

CHURCH UNION IN SOUTH INDIA

ITS PROGRESS
AND
CONSUMMATION

A. J. ARANGADEN

BASEL MISSION PRESS
MANGALORE
1947

Acc No. 1426
J. 14.12.77

Printed by B. Hori at the Basel Mission Press, Mangalore, S. K.
P. L. C. O. H. No. S. K. 1-7747.



Dedicated

BY KIND PERMISSION

TO

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable

Geoffrey Francis Fisher, D. D.,

PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND AND METROPOLITAN,

WHOSE INVALUABLE SERVICES IN THE CAUSE OF THIS UNION

WILL EVER BE REMEMBERED WITH GRATITUDE

BY

THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

FOREWORD

It gives me pleasure to write this Foreword to the second edition of the Rev. A. J. Arangaden's book on Church Union in South India. In this modified and greatly enlarged edition the history is brought up to the present time, when all the consulting Churches have given their final decisive vote in favour of uniting on the basis of the Scheme of Union Parts I and II, and when the detailed arrangements for the inauguration of the Union in September, 1947 are being made. Bishops have been appointed for the fourteen dioceses with which the Church of South India will start, and on every hand consultations are being held to ensure that the transition from the old to the new organisation shall be made with the least possible friction and difficulty.

Mr. Arangaden has himself been a member of the Joint Committee on Church Union for many years as one of the representatives of the South India United Church, and the story he tells is one of many difficulties frankly faced and overcome in the light of a great and compelling vision, and in the assurance of Divine guidance given through many years. If we had believed that all this would lead merely to a change of organisation and perhaps more effective administration, courage would have failed and the undertaking would have been abandoned many times during the past years. It is only the conviction that in this task we were discovering God's Will, and in all humility trying together to fulfil it, that has sustained us, and that now fills us with humble thankfulness as we look back, and as we look forward.

Mr. Arangaden, in the title of his book, uses the word "consummation" to describe what we are officially calling the "inauguration" of the Union. His meaning is clear, and the use of the word "consummation" may be justified, if it is always borne in mind that the end of one process marks but one stage in a larger process; the Churches now

officially to be united in one Church, have still a long way to go as they grow together in full unity of spirit. But we have come to the end of one important stage and Mr. Arangaden does well to help us to pause and look back on the way we have come.

The author claims little originality; but the book is the product of long and painstaking research and labour. I cannot profess to have verified all the references, but those that I have checked are accurate, and I believe that what he has here put together may be relied upon as faithfully reproducing his sources. The chief value of his book which ought to win for it a wide circulation among all who are interested in the Church Union movement, whether in South India or in other parts of the world, seems to me to be that it gathers together significant material from many quarters—official pronouncements of the Churches, and the utterances of many responsible thinkers—which illustrate difficulties hindering union, and the ways in which they have been overcome. Much of this material is not readily accessible elsewhere, and for the ordinary reader, as well as for the future historian, Mr. Arangaden has produced an invaluable "source book". I commend it with confidence.

5th May, 1947.
Concord,
Kodaikanal.

J. S. M. HOOPER

AUTHOR'S NOTE TO THE FIRST EDITION

After twenty-four years of joint consultation the negotiating Churches have now reached a stage at which they have to decide whether or not they should finally vote for entering into the proposed union. It is at such a juncture that this booklet is published, in the hope that it will be helpful to those who are interested in Church Union. In preparing it my task has been mainly one of putting together records of deliberations and events which have, I believe, in the providence of God, worked for the attainment of the agreement so far reached.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to all those who have in any way helped me in the publication of this booklet. Dr. J. H. Maclean, and the Rev. A. Streckeisen, General President, Basel Mission in India, have both been pleased to go through the manuscript and suggest improvements. But for the encouragement received from them as well as from Dr. P. E. Burckhardt, Convener, Committee on Union, Synod of the United Basel Mission Church in India, and Mr. C. J. Lucas, Principal, American Arcot Mission Training School, Vellore, I would not have ventured to publish these pages. Finally, I cannot but acknowledge my deep debt of gratitude to Messrs. George Thomas and E. J. Edona, Lecturers, Malabar Christian College, Calicut, for the invaluable help they have rendered in putting the finishing touches to the manuscript and seeing it through the Press.

Kerala United Theological Seminary,
Trivandrum,
September, 1943.

A. J. ARANGADEN

AUTHOR'S NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The suggestion to bring out a second edition of the book in a more comprehensive manner was first made in 1943 by the Rev. H. C. Lefever, B. D., Ph. D., the then Principal of the Kerala United Theological Seminary, Trivandrum, where I was a lecturer. And it was at his instance that I set myself to the task of collecting the all too important documents connected with the Union Movement in South India, since 1919. While thus engaged, I chanced to hear that the Rt. Rev. A. M. Hollis, M. A., B. D., Bishop of Madras, was interested in the first edition of my booklet on Union, and the bishop's kind words gave me a new impetus. So I worked on; and worked for some months and years. In the meanwhile, the Joint Committee on Union were continuing steadfastly in their labour of love; and God's people in many lands engaged in prayer for the Union; both awaiting the striking of the hour of the Lord.

The hour of the Lord did strike, and most unexpectedly, too. Early in 1947 it was announced that the last obstacle in the way of the Union had been removed, and that the three negotiating Churches had given their final votes in favour of the Union. Forthwith the Joint Committee declared that the three Churches were ready to unite, and preparations for the actual inauguration of the Union were immediately set on foot. At this psychological moment some of my friends urged me to have the second edition published in time for the inauguration of Union in September, 1947. But there was hardly any time left to improve my manuscript; so I hesitated. It was at this juncture that the Rev. J. S. M. Hooper, M. A., Secretary of the Joint Committee on Union, very kindly undertook to examine the manuscript. He made many valuable suggestions for improving the manuscript, all of which I have adopted. My gratitude to him is beyond adequate expression. The Foreword he has written at my request

marks his characteristic readiness to appreciate even the humblest of enterprises in the cause of the Church. That he, the veteran Secretary of the Joint Committee, should have written this Foreword is a great privilege to me.

Despite the very generous help received from others, I still feel that I have not fully succeeded in my venture. Frankly do I confess that the book has many defects. But I take courage in the thought that the Lord of the Church is One who will use even the weakest thing for His glory, and, therefore, in humble thankfulness to Him, I commend it to "all that call upon the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in every place, both theirs and ours."

Calicut,

20th August, 1947.

A. J. ARANGADEN

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PREAMBLE

As we learn from the first epistle to the Corinthians, a tendency to dissension was present in the Church from very early times. Church History describes the growth of many controversies about matters doctrinal and otherwise, which ultimately led to division in Christian communities. It is not necessary for the present purpose to examine in detail the minor dissensions which stained the annals of the early Church. The first great schism which has left an indelible mark upon the Christian world took place in the eleventh century. The seeds of this calamity were sown in 689 A.D., when the Council of Toledo decided, without the sanction of the Churches in the east, to insert in the Nicene Creed the word 'Filioque' indicating the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father. The final rupture, however, did not take place till the middle of the eleventh century. In 1054 A.D., Michael Cerularius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, precipitated a crisis by denouncing the mal-practices of the Roman See in a letter full of invective and by seizing the Latin churches and monasteries of Constantinople. Pope Leo IX intended to check the onslaughts of the Patriarch by a clever piece of diplomacy, and sought the alliance of Constantine, the Eastern Emperor. The latter tried his utmost to effect a reconciliation. The extravagant demands of the Roman legates, however, rendered the attempt futile. The infuriated Pope issued a bull which purported to depose the Patriarch from office, unless he recanted the offending letter. Legates from Rome waited in vain on the Patriarch with the object of bringing about a settlement. At last they laid on the altar of St. Sophia a document imposing an anathema on the Patriarch, and returned to Rome. Michael retorted. He

¹ See *A Manual of Church History*—Rev. A. C. Jennings, M.A.—Hodder and Stoughton, London. Vol. I, pp. 127-129.

called a council which denounced, deposed and anathematized the Pope. Thus mutual recrimination and excommunication resulted in a schism which separated the Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople from the jurisdiction of the Pope.

Subsequent events proved still more disastrous. The latter half of the fourteenth century saw the great papal schism which divided western Christendom for nearly forty years. This was occasioned by the gradual decay and corruption of the papal system which culminated in the coming into power of two rival Popes, who incessantly anathematized each other. One resided at Rome, and the other at Avignon in France. Italy, Germany, England, Poland and Scandinavia accepted the authority of the Roman Pope; France, Scotland, Spain and Lorraine paid their homage to the Pope at Avignon. In 1409 A.D. some leading bishops and the University of Paris made earnest endeavours to bring this division to an end, and as a preliminary measure suggested the abdication of the rival Popes. But they refused to resign. A council which met in the cathedral at Pisa, therefore, deposed both of them and appointed a new Pope. But he died within a year. His successor so scandalized the Church by his depravity that the claims of the deposed Popes were revived. At last, to terminate this aggravated schism a General Council was held at Constance in 1414 A.D. This Council became a landmark in history. Its magnitude and importance may be imagined from its membership.¹ Fifty thousand delegates representing almost every nation, court and university of western Christendom attended the council. It was with three distinct objects that this council was summoned:—to complete the re-union of western Christendom, to effect ecclesiastical reforms, and to suppress heretical teachings in the Church. This general council confirmed the decision taken at Pisa, by distinctly subordinating the

Papacy to general councils, which were declared to be the supreme and irrefutable exponents of the Church's requirements. The Papal schism was thus healed; but the avowed objects of the general council were not realized. Out of the Church's experience at Constance the conviction gradually developed that a genuine reformation of the Church could be attained only through the rejection of Papacy and council alike as the supreme authorities in religion. Some attempt at reform through a Council was made in 1449 A.D.; but its measures were ineffective. Then followed a period covering about seven decades, which paved the way for the Reformation.

On the bronze door of the Castle Church of Wittenburg can be seen today a long Latin inscription which consists of the ninety-five theses against the corruptions of the Papacy, affixed by Martin Luther to the old wooden door of the church on the 31st of October, 1517 A.D. This bold declaration ushered in the great movement which shook the foundations of the Papacy. The Pope proclaimed Luther a heretic and excommunicated him from the Church. Within a few years the Reformation extended through the whole of Lower Germany, and permanently established its seat in Upper Germany. Gradually but steadily Luther's influence spread beyond the bounds of Germany also. Wherever the Reformation was accepted, Protestantism took root, and separation from the jurisdiction of the Pope became a matter of necessity. The results of the Reformation were so momentous and far-reaching that people realised that a new life had entered the Church and awakened her. This awakening was mainly due to the restoration of the Word of God to its rightful position in determining the doctrine of the Church, and the life and conduct of her people. But it was also soon realised that even a reformation in the Church could be carried to such excess as to endanger her very existence. For, in 1552 A.D., an ultra-reforming section, called Anabaptists, turned the theology of Luther in a new direction

¹ Henry Cowan, *Landmarks of Church History*, pp. 125-126.

and proclaimed 'the faithful' to be exempt from all human legislation! Whatever the excesses of the reforming tendency might have been, it was evident to all disinterested observers that the revolutionary spirit could not be suppressed.

