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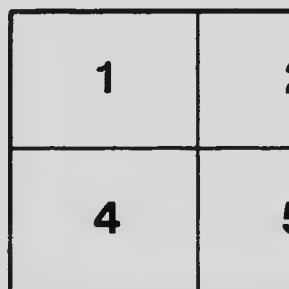
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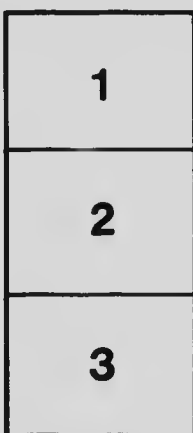
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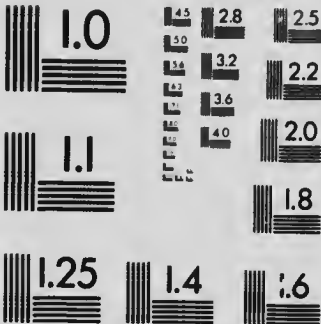
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CHURCH UNION

QUOUSQUE

OUR BISHOPS AND CHURCH UNION

Are our Bishops justified in endorsing a Union :

(a) BUILT ON SAND;

OR

(b) ON A DISSECTED AND DISCREDITED BIBLE ?

- (1) "First Things First."
- [2] "My people will not consider"—*isa. 1:3.*
- [3] "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"—*Amos 3:3.*
- [4] "A foolish man which built upon the sand."—*Matt. 7:26.*
- [5] "So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar."—*Ez. 13:14.*

ANGELICAN CHURCH OF CANADA
GENERAL SYNOD, ARCHIVES

QUOUSQUE

OUR BISHOPS AND CHURCH UNION

"An Appeal on Behalf of Christian Unity" was distributed nearly a year ago, among certain of the clergymen of our church throughout the Dominion. This matter has been revived and recently found its way into our daily press.

Some are troubled that upon this question there should be apparently a difference between our Bishops and our clergy. Is it not, however, the case, that both Bishops and clergy earnestly desire Union and co-operation, and simply differ as to the best means of accomplishing this object?

I have not seen the protest said to have been made by their Lordships to the appeal referred to, but am not the least surprised that they should have felt it their duty to utter a public warning to members, lay and clerical, lest through this attempt at "unity" an increase of "dis-union" should result; and that our church in seeking to remove a presumed injustice to non-Episcopalians, should be doing so by disloyalty to Christian verity.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Bishops might well have taken exception to the expression in "the appeal" that "the most important problem before the religious world to-day is the problem of Christian unity." It may have been, that in the opinion of the Episcopate, it was a matter of much greater importance that the church should possess the Spirit from which alone will come the oneness for which Christ prayed the Father, than have a union on any other basis.

The four chapters preceding the 17th of St. John give us the true preparation for union and present the Spirit which, pervading the souls of believers, the union prayed for follows—abiding in Christ—obedience to Christ's commandments—loving one another—and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Who will guide into all truth. These are the vital matters from which a spiritual union proceeds, and which many consider to be the "unity" for which our Lord prayed. This may be followed in time by an organized or visible Union, which is apparently the practical result to which "the appeal" refers. That living and essential Union which binds true believers together in the fellowship of Christ cannot be obtained by the sacrifice of truth. Truth must be maintained if the union is to be a "Christian Union." We must be careful lest in making "Christian Unity" "the most important problem" we do not sacrifice truth, and in, it may be an honest effort to enlarge the platform of unity, we do not create a larger measure of dis-union by driving therefrom those who are too loyal to Christ and His Gospel to accept of a standard other than that which He Himself set.

Lasting Union must be based upon the truth and in seeking for it we must therefore follow the injunction of the apostle, "first pure, then peaceable," and of our Lord and Master, who ever placeth first things first.

Very probably our Bishops considered that the great need of our church to-day, was a spiritual awakening. That there should be an earnest season of united prayer from one end of the Dominion to the other. That we should thus seek for and obtain the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the preparation of heart which would draw us all into the true union by making us one in Christ. If this be so, many will heartily concur in the conclusion of their Lordships that thus and thus alone shall "all be one . . ." "that the world may believe." "Break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you," Hosea 10:12.

