have been expressed by Eastern Churches. Conferences have been held between leading men of various communities. Almost all the Christian bodies known among us, including the Roman Communion, have, by their heads, requested that prayers should be offered this last Whitsuntide for grace to attain to so great a consummation.

'In thankfulness to the One Spirit for these manifold signs of His operation, the whole Christian Church will consider both the duty of continued movement towards this Divine end, and will also mark all forms of action likely to hinder or invalidate such movement. Peril there would be to us in any haste which would sacrifice part of our trust, and in any narrowness which would limit our vision of Christendom.

'The expansion in late years of our knowledge of the religious spirit and work of the past, the revived and cultivated love of primitive order, and the enthusiasm for repairing failure or carelessness in the acknowledgment of things divine have yielded happy results; and yet we cannot conceal from ourselves that owing to the attractiveness of appearances (rather than of realities) some things have been introduced among us which find no true place in the religious life of the English Church. Evidence of this appears in the introduction of manuals for teaching and of observances which do not even halt at mediævalism, but merely reproduce modern Roman innovations in ritual and doctrine.

'On the other hand, while the stern love of truth is still our inheritance from our fathers of the Reformation, there is some danger lest we should forget that every

age does and ought to shed new lights on truth. To refuse to admit such light, and its inherent warmth is to forfeit the power of seeing things as they are and to lose the vigour of growth. It is in fact to limit ourselves finally to a conventional use of hard formulas.

'The aspiration after Unity, if it be intelligent, is a vast one. It cannot limit itself to restoring what is pictured of past outward unity. It must take account of Eastern Churches, of non-episcopal Reformed Churches and bodies, on the Continent, at home, and among the multiplying populations of the new world, as well as of the Christianising of Asia and Africa under extraordinarily varying conditions.

'The Roman Communion in which Western Christendom once found Unity has not proved itself capable of retaining its hold on nations which were all its own.

'At this moment it invites the English people into reunion with itself, in apparent unconsciousness of the position and history of the English Church. It parades before us modes of worship and rewards of worship the most repugnant to Teutonic Christendom and to nations which have become readers of the Bible. For the unquestioned kindness which now invites our common prayers, already gladly offered, we are thankful. All Christian Churches must rejoice in the manifestation of a spirit of love. The tenderness of unfeigned Christian charity can never be wasted. But this happy change of tone, and the transparent sincerity of the appeal, make the inadequacy of its conception of Unity more patent. Recognition might have lent a meaning to the mention of reunion. But, otherwise, what is called reunion would not only be our farewell to all other Christian races, all other Churches; but we are to begin by forgetting our own Church, by setting aside truth regained through severe sacrifice, cherished as our very life, and believed by us to be the necessary foundation of all union. Union solid and permanent can be based only on the common acknowledgment of truth.

'On the other hand, History appears to be forcing upon the Anglican Communion an unsought position, an overwhelming duty from which it had hitherto shrunk. It has no need to state or to apologise for this. Thinkers, not of its own fold, have boldly foreshadowed the obligation which