The Reformation thus divided Europe into two sections. One was under Papal supremacy and united in doctrine. The other found contentment in remaining as groups of ecclesiastical communions and national Churches. Its component parts were separated not only by doctrinal differences, but by widely diverse theories between Church and State.

Nearly two centuries had to elapse after the Reformation before the churches of Europe realised their duty to evangelize the world. Some of the leaders of the Reformation were far from initiating any missionary enterprise abroad. Adrianus Saravia¹ (1531-1613), a Dutchman, who eventually became the Dean of Westminster, was the first theologian who maintained that 'the command to preach the Gospel to all nations binds the Church'. In response to this appeal in 1661 A.D., George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, succeeded in sending three of his followers as missionaries to China; but, as they did not reach their destination, the mission failed. It was in the beginning of the eighteenth century that foreign missions actually started their work. Bartholmew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutschau, who were sent out as missionaries from Denmark, arrived at Tranquebar on the Coromandel Coast in India, on the 9th of July 1706. Since then, and especially in the nineteenth century there was such a great influx of missionary bodies into India, that the number of missions with headquarters outside India has come up to about one hundred and sixty. These may be classed denominationally as follows:—
(1) Anglicans (2) Baptists (3) Lutherans (4) Presbyterians (5) Methodists (6) Congregationalists (7) Smaller bodies. It

is natural that the direct result of the work of such a vast array of missions, with divergent views on non-essentials and different practices, Christian churches, with diverse denominational differences, should come into being. Such, in brief, is the story of the schisms, separations and divisions which have remained unhealed to this day and make the pages of Church History sad reading.

¹ Charles Henry Robinson, *History of Christian Missions*, p. 43.

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CHAPTER I.

THE VISION AT TRANQUEBAR

After about two centuries of missionary enterprise the truth dawned on the Protestant Churches in the west that if Christian unity is achieved throughout Christendom it would probably be as a direct result of foreign missions. The World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh (1910) emphasized the need for securing united action and closer co-operation by the different missionary bodies and churches in the mission field. But it was felt that such collaboration alone would not adequately conduce to successful evangelization, for the churches in the mission field were divided in many respects owing to denominational differences, and as such, they could present only a disunited front to the non-Christian world. The need, therefore, for organic union in the mission field was soon felt and some efforts were made on the lines both of federation and organic union. The year 1913 saw a move in this direction in the mission fields of China, Japan and East Africa.

But in India some attempts at organic union had already been made. In 1901, two Presbyterian churches—one connected with the American Arcot Mission, and the other with the United Free Church of Scotland Mission—had come together to form one Church. This union was soon to be followed by another between churches in South India and Ceylon which had a Congregational origin, and the two bodies thus constituted were united in 1908 under the title, the South India United Church. The missionary societies represented in this union, besides those already mentioned, were the London Missionary Society and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This move in South India was watched with keen interest by leaders of the church and missionary statesmen in India and elsewhere, and some of them gave valuable advice to the churches as

to the course they should adopt in achieving their end. It is significant to note that the opinion of those missionary statesmen and ecclesiastical leaders coincided to a large extent with that of Adrianus Saravia quoted above. As early as 1590, Saravia had contended that the maintenance of the Episcopal Office was necessary to the fulfilment of the task of evangelism. It was almost an echo of this statement that was heard in 1912, when Dr. Whitehead, the then Bishop of Madras, pleaded for the acceptance of the doctrine of Episcopacy. Addressing the members of the national Conference of Missionaries in Calcutta, the Bishop said :—

"I believe myself that whatever the reason for its adoption, the ultimate ground for the principle of Episcopacy lay in the fact that it was imperatively needed as a safeguard to unity; and I believe also that it is as much needed for that purpose today as it was then, and that it is far more needed in India than it was in the early Church. When I ask, 'If I give up this, what principle should I adopt?' I find it can only be this, that any body of Christian men and women are at liberty to make their own arrangements for their ministry. Now, I have often thought of this alternative principle, and it seems to me that not only does it everywhere throw open the door to division and schism, but, if we were to proclaim it in India, the necessary and inevitable result would be the creation of caste churches. When the Indian community is freed from the restraints of foreign missionary societies, if it accepts this principle, it will necessarily and inevitably take the lines of least resistance, and then we shall see in India divisions based on caste, far more numerous and infinitely worse than anything that the Church has yet seen in the east or west."¹

The conference at which these opinions were expressed did not see its way to take definite steps in the direction of organic union, but it organized the National Missionary Council (which came afterwards to be known as the National Christian Council) and much was done to promote co-operation in Christian work. The character of this Council in those

¹ Charles Henry Robinson, *History of Christian Missions*, p. 503.

were to be taken in that order, a session of three hours being allotted to each paper and discussion thereon.

The conference arranged in connection with the Evangelistic Forward Movement met at Tranquebar accordingly on May 1st, 1919. Now, Tranquebar is historically important; for it was here that 213 years ago Ziegenbalg and Plutschau landed as pioneers of Evangelism in India. This conference consisted of thirty-nine members. Seven of them were Anglicans. Twenty-six had come from the South India United Church, two from the Lutheran Church and four from the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The plan of the meeting was this. After a devotional address the presentation of the papers began. The chairman first called upon the appointed speaker to give his address. Then, any member of the same church was given time to supplement or correct anything that has been said on behalf of that church. After that, the representatives of the other churches were given an opportunity to ask questions to obtain fuller elucidation of the subject. Here it must be stated that while the men were appointed by some responsible person belonging to each church the appointment was not done officially and the churches themselves had no responsibility in regard to the contents of the papers.

The Wesleyan paper came first. It was very full of information, but the two Wesleyan ministers present were not able to speak with any knowledge in regard to the question of union. The Lutheran paper came next and was presented by the local pastor, ably seconded by one of the local missionaries. It avowed frankly the Lutheran position that union except on Lutheran doctrinal position would be betraying the Lutheran trust, and that their church did not consider organic union on any other basis as a desirable ideal. The paper on behalf of the South India United Church was read by one of its pastors and supplemented by others. The Anglican position was presented by the Bishop of Dornakkal.

days being mainly missionary, the subject of Church Union was not within its purview. Nevertheless at one of its meetings held in Jubbulpore in 1919 the idea first occurred to two or three of the Indian representatives from South India that Indian ministers should be given an opportunity of meeting by themselves to discuss the possibilities of Church Union. One of the Indians was the Rev. V. Santiago. He and others decided that the Bishop of Dornakkal as convener of the Committee of the Council on the Indian Church should send out an invitation for a conference on Church Union. Just then it was found that a conference of South Indian ministers was to be held in Tranquebar in connection with the Evangelistic Forward Movement under the auspices of the National Missionary Council. On approaching the secretary of that Movement an assurance was gained that the proposed Union Conference could be arranged to be held on the two days succeeding the Evangelistic Forward Movement Conference. The Convener thereupon got into touch with responsible leaders of the churches represented at the Conference that they might nominate one of their ministers to present a paper to this Union Conference. They were asked definitely to deal with the following questions:—

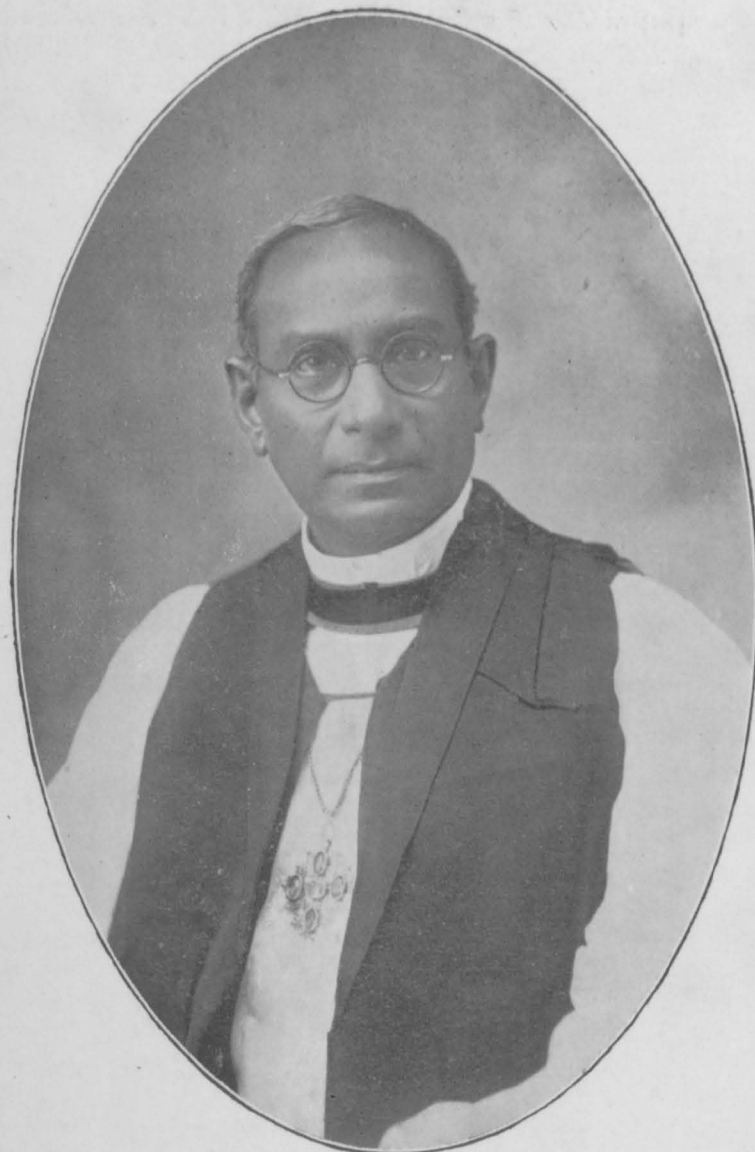
“1. What do you think to be the distinctive features of the organisation and the religious teaching and practice of your church?

2. Should a United Church come into being, what do you consider to be the features that ought to be your contribution to that Church, and which in fairness to your traditions you ought not to give up, without serious loss to the full life of the church?

3. What is the attitude of your church towards union with other churches?”¹

Four speakers were appointed—Wesleyan, Lutheran, South India United Church and Anglican; and the papers

¹ Bishop Azariah of Dornakkal, “What happened in Tranquebar in 1919,” *Church Union News and Views*, January 1931, pp. 144-145.



The Rt. Rev. V. S. Azariah, LL. D. (Cantab.)

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On the second evening, after the Anglican position was fully described, several ministers of the South India United Church felt that the elements of episcopacy for which the Anglicans seemed to stand were precisely the elements that were needed for the system in the South India United Church; and the Anglican representatives felt equally the desirability of being organically one with a church which had so strongly manifested individual freedom, the service of the laity and evangelical zeal. Hence the representatives of the Anglican Church and of the South India United Church stayed on for part of the third day and after various group meetings drew up an agreed statement which later on came to be known as the Tranquebar Manifesto.

The Statement is as follows:—

‘We, as individual members of the Anglican Communion and the South India United Church, having met at Tranquebar in the first Ministers’ Conference on Church Union, after prayer, thought and discussion, have agreed on the following statement concerning the union of the Anglican Church with the South India United Church.