CAN TWO WALK TOGETHER EXCEPT THEY BE AGREED?

Our Bishops might also well have thought that it is useless to talk of a Union unless you present distinctly the ground on which that Union is to be based. No body of men was ever more anxious for Union than the "World's Evangelical Alliance." Their prayer, their life work was to fulfill the statement "unum corpus sumus in Christo," but these men felt how absolutely futile it was to present this petition unless they proclaimed the ground on which their structure of Unity was to be built. They therefore thus clearly presented their objects:

OBJECTS

"The Evangelical Alliance was founded in 1846 to enable Christians of Evangelical and Protestant churches throughout the world to realize in themselves, and to manifest to others that living and essential Union which binds all true believers together in the fellowship of Christ." Their test of membership is stated with equal clearness.

CONDITIONS OF UNION

"Admitted as members of the World's Evangelical Alliance who, acknowledging the Divine Inspiration, Authority and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, believe in one God: the Father; the Son, Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour Who died for our sins and rose again; and the Holy Spirit, Whom they desire to have fellowship with all who form the One Body of Christ."

There is no use in wearying people with an oft-repeated general statement as to "Union." To do so becomes more and more an exhibition of weakness. The time has come to cease playing with the matter, and to present in definite terms a platform for a splendid Union of all Protestant Religious Bodies in an aggressive warfare for the work of our Master. If we do not definitely define our position we shall begin in misunderstanding and end in discord.

HUMILIATING NON-EPISCOPALIANS

(3) But even if their Lordships did not feel inclined to lay the same stress on the statements set out in clauses I. and II. as I have done, surely it would be impossible for them to lend themselves to the following portion of the appeal which furnishes the lines on which proposed action should be taken.

"We believe that the Cause of Christian Unity would be promoted by such practical steps as the two following:

(a) By the admission of Ministers of other Churches under certain restrictions and by rightful authority to the pulpits of our Churches.

(b) By permission being given to members of other communions—being members in good standing in their communion—on occasion and with consent of the Ordinary, to communicate in our churches."

Such action is referred to as "acts of Christian courtesy and good will," and as to them it is said,

"That the official recognition of such fraternal acts would be welcomed by many members of our own and of other Communions as a sincere effort on our part to put into practise the sentiments of brotherly love so often expressed by our lips."

COURTESY OR DISCOURTESY!

It would appear to me that those non-Episcopal churches which claim to belong to "the Church Universal," by tracing back their doctrine, teaching and practice, to the time of the Founder of our religion might reasonably feel that a grievous wrong was done them by an Episcopalian Body which claims to belong to the "Holy Catholic Church," in tendering a precarious and limited, almost secret communion in the doubtful circuitous and demeaning fashion indicated in this appeal. Do these "Signatories" really think that these men, claiming to be Episcopalian, they in fact are, non-Episcopalian full

brethren, of Episcopalians consider the throwing to them an odd bone or crumb from the Historic Episcopate Table, will be looked upon as "acts of courtesy and good will," and expressive of "sentiments of brotherly love." Could they consider these to be "acts of courtesy and goodwill—fraternal acts," or expressive of "sentiments of brotherly love"? I should not like as a member of the Church of England to insult our brethren of the non-Episcopal bodies by making such an overture to them. You need not delay a day in expressing in the most acceptable, legitimate manner "sentiments of courtesy, good will and brotherly love" by becoming co-workers with them in the British Bible Society, the Tract Society, Temperance, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., the Evangelical Alliance and the large number of Religious associations which at present only know the Church of England by its aloofness.

FACE THE REAL DIFFICULTY

(4) Is it not time for us in the interest of Union to face that question, made by a large number of the members of the Church of England an absolute bar to our Union with other religious non-Episcopal bodies? It is by them claimed that the Historic Episcopate is necessary to the very existence of a true Church. That therefore the Church of England would be untrue to itself if it entered into a Union with non-Episcopal Churches. The members that hold this teaching as to the Historic Episcopate claim alone to be the Church of England, and repudiate those who, while they approve and adopt this form of church government, do not consider it to be necessary to the existence of a true Church of God.

