

severed in our views of truth or duty, it will be easy to believe in one another's honesty, in one another's loyalty to the Church, in one another's loyalty to conscience. Granted that this charitable trust might at times be sorely strained; that one side or the other might go to very exasperating extremes of statement; still, the very fact that each party has the right to hold and defend the views they have adopted, must at once soften the manner of controversy, and in time altogether remove it. Brothers could come together to discuss in a friendly way the questions on which they differed, and would then certainly find themselves a great deal closer in thought and feeling than they had imagined, and would part probably each not so absolutely certain that he held the whole truth and his brother no part of it.

9. But now comes the question, How far may we carry out consistently with loyalty to Christ and his Church this toleration of diversity of opinion and liberty of prophesying?

First, is such toleration right in itself, and, if right, what are its limits?

Plainly the principle is here sanctioned by St. Paul. He insists that both parties should be free to hold and teach their several opinions, though he declares one to be mistaken; and not that only, but, what strains the principle of toleration much more, free to carry out those opinions in the ritual and outward observances of the Church, before the eyes of their fellow-Christians to whom such observances gave great offence.

Here the principle of liberty is sanctioned, must we not say, by the Holy Ghost Himself, "who spake by the prophets?"

10. That there are limits to such toleration is undeniable, since we are to "contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered;" and "if any man come to us and bring not that faith" with him, we

are forbidden "so much as to receive him into our houses."

What, then, are the limits? The answer is simple and decisive. The limits have been laid down authoritatively within the last decade of years by the entire Anglican Communion, as voiced by the Lambeth Conference. In the Basis of Reunion formulated by the Anglican Church and held out as an olive branch to all who profess and call themselves Christians, she proposes that outside the Four Necessary Things, religious opinion and ritual shall be free; and in particular, that the Nicene Creed shall be accepted as the sufficient statement of the Christian Faith.

Now here one remark is necessary:—These Articles of Union are not a compromise. Nor are they a new scheme of religion framed by the Anglican Church. They are simply the old religion of Christians from the beginning. The Anglican Church in proposing them did not mean to sacrifice one iota of the Faith of the Gospel. What she meant to say was this: 'The one Catholic Church of Christ has never required her members to believe more than is laid down in the Nicene Creed. What is now proposed is simply a reunion upon the basis of the old faith once delivered, which has been held universally from the beginning. We believe it to be the mind of the Holy Ghost that no greater burden than these necessary things should be imposed upon the consciences of men.'

11. Now, a moment's thought will show that a result of the greatest importance follows from these facts. If I have given a faithful account of what the Anglican Church meant to do, does not her action bind us, who are already fellow-members in that Church, to accept the same as the true criterion of what is necessary and what is not necessary, what is free and what is binding for union and brotherhood among ourselves?