“We believe that union is the will of God, even as our Lord prayed that we might all be one that the world might believe. We believe that union is the teaching of Scripture, that ‘there is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all’.

“We believe that the challenge of the present hour, in the period of reconstruction after the war, in the gathering together of the nations, and in the present critical situation in India itself, calls us to mourn our past divisions and to turn to our Lord Jesus Christ to seek in Him the unity of the body expressed in One Visible Church. We face together the titanic task of the winning of India for Christ—one-fifth of the human race. And yet, confronted by such an over-whelming responsibility, we find ourselves rendered weak, and relatively impotent by our unhappy divisions—divisions for which we were not responsible and which have

been, as it were, imposed upon us from without; divisions which we did not create, and which we do not desire to perpetuate.

“In this united Church we believe that three scriptural elements must be conserved:—the Congregational, the Presbyterian and the Episcopal elements. By the Congregational element is meant that element which represents ‘the whole Church’ with ‘every member’ having immediate access to God, each exercising his gift for the development of the whole body. We believe this Church should include the delegated, organized or Presbyterian element, whereby the Church could unite in a General Assembly, Synods or Councils in organized unity. We believe it should include also the representative, executive or episcopal element. Thus all the three elements, no one of which is absolute or sufficient without the other two, should be included in the Church of the future; for we aim not at compromise for the sake of peace, but at comprehension for the sake of truth.

“In seeking this union, the Anglican members stand for one ultimate principle—namely, the Historic Episcopate. The members of the South India United Church believe that it is a necessary condition that the episcopate should re-assume a constitutional form, on the primitive, simple, apostolic model. The latter further make one condition of union—namely, the recognition of the spiritual equality, of the universal priesthood of all believers, and of the rights of the laity to their full expression in the Church. They ask that this principle of spiritual equality shall be maintained throughout at every step of the negotiations.

“Upon this common ground of the historic episcopate, and of the spiritual equality of all members of the two churches, we propose Union on the following basis:—

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary for salvation.
2. The Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed.
3. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
4. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted.

“We understand that the acceptance of the fact of the Episcopate does not involve the acceptance of any theory of the origin of episcopacy nor any doctrinal interpretation of the fact. It is further agreed that the terms of union should involve no Christian community in the necessity of

disowning its past, and we find it no part of our duty to call in question the validity of each other's orders.

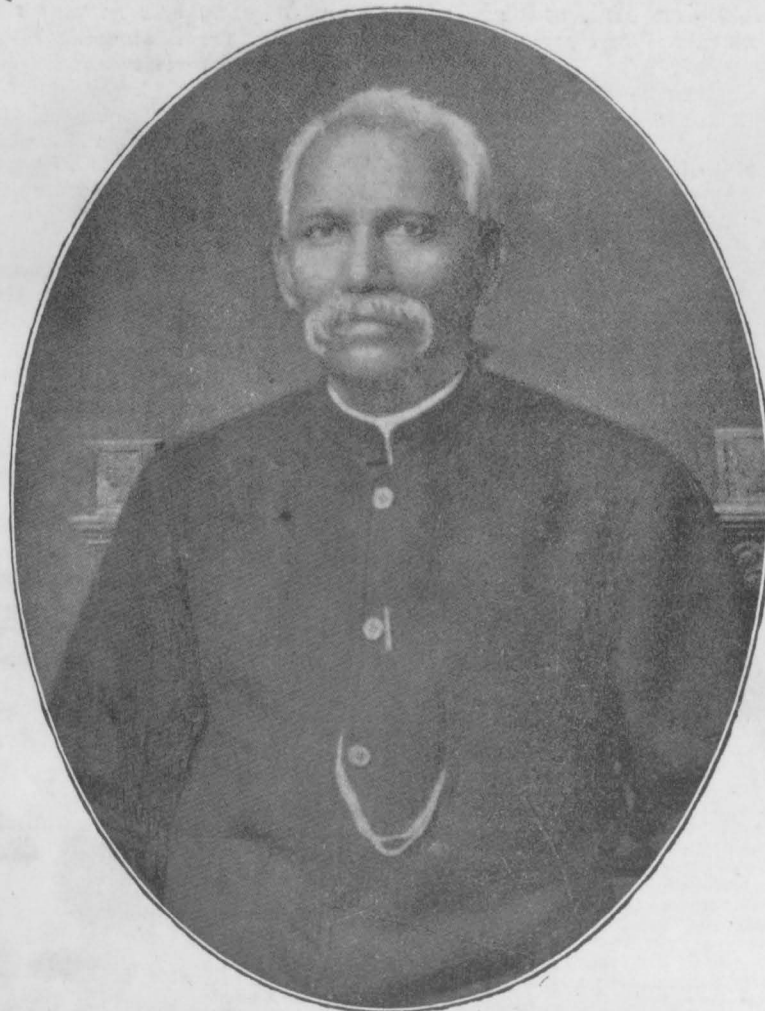
"Fully recognising that we do not commit our respective bodies to any action, we individually and unofficially agree upon the following plan for union. After full deliberation, let the South India United Church, if it desires union, choose from its own members certain men who shall be consecrated as bishops. In the consecration of these first bishops it is suggested that three or more bishops of the Anglican Church shall lay their hands upon the candidates, together with an equal number of ministers as representatives of the South India United Church.

"As soon as the first bishops are consecrated, the two bodies would be in intercommunion, but the further limitation of existing ministers with regard to celebrating the communion in the churches of the other body might still remain. In accordance with the principle of spiritual equality we desire to find some means to permit ministers of either body to celebrate the communion in the churches of the other body. As one possible solution, we would suggest that a special "*Service of Commission*" should be held. All ministers of both sides desiring authority to officiate at the communion throughout the whole Church should present themselves to receive at the hands of all the bishops of the United Churches a commission for such celebration of the Communion. Ministers of either body not desiring to officiate at the communion in the other Church would be under no obligation to present themselves, as full liberty would be claimed for individuals on the extreme wing of each body to maintain their present views and practices.

"While not committing our respective bodies, we, unofficially and individually, with the blessing of God, agree to work toward union on such a basis."¹

This basis of union is popularly known as the Lambeth Quadrilateral, as it was first adopted by the Lambeth Conference of 1888.

¹ Report of Joint Committee on Union, 1925 (A.M. Lenox Press, Pasumalai), pp. 4-6.



Rev. V. Santiago

CHAPTER II.
NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN: THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND AND THE SOUTH INDIA
UNITED CHURCH

1. Action taken by the South India United Church.

The official beginning of the South India Movement took place in the city of Calicut in 1919. When the letter issued by those that gathered at Tranquebar was presented to the General Assembly of the South India United Church which met on the 29th September, 1919 it expressed its joy at the growing desire for a United Church in India, and its fullest sympathy with the idea of union with the Anglican Church. The General Assembly expressed its hope of the possibility of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar also entering into this union. Further, the General Assembly sent its requests to the nine Church Councils under it to consider the advisability or otherwise of adopting a Constitutional Historic Episcopacy. In its communications to the councils the General Assembly made the whole position very clear in the following terms:—

1. By Constitutional Episcopacy is meant that form of Episcopacy in which the Bishops shall be elected by, and responsible to, the General Assembly.
2. There shall be mutual recognition of the absolute equality of the ministry and of the members of the uniting churches.
3. The resultant Church shall be an autonomous entity.

The Executive Committee of the General Assembly also, in their circular letter, dated the 25th November, 1919, to the church councils under them, clearly stated that, by accepting the Constitutional Historic Episcopacy, no one was expected to accept the doctrine of 'Apostolic Succession', though the way was left open for others to do so, if they wished.

The General Assembly also instructed the Executive Committee to confer with the representatives of the Anglican and the Mar Thoma Syrian Churches to bring into effect the contemplated union of the churches in South India.

2. Action taken by the Anglicans.

The Episcopal Synod of the Church of England in India met in February, 1920, and likewise expressed its fullest sympathy with the Church Union Movement. Further, by appointing its representatives to work on a Joint Committee of the two churches, the Episcopal Synod very clearly evinced its sincere desire to come into organic union with the South India United Church.

3. The position of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church.

After the conference of ministers held at Tranquebar in May, 1919, and the conference of missionaries at Kodaikanal the same year, a statement was published on behalf of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church in Malabar by the Suffragan of the Church and two other prominent members. Although in their statement these leaders expressed themselves in favour of the proposal, it was evident that the Mar Thoma Church had not made up its mind either for or against entering into the contemplated union. But in fairness to that Church it must be stated that it was neither general apathy nor doctrinal difficulty which stood in her way. She is still awaiting with keen interest the outcome of the union negotiations in South India. The answer to the oft repeated question as to what actually hindered the Mar Thoma Church from taking any decisive step in the matter of union can be found in an article published in 'Church Union, News and Views' in May 1932 by one of the leading laymen of that church.¹

Mention has to be made here by way of digression about

¹ See Appendix A, R. K. Kuruvilla, 'The Present situation in the Syrian Church in Travancore' *Church Union, News and Views*, pp. 208-214.

the character of the movement that has originated in this part of India. The South India Union Movement was from the start essentially Indian. It sprang from a passionate desire among some Indian Christian leaders for pooling the spiritual heritages of certain divided churches for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God. Even at the initial stage the Uniting Churches realised that, although there had been many movements for union in different parts of the world, the movement now set on foot was the only one in which an attempt was made to unite Episcopal and Non-episcopal churches. In trying to achieve this purpose the uniting churches were aiming at something unique in the history of the Christian Church. In other words the conservation in the United Church of South India of the three scriptural elements of church government—congregational, presbyterian and episcopal—was the ideal that they had in view. In this connection it is worth while to examine the historical background of the three forms of Church government as they existed in the first century of the Christian Era. The dissertation of Sir Henry Lunn on "THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH" by Canon B. H. Streeter of Hereford,¹ will give the reader a clear insight into the subject.

4. Joint Action by the Negotiating Churches.

The first meeting of the Joint Committee of the Anglican and the S.I.U.C. Churches was held at Bangalore in March, 1920. After prayerful deliberation for two days the delegates drew up a statement in which they recorded their full agreement with reference to the basic principles of the Lambeth Quadrilateral, namely: (1) The Holy Scriptures (2) the Creeds (3) the Sacraments. With reference to (4), the Historic Episcopate, they made a more definite statement as follows:—

¹ See Appendix B, Sir Henry Lunn, 'Congregationalism, Presbyterianism and Episcopacy in the Church of the First Century' (*The Reviews of the Churches*, Vol. II, Co. 1, pp. 117-123).

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"1. We believe that the principle of the Historic Episcopate in a constitutional form is that which is more likely than any other to promote and preserve the unity of the Church; therefore, we accept it as a basis of union without raising other questions about episcopacy.

"2. By Constitutional Episcopacy we mean:—

- (a) that the Bishops shall be elected by representatives of the diocese and approved by representatives of the province.
- (b) that the Bishops shall perform their duties constitutionally in accordance with such customs of the Church as shall be defined in a written constitution.
- (c) that the continuity with the Historic Episcopate will be effectively maintained, it being understood that no particular interpretation of the Historic Episcopate be demanded.