WHAT SAY OUR ARTICLES?

The terms on which Union can be properly effected can never be settled rightly or in a lasting form until this question is solved. Let us see the limitations laid down in "the Articles of the Church," which contain "the true doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's Word," and learn whether they warrant the conclusion that the "Historic Episcopate" is necessary to the existence of a true Church of God.

Article 6.—"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

Article 20.—"The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in controversies of Faith: and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another, wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree anything against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of Salvation."

Article 21.—"Wherefore things ordained by them (general councils) as necessary to Salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture."

Article 34.—"It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been diverse, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. . . . Every particular or national church hath authority to ordain, change and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying."

Article 19.—"The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's Ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

From these quotations it is evident that the test of the Church of England as to its Faith—teaching—the requisites to Salvation—its rites and ceremonies is the Holy Scripture, which is made the supreme arbiter in all matters affecting our Church. Therefore in dealing with the question of the Historic Episcopate we are driven to this touchstone: What saith the Scripture?!

A most careful study of the New Testament appears to lead clearly to the two following conclusions:

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

(a) From St. Matthew to the Book of Revelation the plan of salvation is given by its Founder, and His apostles and disciples with absolute fulness, distinctness and clearness. The instruction found in the parables presented, the lives lived, the miracles wrought, gave to each of those who were to be His witnesses, the great Evangel which was to be spread abroad from one end of the world to the other.

NO EXCLUSIVE FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

(b) But with all these details as to the message, no plan, form or organization for delivering it is laid down or defined. This is a matter left to the messenger, whether he be Peter or Stephen or Philip, and the machinery to be used may from time to time be introduced as the surroundings and circumstances might demand. This view has been so strengthened as to make it incontrovertible by the general consensus of opinion of those who have diligently studied the Scriptures in order to understand what they teach. We here learn that while no question is left open as to the message itself, the manner of delivery, save only as to the Sacraments ordained of Christ, is a matter in respect of which no specific regulation is found in the Scriptures. The Episcopal form of government not being there, the one method prescribed for the regulation of our Churches, under the Articles above referred to we are not bound to accept it as an Article of the Faith. The Church of England has therefore no right to set it up as the exclusive form of church government, nor has it the right to endeavor to compel other churches to adopt it, nor has it the right to accuse them of schism because they do not do so. On the contrary it makes itself a schismatic church if it refuses communion with non-Episcopal bodies simply because they do not adopt the Episcopal form of church government.

IS THE HISTORIC EPISCOPATE NECESSARY TO THE EXISTENCE OF A CHURCH?

If certain members of our Church insist upon the absolute necessity of the recognition of the Historic Episcopate and that the non-Episcopal churches proposing Union must accept of this form of government as a term of Union, is it not but fair for them openly to say so? Then we shall have a definite starting point and can without delay place the matter before the governing body in our Church so that an utterance upon the subject may be obtained. Those that feel really desirous of Christian Unity should seek to have the difficulty in question removed. It would be well that our non-Episcopal brethren should know that there is a large number in the Church of England in Canada who do not desire that the claims of some as to the Historic Episcopate should form a bar in the way of inter-communion.

HAVE THIS POINT DEFINITELY SETTLED

If it be true as stated in your appeal that there is a "vital necessity for combination and co-operation in the mission field," and that "without co-operation the evangelization of the world is considered, humanly speaking, impossible," then surely a very grave responsibility rests upon all those who put forward a form of church government, not insisted upon in God's Word, as a reason for keeping apart the churches. We must strike at the root of the matter before we can expect the co-operation of the non-Episcopal religious bodies, and before we can have the result presented by our blessed Lord in His High Priestly prayer.

Much valuable information is found in the work of the late Archbishop Whately, "Apostolical Succession Considered," Longman's, 1912. This is a volume that should be read by the members of our churches interested in this question. I only quote from a statement of Dr. Drury, Bishop of Ripon, found in the Appendix.

BISHOP DRURY ON THE QUESTION

"It is argued that as Christ intended a continuous succession, and as that succession, so far as we can see, has always been maintained, therefore ministerial gifts, and even the grace of Christ's Sacraments, can only be assured to us by an Episcopally ordained ministry.

