

THE
Church Review

FOUNDED 1848

EDITED BY THE REV. HENRY MASON BAUM

VOLUME LVII

APRIL, 1890

PUBLISHED IN

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THE
Church Review

VOLUME LVII. * APRIL, 1890

Christian Reunion.

On the Basis Proposed by the Lambeth Conference.

WE thought it would be, not only a courteous act, but that it was due to representative men of the chief Christian Communions in this country, to offer them an opportunity to say in the pages of the CHURCH REVIEW how far they were willing to accept the basis for Christian Reunion proposed by the Lambeth Conference. Invitations to write were sent out to several leading clergymen of each Communion here represented, and we are glad to state that they were accepted, with but three or four exceptions.

Before entering upon the discussion of the basis proposed for Christian Reunion, we give so much of the Report of the Lambeth Conference of 1888 as relates to the subject.

Representative bishops and priests of the English and American Churches will reply, in our July issue, to these distinguished contributors to the great subject now under fraternal consideration. The replies will be written for the purpose of giving more definite information upon the points raised in these articles and not for the sake of controversy.

EDITOR.

ENCYCLICAL LETTER.

TO THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST JESUS, GREETING: —

WE, Archbishops, Bishops Metropolitan, and other Bishops of the Holy Catholic Church, in full communion with the Church of England, one hundred and forty-five in number, all having superintendence over Dioceses or lawfully commissioned to exercise Episcopal functions therein, assembled from divers parts

Methodists have no doubt as to their possession of both these, nor have they any doubt that the ministers of the Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregational, and Lutheran bodies are true ministers, not only of CHRIST, but of His visible Church. Entertaining no doubt of their own authority as ministers of the Gospel and of the visible Church, they do not feel the need of what is called the Historic Episcopate, nor would they under any circumstances or for any result place themselves in a position where an exchange with the ministers of other denominations would be a breach of propriety or of Church order; or where an invitation to the ministers of such Churches to administer the Holy Communion, or to perform any function, or exercise any prerogative, of the Christian ministry, would be a violation of the letter or the spirit of the laws of such an organization.

It is at this point that all the difficulties centre. If the "large freedom and variety on secondary points of doctrine, worship, and discipline, without interference with existing conditions of property and endowment," could be allowed, and the Historic Episcopate could be so held as not to put the intolerable burden of unchurching (a "vile word," but expressive of the thought) other Christian bodies, upon some such basis, "under GOD'S gracious providence, a reunited Church might rest."

Yours sincerely,

J. M. BUCKLEY.

THE REV. HOWARD CROSBY, D.D., LL.D. [PRESBYTERIAN],
NEW YORK CITY.

EDITOR OF THE CHURCH REVIEW, SIR:

WILL you excuse me from preparing an elaborate opinion on the Basis of Christian Union proposed by the Lambeth Conference? I can put my views in a few words; they are these: —

1. The Lambeth propositions I believe to have sprung from the best of motives.

2. The external union of the whole Church of CHRIST under one government is not desirable. The endeavor to accomplish this end led to the frightful and bloody scenes of the fourth century; and when the end was gained, the Church became a political power of worldliness and tyranny.

3. The true union of the Church of CHRIST is spiritual, to be marked by brotherly love.

4. Bible doctrine and *local* government are the soul and body of the Church.

5. Externals should give way before spiritual life. Where the spirit of the LORD is, there is liberty.

6. The Apostles' (?) Creed and the Nicene Creed are man's creation long after the Apostles' day, and are imperfect statements. I deem the Apostles' Creed wrong in saying that our LORD *descended* into hell or hades. He went to *Paradise*, and when Paul went to Paradise, he was caught *up*. I believe that article of the Apostles' Creed was derived from a false interpretation of 1 Peter iii. 19, in the third century. I object to the Nicene Creed as entering into philosophical speculation, when it should have been content with the Scripture statement that "the Word is GOD." The Council of Nice was a disgraceful meeting in a corrupt age.

7. "The Historic Episcopate" is an ambiguous phrase. The Historic Episcopate of the first century was a parochial Episcopate. The Historic Episcopate afterward was Diocesan, Metropolitan, and Provincial, and finally Papal. Hence the ambiguity of the phrase.

8. All the Churches of CHRIST should recognize one another in all things and not allow mere external peculiarities to keep them in apparent hostility.

9. The blame for Christian schisms is with those who magnify externals and so bar off spiritual union.

10. There is no schism where there is mutual love and respect.

These ten propositions present my views of the subject better than I could give them in an essay.

Very truly yours,

HOWARD CROSBY.

THE REV. TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D.D. [DUTCH REFORMED],
NEW YORK CITY.

EDITOR OF THE CHURCH REVIEW, SIR:

THE mutual recognition and fraternal co-operation of the existing Evangelical Communion would be a far better evidence of the oneness of the Church than any external bond of union such as is proposed.