"3. We are agreed that after union all future ordinations to the Presbyterate would be performed by the laying on of hands of the Bishops and Presbyters; and that all consecrations of Bishops would be performed by Bishops, not less than three taking part in each consecration.

"4. By autonomy in the resultant Church we mean:—

- (a) that the Church in India ought to be independent of the State.
- (b) that the Church in India must be free from any control, legal or otherwise, of any church or society outside India.
- (c) that, while the Church in India is free from such control, it would regulate its actions by the necessity of maintaining fellowship with other branches of the Catholic Church with which we are now in communion."

With reference to the question of the equality of the ministry, it was recorded that the S.I.U.C. makes it a condition of union that its present ministers (Presbyters) shall after union be recognized as ministers (Presbyters) without re-ordination.

The Joint Committee met for its second session in December, 1920, at Bangalore. It was then that certain practical difficulties were pointed out by the Anglican side in regard to their acting in accordance with the agreements

made at the previous meeting. The intention of both parties in the negotiations was that the resultant Church should be an independent and autonomous body free from State control. This involved negotiations for severing the Anglican Church from the State. Although that Church had already begun working on this problem quite apart from the negotiations with the S.I.U.C., it was felt that the legal difficulties involved would take a long time to solve and that the contemplated corporate union of the churches would be indefinitely postponed. In the Anglican Church in the northern dioceses a very large proportion of the membership was European and not directly affected by the problems which influenced churches in South India. The churches in the south were, moreover, linked together by language and race and therefore could form a national regional church.

It thus became evident that the best way of solving the practical problems was to entrust the matter to those who were linked together by race and language and lived in a smaller area where continuous consultation was possible. It was the earnest hope of the Anglican section that their church as a whole would be willing to entrust the working out of the principles laid down for the union to the judgment of the local Bishops guided by the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference.

CHAPTER III.

UNION OF THE MALABAR CHURCH WITH THE SOUTH INDIA UNITED CHURCH

The circumstances in which the Malabar Church became a party to the negotiations for wider union need to be specially mentioned. This was occasioned by her affiliation to the South India United Church, which happened in March, 1919, exactly two months before the Tranquebar Conference. Sometime after the outbreak of the great European War (in 1914) all German missionaries in the districts of South Kanara, South Mahratta and Malabar were interned, and the Basel Mission Industrials, consisting of several weaving and tile factories on the West Coast were sequestered by Government, as they were considered to be German concerns. Naturally, this caused considerable alarm in all the three churches. The work of the Mission and the Church was, however, continued for three years under the guidance of the General Local Committee of the Mission, composed entirely of Swiss Missionaries. In spite of untold difficulties they would have carried on their work in Malabar if circumstances had permitted. But this was not to be. Turkey had joined Germany against the allies in the Great War (World War I), and the Government of India apprehended that the presence of the German-speaking Swiss missionaries in Malabar where there are fanatical Moplas, might in the circumstances be a source of trouble. Hence Government intimated its decision to remove all missionaries of the Basel Mission from Malabar. The General Local Committee was, therefore, forced to request other missionary societies in India to shoulder the entire responsibility for some parts of its extensive field. The mission organizations and churches in the Nilgiris were handed over to the Wesleyan Mission, and some parts of North Kanara were entrusted with the National Missionary Society. The General Local Committee

thought it could confine its activities to South Kanara and South Mahratta, where help was now being given by a new organization which had its headquarters at Lausanne in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. This mission thus constituted, which was known as the Kanarese Evangelical Mission, was recognized by the Government of India, and had on its staff an English Missionary appointed by the National Missionary Council. As for Malabar, the parting General Local Committee met at Coonoor on the 16th May, 1918, and in consultation with the District Committee of Malabar and the special Swiss delegate who had arrived from Europe, made the following decision :—

"The General Local Committee empowers the District Synod Board of Malabar to arrange for the election of an extra-ordinary Church Assembly to meet in June. The number of delegates to this assembly shall be proportionate to the strength of each congregation—three to every five hundred or fraction thereof.

"The Pastors in charge of the congregations shall be *ex-officio* delegates. All ordinary members of the Church, and Catechists, including those employed in the evangelistic department, are entitled to stand for election. The Presbyteries are requested to give to their respective congregations all the information they need about the proposed meeting. The Assembly shall sit for one day and discuss the question of affiliation to the South India United Church. This Assembly is further empowered to elect a Temporary Commission of not more than twelve members, six of whom shall be Pastors or Catechists in charge of congregations, to draft a Constitution for the Church in Malabar and a Trust Deed for its property. These drafts will be examined by the General Local Committee and as soon as the final version is approved and accepted the General Local Committee will transfer the church property to the Trustees of the Church and hand over the administration of the Church to authorities who are constitutionally established."

¹ Communication by the General President on behalf of the General Local Committee dated 6th June 1918.

The decision of the General Local Committee was duly communicated to all the fourteen congregations in Malabar, and in compliance with the same an extra-ordinary Assembly of the Malabar churches met at Calicut on the 3rd of July, 1918, and resolved to take immediate steps to accept and assume the autonomy of the Malabar Church and be incorporated into the South India United Church as advised by the General Local Committee.

It took nearly eight months for the Temporary Commission to draft the Constitution for the Church and the Trust Deed for the property. Having approved the drafts in March, 1919, the General Local Committee sent the following parting message to the Malabar Church :—¹

Announcement of the General Local Committee to the churches of Malabar.

"In recommending to the churches of Malabar the constitution prepared by the Temporary Commission and approved by the General Local Committee, we expect the churches to accord to the fundamental document due appreciation and adherence and request them to carry out the election of the various authoritative bodies of the Church according to the constitution and the provisional rules.

In pursuance of the resolutions of the extra-ordinary Assembly held on July 3, 1918, we request the said Assembly to meet again at Calicut on Friday, March 21, 1919, at 3 p.m. for the purpose of fixing the date from which the affiliation of the Basel Mission Malabar Church should take effect.

As the present authorities will be relieved of their responsibilities from the date of affiliation and the new authorities are yet to be elected, we authorize the extra-ordinary Assembly to nominate at the said meeting three representatives of the Malabar Church who, in conjunction with the representatives of the South India United Church will be responsible for the management of the Church until the new authorities assume their office.

¹ Communication from the District President on behalf of the General Local Committee, dated 13th March 1919.

Trusting that the Basel Mission Christians of Malabar will in these days of transition, as well as in the future, prove conscientious and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, we, the parting General Local Committee, commit them and their Church to the all-sufficient grace of God, praying that He may keep, increase and bless it through Jesus Christ for ever."

On the evening of the 20th March, 1919, when the Temporary Commission met in the Church at Calicut, the General Local Committee of the Basel Mission and the Executive Committee of the General Assembly of the South India United Church were also present. At that meeting the question of the arrangements to be made for the future administration of the mission work in Malabar was raised. The members of the General Local Committee of the Basel Mission both jointly and individually declared their inability to continue to work in Malabar and also expressed their deep regret at not finding any Missionary Society in India which was prepared to take over the administrative and financial responsibilities for the work. It became clear, however, that both the parting General Local Committee and the Executive of the General Assembly of the South India United Church were unanimous in accepting one fundamental principle—namely, that the mission work in Malabar must be undertaken only by a missionary society officially connected with the South India United Church with which the Malabar Church had affiliated itself. But in the course of further discussion it became also clear that the General Assembly of the South India United Church being only a legislative body in ecclesiastical matters and a connecting link between the churches that had entered into an organic union could not in the very nature of things undertake any responsibility for financing so elaborate a mission organization. The situation thus became quite critical and alarming.

It was a gloomy evening; and the perplexity of the situa-

tion seemed to add to its gloom. Those few Christian men—Indian, American, Scotch, English and Swiss—sat in front of the altar in that historic Church at Calicut—all of them filled with grave uncertainties and fears. There was a rumour that the Government of India had issued an order for the liquidation of the Basel Mission Industrials. The properties of the Mission and of the Church had been placed in the hands of the Custodian of enemy property. These developments had caused a panic throughout the Church in Malabar. The leaders who had assembled to consider the future of the Malabar Church and of the Mission found themselves therefore gazing at an undefined catastrophe looming in the encircling darkness. The discussions had come to a stop. Only a few whispers could be heard. Just then one member proposed to spend a few minutes in silent prayer. As they knelt in silence, it was felt that the Lord was in their midst; His voice was heard in unmistakable accents. Afterwards a few members of the Executive Committee went out and conferred together for a short time. They returned to the meeting and made an announcement which proved a real message of hope to the Malabar Church and Mission. The announcement was to the effect that the Executive Committee trusted that some missions, especially the United Free Church of Scotland Mission, the London Missionary Society and the Reformed Church in America, which were organically connected with the South India United Church, would give their financial support for the continuance of the missionary activities in Malabar. This was virtually the origin of what later on came to be known as the Malabar Mission. The extra-ordinary Assembly of the Malabar Church met on the next morning. After prayerful deliberation they resolved to request the Executive of the General Assembly to affiliate the Malabar Church to the South India United Church and to recognize it as an integral part thereof from the date of affiliation, application for which would be made as soon as the new constitution was approved. Finally, on the 23rd March,

1919, the constitution was drawn up and adopted by the churches and the General Local Committee.

On April 1, 1919, the South India United Church, acting under a mandate from Government through the National Missionary Council, assumed responsibility for the whole work carried on by the Basel Mission in Malabar. The mandate stated that the responsibility was to be exercised in conjunction with the Malabar Church. In compliance with the express desire of the leaders of the Malabar Church to assume the fullest measure of control over the whole work, and on the recommendation of its own Executive and that of the Malabar Church Council, the General Assembly of the South India United Church decided at its meeting held at Calicut on September 26, 1919, to hand over control of the whole work, as an experiment, to the Church Council, operating through a Joint Board of Management consisting of seven members of the Church and five appointed by the South India United Church—the Assembly retaining only a joint veto for its five representatives.

From this time until the return of the Basel Mission in 1926, the work in Malabar was carried on under the joint direction of the Malabar Church Council and the representatives of the South India United Church. During those seven years of great difficulty the South India United Church rendered invaluable help to the Malabar Church and Mission through its representatives. Not only did the South India United Church largely contribute to the financial support of the Mission but also lent the services of several able leaders consisting of Scotchmen, Americans, Englishmen and Indians. Some of them resided and worked in Malabar at a time when no communication with the mother mission was possible. Their effective preaching, Christian example, and the guidance they gave in all matters relating to Church and Mission will ever live fresh in the memory of the Malabar Church. The last and most memorable service they rendered to Malabar was to move the British Parliament to permit

the Basel Mission to resume their work on the West Coast of India. Although, with the return of the Basel Mission, the South India United Church ceased to have any official control of the mission work in Malabar, the Church in Malabar still continues to be a part of the South India United Church, and is governed by its general constitution which provides for the autonomy of the churches under its care and oversight.

CHAPTER IV.

EVOLUTION OF A SCHEME OF UNION

The third meeting of the Joint Committee was held in Madras in 1921 when detailed statements of agreement were drawn up relating to the following:—

1. *Government of the United Church.*

(i) Size of the Dioceses.