"From this mechanical theory we wholly dissent on Scriptural grounds, historical grounds, and on our position as members of the Church of England. God's covenant of grace is clearly laid down in Scripture, and we cannot point to a single passage which even hints at any such condition of that covenant. We have, it is true, the two Sacraments, the Divinely appointed seals of the covenant, which none can without utmost peril wilfully reject. But it is nowhere stated that Episcopal ordination is essential either to the Sacraments, or to the covenant which they seal, or to the grace which they convey. God's grace is entirely free and untrammelled."

MOULD THE SCRIPTURES TO SUIT THE NEED

During this month the matter has again been taken up. In a statement handed out by "one of the clergymen at the meeting" where "the Church Unity League was organized, in explaining the movement, he gave the following as the reason of its existence: "*As the Christian Church has largely restated its position in regard to the Scriptures*, so it is now reviewing its ecclesiastical systems, that it may separate what is essential from what is more or less incidental." No contradiction has appeared of this statement. The review of the ecclesiastical systems is to go hand in hand with the restatement of the position of the Church "in regard to the Scriptures." On which of the many positions taken, dissecting and discrediting the Scriptures is the work for so-called Union to be carried on? What portions of the Scriptures are to be omitted? What standing ground is given to those who believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and as it stands, it is the touchstone to be applied to all the matters raised in connection with the question of Union? In an age when the Articles of the Faith are so largely questioned, those who hold the Faith as held by the apostles and taught by our Lord must be very zealous of His honor. While we may respect the convictions of others that we may meet on an avowedly Christian platform, we cannot work together with them for Union while in the most essential matter that can be presented, the rock on which we stand, the basis on which all her conclusions are based, there is an entire disagreement.

"Can two walk together except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3. We cannot join in building upon sand. Our building daubed with untempered mortar must surely fall.

WHAT SAY THE BISHOPS?

But passing over meantime, this fundamental obstacle in the way of united action, let me simply say that it would be a matter of very great disappointment if our Bishops did not on this ground make a determined protest, to which all the Church would give ear, or join on a basis of division from a want of accord in respect of the foundation principles of the movement and increase division in place of making for peace and union.

SETTLE FUNDAMENTALS

Is there not a lack of wisdom in attempting to promote Christian Union until it is determined, (a) whether or not according to the Articles of our Church, the Bible, as we now have it is the inspired Word of God, and we heartily acknowledge that "Thy Word is truth"; and (b) whether or not we can so far drop or modify the teaching as to the Historic Episcopate, as to admit that a Church of

God with which we unite may exist without it. I believe we desire Christian unity and are ready to promote it. Our friends in the other churches may very fairly say to us, "You propose to know us better and that we should meet and discuss the grounds on which our divisions are based and promote a cordial, mutual understanding." And answer: "Begin at once, become members of and attend the meetings of the societies and associations before referred to, do not study our differences, but recognize the great central truth, our oneness in Christ, human accretions will then soon be lightly esteemed, and in co-working and co-operation our divisions will disappear or be largely lessened."

WHAT THE LEAGUE APPLAUDED!

The newspapers tell us that "some magnificent addresses were delivered" at the opening meeting, and examples were given of these oratorical efforts, such as:

(a) "Is it the belief of anyone that if a Presbyterian minister came into my pulpit it would split the church? The thing seems to me unthinkable."

(b) "You may be sure if there is anything in your religion which tends to drive you away from your brother man there is something wrong about it, it should draw us together rather than drive us apart."

(c) "The Church of the future will consider members of other churches and recognize them as brothers and the whole will be knit together in one compact mass for the salvation of the world."

(d) "Wouldn't you like to meet John Bunyan, Francis of Assisi, Thomas a Kempis? How can we refuse to "recognize" on earth those who will be stars in the spiritual firmament hereafter? Will there not arise some sense of shame to remember hereafter that we refused to recognize them on earth." It is stated that "the applause which greeted some of the statements of the speakers was of a tumultuous character."

INCONCLUSIVE CONCLUSIONS THE BASIS OF THE LEAGUE'S ACTION

Now what have all the above questions to do with "Church Union" or "Christian Unity," or the Christian Churches working together "as one"?

