

THE  
**Church Review**

FOUNDED 1848

EDITED BY THE REV. HENRY MASON BAUM

VOLUME LVII

APRIL, 1890

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THE  
**Church Review**

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VOLUME LVII. \* APRIL, 1890

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**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

2. The statement in regard to the Scriptures might be improved, but still may be accepted as it is.

3. The Nicene Creed is wholly inadequate as a statement of doctrine, because it makes no mention of the extent and nature of sin, or of the character of the atonement, or of the need of regeneration, or of the means of justification, or of the extent of future retribution. The varying views of Christians on these points would be a bar to any real or efficient union. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"

4. Since the Nicene age GOD has led His Church to the development of a number of important truths contained in the Bible; to give up these truths formulated at such great cost, and confine one's self to the one formula of an infant period, would be simply folly.

5. The article respecting the Sacraments is unexceptionable.

6. The fourth point, the "Historic Episcopate," is too vague to serve its purpose. It might be interpreted to mean the Episcopate of the New Testament, or that of the age of Cyprian, or that of full-blown Romanism; or subsequent to the Reformation, it might mean that of the Anglican Church, or that of the Scandinavian, or that of the Moravian Brethren.

7. The Roman Church has unity in the sense which the present effort seeks to secure; but the results which have followed and are now following from the rigid outward clamp by which this unity is secured, do not commend it to favor, but rather the contrary.

TALBOT W. CHAMBERS.

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THE REV. THOMAS S. HASTINGS, D.D., L.L.D. [PRESBYTERIAN], PRESIDENT OF THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK.

EDITOR OF THE CHURCH REVIEW, SIR:

THE action of the Lambeth Conference of 1888 I regard as an honest effort in the interest of higher Christian unity. As such it has a claim to general and earnest consideration. I do not understand that this action aims to absorb, but only to unify the different denominations, bringing them on common ground into closer Christian fellowship. With this aim I heartily sympathize.

The several branches of the Church should recognize their vital relations to one another as one in CHRIST JESUS, who alone gives life to all. To this end they should emphasize only what is essential and what is common to all who "hold the Head."

As to the four points in the proposed "basis for Christian Reunion," I would prefer that the first should state more strongly the *fact* of the Divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. I would leave room for differences of opinion as to the *theory* of inspiration; but I would assert the *fact* more distinctly.

The fourth point is not as clear as I could wish. It will bear an interpretation to which I would not object. "The Historic Episcopate," taking the words in their strict meaning, has possibilities of which we of our Church might avail ourselves to advantage, if thereby we could bring our own Churches closer together and at the same time come nearer to our brethren of the other branches of the one Church. But with the possibilities there are perils which cause us to hesitate to approve this fourth point, and to ask, Exactly what do you mean by "the Historic Episcopate"?

THOMAS S. HASTINGS.

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THE REV. WILLIAM M. TAYLOR, D.D. [CONGREGATIONAL-  
IST], NEW YORK CITY.

EDITOR OF THE CHURCH REVIEW, SIR:

THE question of Christian Reunion has not a very great interest for me at this time. I do not regard it as, in the present state of things, a practical one; and I am not sure that I should regard a great aggregation of the different branches of the visible Church, on any basis, as very desirable.

So far as the first three articles of the basis proposed by the Lambeth Conference in 1888 are concerned, I can heartily accept them; but in the fourth the "Historic Episcopate" needs to be defined. I do not know what it means. If it denotes the Episcopate as at present existing in Episcopal Churches, I do not see any warrant for that in the New Testament Scriptures; while, if it signifies what I should call the Primitive Episcopate,