The Committee considers that the aim of the scheme should be to establish Dioceses smaller than the present Anglican dioceses and that the division of the dioceses should, as far as possible, be on a territorial basis. As the membership of the uniting Churches is about equal, it would be advisable that in the beginning the number of dioceses in each of the two uniting Churches should be as nearly equal as possible.

(ii) The Governing Bodies.

It is agreed that the present Council system with the Pastorate Committees, Local Councils (variously called 'Circles' and 'Districts' in the Anglican Church), the Diocesan Council and the Provincial Synod (General Assembly), should be adopted—subject to such modifications as the circumstances of the dioceses demand.

(a) The Pastorate Committees and Local Councils:—

It is agreed that the present scheme of Pastorate Committees and Local Councils should be continued and that in the United Church each diocese should be at liberty to draft its own rules for these, subject

to the final approval of the Provincial Synod (General Assembly).

(b) The Diocesan Council:—The Church Council of the South India United Church would generally be, in size and constitution, the basis of the Diocesan Council.

It is agreed that this Council should consist of (1) the Bishop (2) all the clergy (ministers) (3) lay representatives chosen on a definite proportional basis and (4) co-opted members. The Bishop shall *ex-officio* be the Chairman.

It is agreed that the duties of the Diocesan Council should be those at present assigned to the Church Councils of the South India United Church, namely,

(1) oversight and care of the congregation within the diocese;

(2) organization and recognition of pastorates and local councils;

(3) approval of candidates for ordination and the appointment of clergy (ministers) to pastorates;

(4) counselling and aiding unorganized groups of believers;

(5) decision on references and appeals;

(6) encouragement and maintenance of evangelistic work;

(7) discipline of the church according to the constitution; and

(8) election of representatives to the Provincial Synod (General Assembly).

Note:—Each Diocesan Council would be free to adopt its own rules for the appointment and transfer of clergy (ministers).

(iii) Powers of the Bishop.

(a) The Bishop shall be President of the Diocesan Council, and have the right to visit committees and councils in the diocese.

(b) Location of clergy shall be carried out by the Bishop in accordance with the rules formulated by the Diocese. It is highly desirable that the Bishop should conduct, or arrange for the conduct of, the service at which the minister is inducted to his charge.

(c) The Diocesan Council will approve and communicate

to the Bishop the names of candidates for ordination in accordance with the rules formulated by each Diocesan Council.

The Bishop will enquire into their fitness and, if satisfied, he will ordain them in the form prescribed. If he does not approve of a candidate, he will inform the Diocesan Council of the fact, and they may at their discretion take steps to enquire further into the fitness of the candidate; but the Bishop cannot be compelled to ordain a man whom, after careful enquiry, he does not approve.

- (d) The spiritual care of ministers and workers shall be the Bishop's special responsibility.
- (e) In accordance with the rules laid down by the Provincial Synod, the Bishop will give formal licenses to the clergy to officiate and preach in the Diocese.
- (f) Cases requiring discipline shall be tried by Courts authorized to do so by the Provincial Synod. Any sentence which involves excommunication will require the approval of the Bishop.
- (g) Charges against the clergy shall be submitted to the Bishop in the first instance, and he will proceed to deal with each case in accordance with the rules to be formulated by the Provincial Synod.
- (h) As chairman of the Diocesan Council the Bishop shall have a veto on resolutions concerning certain classes of subjects prescribed by the constitution. This veto can be the subject of appeal to the Provincial Synod, whose decision will be final.
- (i) The Bishop will not have control over finance, or any arbitrary powers not conferred by the constitution.
- (j) While the utmost freedom should be allowed in public worship, it will be the duty of the Bishop to advise the churches in this matter and to cause to be prepared special services and prayers as may be required from time to time. He should also be empowered to take notice of any grave irregularities, if they should occur in public worship. It will be of great benefit to the churches if the Bishop receives reports from them as to the usefulness of different services.

(iv) Voting by Houses of Laity, Clergy and Bishops in the Provincial Synod.

- Consideration of this question was relegated to a committee.

II. *Creeds; their Use; Declaration of Assent.*

(i) In accepting the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as a sufficient statement of faith of the Church for a basis of fellowship, it is competent to the church after union to issue supplementary statements concerning faith, for the guidance of its teachers and the edification of the faithful, provided that such statements are not contrary to the truth revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

(ii) The Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed should be used as the basis of one part of the instruction for Baptism, it being understood that at first the Apostles' Creed will be so used. According to the present custom in the Anglican Church the creed is used as prescribed in the Prayer Book and the candidates are asked at the baptismal service to affirm their belief in its terms; and in the South India United Church it is frequently used in the service and questions are asked of the candidates dealing with their faith.

(iii) The use of the creeds in worship is an act of adoration and thanksgiving to Almighty God for His nature and for His acts of love and mercy as well as a joyful remembrance of the faith which binds together the worshippers. While it is competent to the Church to legislate concerning the occasions on which the creeds are to be used in worship, it is agreed that neither the General Assembly (the Synod), nor the Diocesan Council, nor any other Church authority will forbid their use in worship.

(iv) Declaration of Assent:—It ought to be observed first that individuals share the belief of the Church in proportion to their capacity and experience. No two say any creed with precisely the same understanding. One may accept it as a whole as capable of being proved 'by most sure warrants of the Holy Scriptures', and as being the faith of the Church Universal throughout the ages. Some portions of the creed he accepts in quite a different way as having deeply influenced his own life and entered into the very heart of his thinking and feeling. With his growth in religion, more and more of the creed becomes part of his

personal religious experience. But it is equally possible for him to give a conscientious assent to the clauses of the creed either because they have entered into his religious life, or into the religious life of the Church, or simply because he believes them warranted by the Holy Scriptures. When the clergy or others make a formal declaration of assent to the creed this should imply at least one of these three positions towards all its clauses. It is no business of the Church to enquire curiously into the individual's state of mind on each clause. By assent the Church means real assent which may take any of the above-mentioned three forms.

The General Assembly or Synod of the Church shall determine what profession of faith shall be required of persons seeking to be ordained by its bishops, it being understood that in making the union both churches agree that at least a sincere belief in the truths enunciated in the Nicene Creed will be required.

(v) By the expression 'Nicene Creed' is meant that creed which is commonly so called, though it is not the creed of the Council of Nicaea, but the creed of the Council of Constantinople, which is known to scholars as the Constantinopolitan Creed.

(vi) It is desirable in effecting the union to provide that the act or agreement of union shall not be invalidated, if in the future the Church should return to the original form of the Constantinopolitan Creed by omitting the words 'and the Son' from the article of the Holy Spirit.

III. *Confirmation.*

Confirmation, as it is understood in the Anglican Church, may be administered by any of the bishops of the United Church in any congregation which desires it. Persons who have been thus confirmed will be admitted to Holy Communion throughout the Church.

In other cases the service of admission to full membership now in use in the South India United Church or some similar service shall be employed and persons who have been admitted according to this method will be admitted to Holy Communion throughout the Church.

IV. *Marriage.*

It is understood that the rules now in vogue in the Dioceses and Councils which will be included in the United Church shall continue after union till the Provincial Synod of the Church shall determine otherwise.

V. *Intercommunion.*

(i) It is not intended that the consummation of union between these two churches should have the effect of excluding from Communion in the Church after the union, such persons as have formerly enjoyed the privilege of receiving Communion in one of the uniting Churches. In order to secure some equality of treatment in different parts of the united Church, general rules will have to be framed by the Provincial Synod or General Assembly, which the diocesan authorities will apply to individual cases.

(ii) Again, it is not intended that the consummation of union between the churches should have the effect of laying open to excommunication or other church discipline, a member of the future united Church who receives Communion from some other church in places where no church services are conducted by the united Church or who, in places where the united Church is working, receives Communion on special occasions in other churches, provided that in either case the church to which the said member of the united Church goes for Communion is one with which, before the union, members of either of the uniting Churches were accustomed to communicate.

VI. *The Ministry of the Church.*

(i) *The Diaconate.*

It would be in accordance with a custom which has prevailed in the Church for more than a thousand years, if all persons were required to pass through the Diaconate before being ordained to the Presbyterate. In view of ancient history it cannot be said that this is essential to the validity of the higher order of ministry. But one of the questions which need determining is whether it should be required as a condition that in the future united Church candidates for the Presbyterate should have passed through the Diaconate.

(ii) The Presbyterate.

The Committee considered the interpretation of the resolution passed at its first session that 'after union all ordinations should be by Bishops' in relation to the position of ordained ministers who might, after union, offer to enter the ministry of the Church as ordained ministers without further ordination in the united Church and in relation to the Missionary Societies and the Churches which supported them.

A Sub-committee was appointed to consider this subject further and report at the next meeting.

In April, 1923, when the fourth meeting of the Joint Committee was held at Pasumalai, it was reported that the General Assembly of the South India United Church which met in 1921 had expressed very strong dissatisfaction with the proposals of the Joint Committee on the equality of the ministry. The continuation of what was virtually a dual ministry in the United Church seemed to them to militate against the attainment of real unity. This led the committee to the adoption of a proposal for a mutual commissioning of ministers. This proposal was strongly advocated by Prof. Vernon Bartlett of Mansfield College, Oxford, in 1921 who in a letter¹ urged that it would effect the purpose which all desired of including in the commission of ministers elements which might be lacking on one side or the other.

The commissioning service was to be one of the series of acts consummating union, in which a declaration should be read by all ministers. It was proposed that the bishops and clergy of the Anglican Church be commissioned by certain representative presbyters of the South India United Church; and the ministers of the South India United Church by a bishop and certain representative presbyters of the Anglican Church. Then the words of prayer would be read by each of these groups, and they would then lay their hands on the heads of those of the other church who were to be commis-

¹ See Appendix C.

sioned. This would be the last act of the churches as separate bodies.

Declaration to be read by all.

"We are gathered together in the presence of God to receive, and on behalf of the churches we represent, to give a mutual commission for a wider ministry in the Church of God. We offer thanks to the One Head of the Church for the privilege of the service which He has permitted us all to render in our several ministries and for the manifestations of the working of His Spirit through our imperfect means.

"None of us dare in any way repudiate the ministry which we have received or dishonour the Spirit of God who has called to His service. We are here publicly and formally seeking additional recognition of a new call, and a fuller authority for a wider service in the united Church, and implore for ourselves God's care and strength to fulfil the same. And we believe that He who prayed that His Church might be one will bestow upon us the spirit of love, which will work mightily for the healing of divisions in His Body by the united working of one ministry for the extension of His Kingdom."

Form of commission to be pronounced by one of those appointed to lay their hands on the heads of the ministers.

"We pray Thee, O God, to anoint with Thy Holy Spirit these Thy servants that they may perform the work of a presbyter in Thy Church, and especially in those parts of it which are now entering into closer fellowship in accordance with the prayer of Thy Son that they all may be one. May the grace of Him who in sending forth His Apostles said: 'As the Father hath sent me even so send I you' be ever present with them, and may the gift of love now and ever illumine their lives, and may they faithfully preach Thy Word and dispense Thy Sacraments in the larger sphere now open to them by our union in Thee."