(a) It is asked, What might be the effect of a Presbyterian minister lighting, it might be from an aeroplane, in the pulpit of St. James the Apostle, Montreal? It is only partially answered by the speaker, who says "that it would split the church," "seems to me unthinkable." But how does this aid the great question of "Church Union"? Then again, it would depend upon so many matters as to which no information is given us, "Was the Rector in the pulpit when this invasion took place? The state of repair of the pulpit and the material of which it was made. The impact of the non-Episcopalian as with militant or non-militant intent he took possession so softly and courteously, that he did not "split the Church"—without further information the matter "is unthinkable." It would indeed be surprising if at the close of this paragraph there was not "applause of a tumultuous character, especially from all present who had a sense of humor."

PEACE AT ANY PRICE

(b) How can this statement help us to true union? Our blessed Lord's words are: "I came not to send peace but a sword—unfortunately, to-day the world hates "the narrow way," and the "first things" of Christ, and desires to draw all into "the broad way." Our Lord demands of us that we should, irrespective of consequences, witness for Him. The world will not bear this testimony and our Lord warns us again, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The world hates you if you are faithful and thus brings in separation. The League's panacea is a dead level of worldliness, in place of a union of Spirit-filled men who by their lives touch and awaken their fellow-men. You cannot have a union of light and darkness. God calls His people to be in the world and

yet not of the world. "Be ye separate." "What communion hath light with darkness?" May God lead us to some better basis of union than that which is referred to in (b).

(c) This is a prognosis. Many are thus working with our brethren of other Churches, but it does not help us in working out the means by which a general union is to be accomplished.

AD CAPTANDUM STATEMENTS

(d) Is not this going very far afield from that which we are considering? We are asked, "Wouldnt' you like to meet John Bunyan" and other great men named? There is no danger that we should refuse "to recognize them on earth." If they were to visit us on earth we should give them garden parties, great meetings at Massey Hall, and, as we have done, would make much of them. Toronto would be all astir, as it was when Moody, Grubb, Varley, Rainsford, McNeill and other great evangelists came among us. But how does that help us in the question of Church Union? There is no question that we do and will continue to "recognize" such men. We are not dealing with recognizing individual people, but with the complex and far-reaching question of forming a union of churches comprehending millions of people throughout our Dominion with different forms of church government and diverse views on many matters of religion on which some lay great stress and others pass by as of no moment. A work which can be consummated only by the Founder of our religion through the indwelling Spirit of the living God entering into the hearts of those assembled with one accord in one place who have with incessant prayer asked and looked for and await the Pentecostal blessing.

What has the League done to help us in the movement to answer the prayer of our Lord and Master, "that they may be one as we are"? We must begin afresh and on Rock and not on sand.

MAKE 1913 THE *ANNUS MIRABILIS!*

Shall we not with one voice and heart earnestly entreat our God to make 1913 to be remembered as the year in which throughout the whole Dominion the Spirit-filled members of our churches turned unto the Lord with full purpose of heart and with deep contrition mourned over their ingratitude, their apathy, their worldliness, their greed for gain, the selfishness of their lives and their forgetfulness of the marvellous holiness of God. They deplored that while God looked for them as His witnesses in the midst of a perverse and crooked generation they failed Him and were witnesses for the world, its pleasures and its sins—and then determined that in God's strength and through the grace, light and power of the Holy Spirit the great year of a never-to-be-forgotten spiritual revival should be ushered in. A year in which the whole Church Universal was awakened to a sense of its responsibility for the work of Christ and the members offered themselves as vessels set apart for the Master's service. A year in which was caught the spirit of our Lord, and the Church thus prepared carried His message throughout the length and breadth of the Dominion, and thence throughout the world, until all people from the rising to the setting of the sun heard the glad tidings from those coming to seek the lost. God is waiting to bless us and make us a blessing and to grant these great mercies, so that we shall become a people, not so much known for their vast wheat fields and waterways, but as the people that distribute the Bread of Life and the Water of Life wherever hungry and thirsty souls are found. God in His abundant mercy grant it.

S. H. BLAKE.

Toronto, 46 Maple Ave.
31st May, 1913.