The above form of the Commissioning Service was communicated to all Church Councils under the General Assembly to ascertain their opinion.

CHAPTER V.

THE METHODIST CHURCH ENTERS INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS

At the fifth meeting of the Joint Committee held in Madras in February, 1925, the Wesleyan Methodist Church was represented very strongly by fourteen members duly appointed by the Provincial Synod of their Church in response to an invitation from the Joint Committee. This meeting was mainly engaged in ascertaining how far the Methodist representatives found themselves in agreement with the findings of the first preliminary report.

In the same year the General Assembly of the South India United Church met at Salem. The reports from the several churches, with reference to the proposed Commissioning Service, clearly indicated a strong feeling in the churches against the laying on of hands which formed one of the acts of the Commissioning Service. The Assembly, therefore, had to instruct its committee on union to urge the Joint Committee to find a better solution.

This was reported at the sixth meeting of the Joint Committee in February 1926 and the Committee came very near a deadlock. Some time had to elapse before the Joint Committee could move forward again. In July 1928 the seventh meeting of the Joint Committee was held at Bangalore. It then appointed a Continuation Committee to which were referred definite questions on which reports were to be prepared and presented to the next meeting of the Joint Committee. Sub-Committees of this Continuation Committee started their work immediately. They prepared the necessary statements and presented them to the Continuation Committee when it met at Madras in January 1929. At this meeting further plans were discussed and certain statements prepared. When the eighth meeting of the Joint Committee was held in February 1929 in Madras these statements were

ready for consideration. The Joint Committee sat for ten full days with forty-two members present and considered in great detail all the questions relating to the formation and working of the united Church. The statements in agreement were in many cases modified and at last put in such a shape that the whole might form a complete and consistent scheme. Since the Wesleyans joined the negotiations in 1925, the draft of the scheme had to be revised. The proposed Scheme of Union was first published in 1929.

It was by the perceptible guidance of God that the Committee was able, after prayerful consideration, to report in 1929 that a much clearer understanding of one another's mind had become possible as manifested in the meetings held in 1928 and 1929 at Bangalore and Madras respectively. The Committee then reported that it was agreed that all ministers of the negotiating churches should become, by the act of union, ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the United Church. In putting this clause into practice the sentiments of those who hold conscientious objection were to be fully respected.

It is important to record here that the Indian Church Measure of 1927 had, meanwhile, been passed. By this the Anglican Church in India which till then had been a State-aided Church under the British Government ceased to be such, officially separated from the Church of England, and came to be known as 'the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon'.

The following extract from the Government Report on India in 1929-30 made to the Parliament shows in what connection the Church of India came to be separated from the Church of England and how the Government of India has viewed the union movement in South India :—

“The separation of the Indian Church from the Church of England can scarcely be discussed without mentioning the movement known as the Scheme of Union, which is designed to secure the coalescence of Anglican, Congrega-

tionalist, Presbyterian, and Wesleyan bodies in Southern India, and which is a significant event in the history of religion, both from the doctrinal and the practical points of view. For, doctrinally, it is a strikingly bold project for amalgamating both episcopalian and non-episcopalian elements within one organization, which if it succeeded would possibly have important repercussions outside India altogether, by stimulating the movement towards the re-union of various communities and sects in the predominantly Christian countries of the world. On the other hand, in so far as India alone is concerned, the historical and doctrinal significance of the scheme counts for little as compared with its practical advantages. A small community such as the Christians form in this country stands to gain a great deal if it can compose its internal differences,—many of which of course pale into insignificance beside the differences which separate Christians as a whole from the religious groups that surround them. Thus from the point of view of the future of Christianity in India, the suggested union is obviously an event containing interesting possibilities, since within it would be dissolved the historical differences whereby these particular groups of Christians have been separated in the West, but which are of comparatively little importance in an Oriental environment".¹

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONGREGATIONALISTS OF SOUTH INDIA EXAMINE THE SCHEME

It was by the Congregational section of the South India United Church that objections to the Scheme were first raised. Some leading members of the London Missionary Society in Travancore and in other parts of South India felt they could not accept a scheme which, they said, was not in line with the cardinal principles upheld by them as English Congregationalists. A pamphlet was published in

¹ *Church Union, News and Views*, Vol. II, No. 3, p. 86.

1929 by a missionary¹ of the London Missionary Society in Trivandrum which contained an examination of the Proposed Scheme from the Congregational standpoint and was issued with the approval of seventeen ministers and eight laymen of four Church Councils of the South India United Church, namely, Travancore, North Tamil, Telugu and Kanarese. The points of objection raised in the pamphlet are noted below :—

"The advocates of the scheme claim that an attempt has been made to conserve for the united Church the elements of value in each of the traditions that are to be brought together, and the scheme itself contemplates affiliation with, amongst others, the World Union of Congregational Churches. It seems to me doubtful whether the vital elements in such diverse traditions as are represented can be preserved in any scheme which contemplates so close and rigid an organic union as this scheme does. But let us examine some of the vital elements in Congregationalism and see what prospect there is of their conservation. We have, of course, to bear in mind that Congregationalists who have entered the S.I.U.C. have already to some extent modified their Congregational practices. We shall refer again to this matter later. Meanwhile it will be interesting to see how far this new scheme will take us from the strictly Congregational position.

1. *The individual congregation and the individual church member.* One of the most obvious characteristics of historic Congregationalism has been the importance it has attributed to the individual congregation and to the individual church member. The ideal of a Congregational Church is a group of sincere believers in Christ, conscious that they are called by Him out of a worldly life, to live in fellowship with Him and with one another. When this fellowship gathers together in solemn meeting they believe their Lord is in the midst of them guiding them by His Spirit. Thus they cannot submit their consciences so guided to any outside authority. Hence such a congregation claims the right to govern itself, to call its own minister, to decide its own

¹ Rev. A. H. Legg, *An examination from the Congregational point of view, with some suggestions* (City Press Trivandrum).

membership, to decide its own form of worship, and to formulate its own statement of belief if it desires to do so. It may take advice from outside its own membership, but the responsibility of decision remains with it. In this governance of the church each adult communicant member has an equal voice. The knowledge and gifts of the members will certainly vary and so will the influence they exert on the common life. But we cannot confine the guidance of the Holy Spirit either to the intellectually gifted or to the theologically learned. Thus we believe we have no right to deny to any full church member a voice in all the affairs of the church. Each member should, in fact, feel a personal responsibility to participate in them to the best of his opportunity and ability.

Now in the United Church as outlined in this scheme it seems certain that this emphasis on the importance of the individual congregation and individual church member would disappear. They would be swamped in a vast and complex organisation, would become mere cogs in the machine. A church would not be able to call its own minister or suspend its own backsliding members (see Section 7 Part 1, A, 3, 4 & 5). The bishop or the Diocesan Council might often act in accordance with the wish and judgment of the congregation, but they might also often act contrary to them. As regards worship, it is laid down that every pastor and congregation shall have full freedom in determining the form of worship to be used on any occasion, but this is subject to any special regulations the Synod may issue hereafter (Section 9, A, 2) and it is not clear whether Sections 7, Part 1, A, 2 and 9, D make the bishop's directions concerning the use in worship on certain occasions of special services and prayers, and the creeds, a matter of compulsion or of mere advice. These provisions certainly seem to leave loopholes for an outside interference with the worship of a congregation which would be intolerable to the Congregational temper. Again, though it is stated that the privilege of participation in the governance of the church will be confined to adult communicant members, it is nowhere stated that every adult communicant member will thus participate, nor does this seem to be implied. It is on the contrary laid down that the Synod or Diocesan Council will have power to attach other conditions to the exercise of this privilege (Section 6, 3). It is certainly laid down somewhat vaguely

that "provision should also be made . . . for general meetings of each congregation for purposes to be defined by the Diocesan Council." (Section 8, A, 3), but for what purposes it could meet it is not easy to see. Every normal function of the Church Meeting as we understand it (except the one of appointing the elected members of the pastorate committee, see Section 8, A, 2) seems to have been already taken away from it and distributed amongst the bishop, the Diocesan Council, the presbyter, the pastorate committee etc. In general we may say that the conception of the Church as a complex organisation with its graduated hierarchies of authorities, in which the individual congregation and the individual member become but cogs in the wheel, is far removed from the Congregational point of view. Such an organisation may seem good from a political or administrative point of view, but it seems to me to be remote from the simplicity of Christ.

Congregationalists themselves are fully aware that their position may easily lead to an extreme independency which becomes almost oblivious of its neighbours and neglectful of its responsibilities towards its brethren in other congregations. But the modern history of the denomination in England (I cannot speak of America) demonstrates that the position of the individual congregation and of the individual member can be maintained alongside of a very close and vital fellowship and co-operation between the various congregations, as witness both the organisation and the practical work of the denomination at home, and the tremendous co-operative effort of Congregationalists in the support of Foreign Missions. The possibility of combining the emphasis on the individual congregation and member with a real union and co-operation between congregations has also been demonstrated with varying degrees of success in those churches in South India which owe their origin mainly to Congregationalists.

2. *The ministry and the sacraments.*—Congregationalists believe in a ministry. But they have no room for priests. Let me explain more closely what I mean, for the terms are open to various interpretations. We believe in a ministry in the sense that we believe that Christ calls certain people to devote themselves specifically to the work of the Church and of evangelisation, and that the Holy Spirit guides the Church to set apart such people for that work. But we do

not believe that there are any functions of the ministry which cannot be properly and validly performed by un-ordained members of the Church. Such a belief, we feel, imports both into the idea of the ministry and into the idea of the sacraments an untrue element. A view of the sacraments which makes their validity depend on their celebration by a special class of religious officials, instead of making it depend solely on the spiritual condition of the worshippers together with that of the officiating person, imports, we feel, into the rite an element of magic which is to be found in the rites of many non-Christian forms of belief, and most powerfully perhaps in the lowest forms, and which we believe to be sub-Christian. The same applies to any insistence on the vital necessity of particular formulae being repeated at the rite.

Here, it seems to me, we have an irreconcilable cleavage upon the matters of the ministry and the sacraments. On the one hand we have a ministry called and set apart indeed to devote itself in a specific way to certain work, but without exclusive rights or powers inherent in it; on the other hand a ministry which is conceived to be the sole channel of certain gracious operations of the Holy Spirit. On the one hand we have a rite solely expressing, and dependent for its benefits on, the spiritual condition of the worshipper; on the other hand a rite which though indeed it is said 'to be made effective by faith' is also dependent on certain extraneous details as to the person who conducts it and the manner of its performance which are not matters appertaining to his faith or sincerity or those of the worshippers.

We have in the S.I.U.C. departed in practice from the strictly Congregational position here by limiting the administration of the sacraments to ordained men (though I believe this is not quite rigidly adhered to in all parts of the S.I.U.C.). But we have not necessarily departed in theory. We have restricted our complete liberty in the interests of order and decency, and perhaps also in the interests of union with other parts of the S.I.U.C. But our theory remains the same. It is well known however that some parties to the Proposed Scheme intend these restrictions to be laid down as the unvarying rule of the united Church not from motives of order or convenience, but from theories of the ministry and sacraments outlined above with which we are in entire disagreement. If we enter this scheme it seems

clear that we shall not only bind these non-Congregational practices irrevocably upon the Indian Church, but we shall do much to fasten upon the church theories which are repugnant to us.

From what has been said above it will be clear that our idea of the ministry leaves no room for the theory of Apostolic Succession, for that introduces again the idea of a ministry to which certain graces and powers are inherent and restricted. Now the Proposed Scheme does not include belief in the theory of Apostolic Succession. It bases itself on the 'Historic Episcopate in a constitutional form', and distinctly says that no particular theory concerning episcopacy is intended to be implied thereby. (Section 3, B). On the other hand there is nothing to rule out any connection between the Historic Episcopate and the theory of Apostolic Succession. Is this sufficient? It seems quite clear that the phrase Historic Episcopate will mean one thing to one party to the Union and another thing to another party. And when the phrase on which such a double interpretation is sure to be placed concerns so important a matter, and is made so central to the scheme, it seems a very insecure basis on which to build a vital spiritual union. The very emphatic insistence on the maintenance of 'continuity with the historic episcopate both initially and thereafter' (Section 3, B, 3) is itself calculated to inculcate upon the church ideas of a ministry in sole possession of certain graces and powers which can be passed on almost mechanically from one to another, and which are radically contrary to the whole Congregational conception.

These fears are strengthened by the provisions for the consecration of bishops in the new united Church. The present Anglican bishops in the area are to be accepted as bishops of the new church, apparently without any act of consecration or commission by the non-Anglican sections (Section 3, C, 1) presumably because they are already in continuity with the Historic Episcopate, while non-Anglican ministers to be consecrated at the inauguration of the union will be consecrated by the laying on of hands of bishops and of presbyters of their own churches (Section 15, B, 4, e). All further consecration of bishops after the union is consummated is to be by the laying on of hands of bishops only, though presbyters are to be associated with the bishop in the ordination of presbyters. (Section 3, B, 4).

The bishop of Madras pointed out at the Kodaikanal Conference recently that the Anglican Church has never officially determined whether bishops constitute a distinct grade of the ministry or are only presbyters to whom special functions are entrusted. This may be so, but the tendency of this scheme is undoubtedly towards the recognition of bishops as a distinct grade in the hierarchy. After the union they cannot be consecrated except by members of their own grade, and we see from the arrangements for the initial consecrations that the essential element in the consecration is not a commission from the whole church (else why are not the present Anglican bishops to receive some commission from the non-Anglican sections) but the element of continuity with the Historic Episcopate.

This tendency to make the bishops a separate grade in the hierarchy is also seen elsewhere. Thus both in the Diocesan Councils and in the Synod certain vetoes are reserved for the bishops, and these vetoes cover all matters directly concerned with the faith and doctrine of the church, the conditions of church membership, the functions of ordained ministers, and worship and forms of worship. (Section 8, B, 3; and 8, C, 7). This seems to leave free only such religiously minor matters as are purely administrative or financial, and even some administrative matters are reserved for the bishops, e.g. location of ministers etc. These immense reservations of power, both in doctrine, worship, and administration, to the bishops, I need hardly say, are extremely remote from our view, both of the nature and functions of the ministry, and of the importance of the individual congregation and individual member guided by the Holy Spirit.

3. *Creeds.* I do not think that as Congregationalists we have any fundamental objection to statements of belief provided they are not thrust upon us by others against our conscience. But creeds have too often in the past been used as tests to curtail the liberty of Christian men to follow what they believed to be the guidance of the Holy Spirit for us to be altogether comfortable about accepting them. The Scriptures are the ultimate standards of faith. But they, it is said, are liable to diverse interpretations, may be quoted to support almost any view, and contain much besides what is of vital importance to the Christian faith. Hence the necessity, it is argued, for a creed to give in a

brief form the vital elements of the Christian faith and the Church's official interpretation of them. There are advantages here, but not so many as might seem. Creeds seem invariably to contain some matters of historic fact or theological theory which can hardly be said to be essential to a saving faith in Christ, and in common practice belief in the various clauses is not considered equally vital. Even with creeds, too, there is room for various interpretations to creep in. Hence it is a little difficult to see what advantage there is in adding the creeds to the Scriptures as the standard of faith. Moreover, creeds are phrased in the terms of their own age, some of which are out of date. Thus while fully realising the value of creeds in the historic development and safeguarding of doctrine, it still seems to some of us that the disadvantages they may entail outweigh their advantages when considered as a basis on which to build a church.

In examining the proposed scheme I find that the Holy Scriptures are laid down as the ultimate standard of faith, and the uniting churches "accept the Apostles' Creed and the Creed commonly called the Nicene, as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith" (Section 3, A). There are no credal tests laid down for ordinary members of the church (Section 6, 2), but in the preparation of candidates for baptism one of the two creeds mentioned shall be used as a basis of part of the necessary instruction, though the candidate need not in answering questions use the actual words of the creed. (Section 6, 6). But the ordained minister will be required before ordination to "affirm his sincere belief in the truths witnessed to by the Nicene Creed" as well as to accept the Governing Principles of the Church and any doctrinal statement which the united Church might in future draw up for the purpose. It is here that difficulty may be felt. It is argued that while ordinary members may be free from credal tests, ministers as the teachers of the Church should conform to a certain standard. There is some force in this argument. But I wonder how many Congregational ministers would feel unable to accept the creed laid down? Personally I should not feel any insuperable difficulty about it. The phrase 'truths witnessed to by' (which we are told has been deliberately inserted instead of simply 'accept the Nicene Creed' or 'believe in the Nicene Creed') seems to me at least to leave room for the phrases

of the creed to be interpreted in the light of the historic controversies and the philosophic outlook of the age which gave rise to it. This is however something of a mental 'shuffle', and moreover the individual bishop would have considerable power to demand his own interpretation of the creed, since he has to make enquiries concerning the ordinand and will only bring his name forward if he considers the candidate fit to be ordained (Section 7, Part 1, A, 3-). A simple modern statement of belief (such as the S.L.U.C. has as its basis) would be much preferable. Such a statement could easily safeguard vital points such as the Divinity of Christ for which, we are told the Anglicans are apprehensive if the old creeds be not laid down. The use of these old creeds, of course, would form a link with certain other episcopal churches, and some are reluctant to give them up on that account. But in this matter, as also in the matter of the Historic Episcopate, it seems doubtful whether a satisfactory union scheme can at present be drawn up to face both towards the Free Churches and towards certain other old episcopal churches.

4. *Relations with other Churches.* This is a vital subject would the scheme end by restricting such freedom as we now have in our relationships with other churches? Or would it bring us into closer fellowship with other churches? Let us take first the question of recognition of ministry and intercommunion with other churches. As Congregationalists we are willing to recognise the ministry of all churches as valid ministries, and we are willing to have intercommunion with all who are willing so to allow us.

The scheme lays down that the united Church would seek to be in such relations of communion and fellowship with other churches as are now maintained with those churches by the various parties to the union, and will seek to keep in touch with them by means of affiliation with the world assemblies of such bodies, and by visiting delegates to the assemblies of the bodies whose missions have established the various portions of the united church. (Section 4, A.). It further lays down that while the united church will have power to regulate from time to time in such manner as it thinks desirable the relations of its ministers and members with other churches, yet it will be its intention that none of the ministers or members of the united church shall because of the union forego any rights of intercommunion or inter-

celebration which they possessed before the union. (Section 4, B, 1 & 2). Now the scheme is far from clear here. But there seems to be a distinction between the position of the united Church as such, and that of individuals who enter it. Though individual ministers and members would retain such rights of intercommunion as they personally possessed before the union, there is nothing to suggest that the united church, as a church, would accept that intercommunion for itself in the case of non-Anglican Churches. For example, I might personally retain the privilege of intercommunion with Baptist churches which I now enjoy, but there is nothing to show that the united Church, as a Church, would be in relations of intercommunion with the Baptists. If this is the correct interpretation of the scheme, as it seems to be, it means that while I personally should not suffer any deprivation of these privileges I should nevertheless have entered a church that is, as a church, 'closer' than my present one. And it would become 'closer' and 'closer' as time went on and the original non-Anglican members passed away.

It is further laid down that for thirty years succeeding the inauguration of the union ministers of any church whose missions have founded the originally separate parts of the united Church may be received as ministers of the united Church if they assent to the basis of union and the constitution. But it is noteworthy that these are spoken of as 'exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry' which will be reconsidered after thirty years have elapsed. Now how will this work out? It means that while the united Church will seek to be in communion and fellowship with the Congregational churches of England, and will recognise and accept an ordained Congregational minister from England for the first thirty years, yet after that period is completed it is at least possible that English Congregational ministers would no longer be regarded as ministers in the churches founded by the L.M.S., and intercommunion with English Congregationalism would cease. This possibility is converted, I think, into a probability by the consideration that the united Church's insistence on maintaining close continuity with the Historic Episcopate, and its desire for closer fellowship with other such episcopal churches, would inevitably tend to push it towards a withdrawal of recognition of non-episcopal ministries."

On the ground of these objections the English Congregationalists suggested a few alterations to the Proposed Scheme which, if accepted, they hoped, would tend to remove their fears and convince them that a real effort has been made to meet their point of view.

CHAPTER VII. ANGLICAN REPLY TO THE CONGREGATIONALISTS

The objections to the scheme raised by the Congregationalists of South India were met by Bishop Western of Tinnevely in a letter¹ published in July 1929, where in the clearest terms the Bishop explained from the Anglican standpoint each of the points raised in the pamphlet referred to in the last chapter. The reply was as follows:—

*Bishopstowe,
Palamcottah,
16th July 1929.*

Dear Mr. Legg,

I have naturally read with great interest your "Examination from the Congregational point of view" of the proposed Scheme of Union, and feel I should like to make some remarks upon it, especially where I hope that I can give some helpful examination, or otherwise advance useful discussion. It was a great pity that things were so crowded at Kodaikanal that those who desired to discuss closely the union proposals did not have as much opportunity as might have been desired.

¹ Bishop Western, A letter on the Proposed Scheme of Union, with special reference to Rev. A. H. Legg's *Examination from the Congregational point of view* (A. M. Lenox Press; Pasumalai).

1. *Self-government in the individual congregation*—It is natural that many of your points should come under this general heading. I should like to refer to the following special points:—

1. You refer to a congregation claiming the right in Congregationalism "to call its own ministers". I rather think that this phrase covers what the Anglicans, the Wesleyans and the S.I.U.C. distinguish as *ordination* on the one hand and *location* on the other hand. In the S.I.U.C. ordination is not in the hands of an individual congregation, and I am not sure how far you are desiring that it should be. With regard to *location*, the scheme certainly has a centralising idea; I do not know whether more so than in the S.I.U.C. The reference to "other bodies" in Section VII (A) 4 would include, and was meant to include, individual congregations. I do not think that there would be any objection to a diocese adopting a scheme in which the individual congregation had a considerable say in the location of a minister to them, though I think the three negotiating Churches would all wish that there should also be representation of the district or diocese. It would not be regarded as a vital point that the executive decision should be made by one man, but this would probably be argued for on practical grounds.

2. You desire on page 15 Sec. (a) "an increased element of self-government". I should be glad to know in what matters this would operate apart from the one already mentioned?

3. With regard to worship—(a) The special regulations referred to in Sec. IX A (2) could not, of course, be such as would be against the general principles laid down in Sec. E of the basis of union. It was thought, however, that certain such regulations might from time to time be found advisable, similar to that given in Sec. IX (C), and that in the Holy Communion service there would be progress towards a common form or forms [as noted in Sec. IX (B)] which would come to be a subject of special regulations.

(b) I cannot understand how Sec. IX (D) offers any possibility of danger. It is said that the Synod *may* give directions concerning occasions on which the Apostles and Nicene Creeds *may* appropriately be used in worship. This phrasing was definitely adopted in order to bar the idea of compulsion in the 'directions'. It has no connection with the

powers of the individual bishop. With regard to the individual bishop no element of compulsion was intended by the word "issue" in Sec. VII A (2).

If necessary, changes of wording could easily be made which would make these points free from any possibility of misunderstanding. It certainly was not intended to leave loopholes for outside interference with the worship of a congregation.

4. With regard to the powers of an individual congregation to decide its own membership and suspend its own backsliding members, I fear that we here come to a point at which a strong Congregational point of view is not compatible with that taken in the Scheme. But does an individual congregation in the S.I.U.C. exercise the powers of excommunication?

5. The participation of every adult communicant member in the governance of the church—The provision in Section VII (3) was to give the Synod or a Diocesan Council the power to lay down that the actual exercise of the right of sharing in the government of the church should depend on the payment of certain church dues. This may not be the case in England, but most Churches find it desirable in India, and I trust that you would not hold that it is a vital principle that all communicant members must have the power of voting whether they do anything to support the church or not.

Generally with regard to the freedom of the individual congregation, I think the truth is that in any union between Churches, it would be impossible to maintain the full Congregational position. The question now before us is (i) to what extent the present scheme goes further than the S.I.U.C. in restricting the liberty of the congregation and (ii) whether the proposed union would interfere more than that the S.I.U.C. does with the members of it holding Congregational theories.

I do not think that the fact that some parties to the scheme desire certain rules not only from motives of order or convenience but from theories of the ministry and sacraments with which others are in disagreement need in itself operate in the direction of (ii). The whole point of the union is that it would be equally legitimate for members of the united Church to hold different views, whether Congregational or

Anglican. Either party will be precluded from preaching its views as being the doctrine of the united Church, but members of either party will be free to preach their own views of what is right, and to justify the actual arrangements followed by the united Church on one ground or another. I should therefore like you to consider further how far it is true that "we shall do much to fasten upon the Church theories which are repugnant to us". What you will actually do is to allow these theories to be held in the Church, and to have a Church order which is compatible with them. These things, I urge, are necessary in any union scheme.

II. *The ministry and the sacraments*

1. The Historic Episcopate. I venture to think that you have fallen into an ambiguity when you say "it seems quite clear that the phrase Historic Episcopate will mean one thing to one party to the union and another thing to another party". This is true if by the word "mean" is meant "bear a value" or "have connected with it certain theories"; but it is not true in the purely factual and historical sense in which the historic episcopate is intended to be referred to in the Basis of Union. In conversation at Kodaikanal I expressed it as follows:—

"The uniting Churches accept as part of their basis of union a system of constitutional episcopacy which is continuous with that which has prevailed in history in the Christian Church".

I have not the slightest doubt that the Anglican members of the Joint Committee would be entirely ready to accept this or some similar phrasing which would make the point clear. The phrase "the historic episcopate" is simply a brief description of a certain institution which is a fact in history. It is proposed that the united Church should accept this institution in a carefully limited and defined form, theories about it being barred.

On page 15 you ask that there should be a clause "definitely ruling out connection between the historic episcopate and the theory of apostolic succession". Here I think you need to be more clear. Do you mean that in the constitution the theory of apostolic succession should be denied? Surely not, for this would be contrary to the basic idea that different persons or groups in the united Church shall be free to

hold different theories. Or do you mean that the general statement that the acceptance of the historic episcopate is not intended to imply or to express judgment on any theory concerning episcopacy is to be given an explicit application to the case of the theory of apostolic succession? I think you must mean this. But is it reasonable that the general negative statement should be given explicit application in one direction only? If one is to say explicitly "the acceptance of the historic episcopate does not imply acceptance of a theory of apostolic succession", should not one equally say "the acceptance of the rules of Church order given in this constitution do not imply any theory of the parity of presbyters and do not imply any theory of the fundamental liberty of congregations? One could make a long list of particular theories in different directions, each of which is to be allowable in the united Church but none of which is to be taken as necessarily implied by the arrangements adopted, and it would be strange to pick out one of them. Nor do I see how the general negative statements in Section (B) of the basis of union could be put more strongly or more widely.

2. I should like to say a little more about "the theory of apostolic succession". I expect you will have observed at Kodaikanal that no very satisfactory definition of this was given, whether by Anglicans or by others. This, in fact, was because the phrase covers several different views of history and several different theories of Church order. Some of them are the following, though I would not venture to say that I have stated them all, or have distinguished them accurately:—

(a) The alleged historic fact that there has been an interrupted succession of consecration of bishops by bishops right back to the Apostles. I think that few people would hold this now; certainly no respectable Church historians would claim at the very most more than a probability, and many would not do this.

(b) A real continuity in the life of the Church from the apostolic times, which expressed itself in a definite rule as soon as the order of the Church came to be defined in the sub-apostolic age.

(c) The conception that bishops are successors by right, and by the working out by the will of God through the

Church, of the governing powers which it is held that the Apostles exercised.

(d) The belief that the validity of those sacraments only is guaranteed which are administered by those ordained by bishops of the regular succession.

(e) The belief that to have bishops of this regular succession is a safeguard of apostolicity in doctrine.

The last two of these are not dependent on a rigid belief with regard to the completeness of the historical succession. I may also remark that in the early Church it was (e) on which more stress was laid, and the question of the validity of sacraments was thought about later; and similarly at the present day, there are not many Anglican theologians who would wish to make a rigid idea of validity of sacraments the cardinal thought.

I mention all these, you see, not with a view of arguing for the idea of apostolic succession in any particular form, but to suggest that it does not really help matters to speak of "this theory of apostolic succession". Experience in the Church of England shows that the system of the historic episcopate can co-exist with a very wide variety of theories about apostolic succession in one sense or another and indeed, in the case of many Evangelicals, with a denial of it in almost every sense. The institution of the historic episcopate most certainly does not necessarily imply the idea of a ministry "which is conceived to be the sole channel of certain gracious operations of the Holy Spirit" or "to which certain graces and powers are inherent and restricted". Indeed I think that there are few if any Anglo-Catholics who would accept these phrases as expressing their views. But even if there be some such, I must insist that it is a general principle of the union that there must be room in the united Church for those who hold these views, as equally for those who believe that there are no functions of the ministry which cannot be properly and validly performed by unordained members of the Church. I submit that the case of the Church of England itself, or again of the Swedish Church, shows that it is quite possible to include very different view on this matter within one Church, and that to have a rule of episcopacy does not in practice lead to any one theory about episcopacy.

3. You suggest that the Anglican bishops who are taken over into the united Church should receive some form of

commission from the presbyters of the non-Anglican sections. I do not think that our bishops, or our Church, would have any special objection to this. But we should have to think out why it was done and what it meant. The scheme adopts as part of the basis of union a system of constitutional episcopacy continuous with that which has prevailed in history in the Christian Church. Or in other words, the uniting Churches say "Without any theories but believing that it is an useful system, one under which we can unite and one which will help us towards further union, we intend to have bishops of the historic sort". Now these Anglican bishops are such already, hence from this point of view there is no need to add anything.

There is, however, another aspect, that of acceptance by the Church. I can quite see that some expression of this would be suitable. You know, doubtless, that in the Anglican theory, and indeed generally in the theory of episcopal churches, it is regarded as very important that bishops should be accepted and indeed chosen by the whole body of the faithful. Hence, though the consecration has always been by bishops, they have always, in the time of freedom of the Church, been elected by the clergy and laity, and there are vestigial remains of this even in the Church of England. With the freedom which the Anglican Church is gaining in India, such election will be the rule. I recognise that this is not quite what you are thinking of, but it does really bear on it. A bishop who is made such merely by consecration by other bishops, and in whose appointment the Church as a whole has had no part, is not altogether a true bishop; and in fact, certain Anglo-Catholics in England have been pressing this of recent years as a reason why they will not admit that bishops have the authority which they claim.

III. *Credal tests.* With regard to this, I think that the distinction between the following two things must be kept clear:—

- (a) The demanding from candidates for ordination that they should undergo a somewhat detailed examination as to their faith and beliefs.
- (b) The demanding of subscription to or direct acceptance of a written creed or other statement of belief.

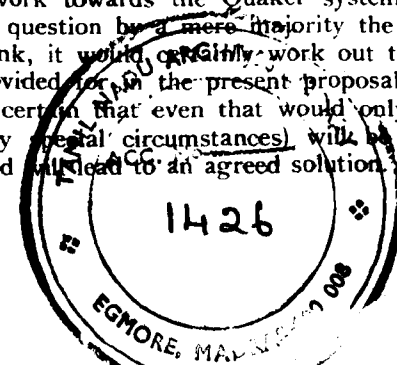
I am really not clear how your arguments are towards the reduction on demands under (a) and the acceptance of a candidate for ministry on the basis of a quite general affirmation of his faith, or how far they really concern (b). I must say that it seems to me that the proposals in the scheme have really done away with (b); the phrase "truths witnessed to by", does not, I really think, indicate any mental shuffle, but gets to the point which is at least partly that for which you stand, that the important thing is the truth and not any particular statement of it, however ancient.

Unless (a) is reduced to a very considerable extent, to say the least, I do not see how one can avoid the danger that a person (or equally a Board) who examines the candidate for ordination may make unreasonable demands of him or may insist on his (or their) own interpretation, and I do not think that experience shows that Boards are likely to be more free from the danger of doing this than individuals.

What you seem to me to mean, is that you wish that it should be possible for men to be ordained with less definiteness and fulness in their beliefs than would be indicated by para 3 of Section VII (D). I may, however, not understand you here.

IV. *The Bishop's veto.* With regard to the veto of a single bishop in the Diocesan Council, it is of purely suspensive action—Section VIII B (3). But perhaps you mean here that the Diocesan Council itself should have power to over-rule the bishop's objection. Is not the proposed solution of such a difficulty the reference of it to the Synod—much more satisfactory? For what is really sought, of course, is agreement, not victory of one side or another.

In the case of the Synod, no proposals have been made for the solution of a dead-lock between the body of bishops and the whole Synod, if such should occur. Perhaps some such provision should be made. But here again, what is really important is to get a system which will lead as far as possible to settlement of a question by agreement. The more one can work towards the Quaker system of refusing to settle any question by a mere majority the better. In practice, I think, it would ~~work out~~ ^{originally} work out that the delaying action provided for in the present proposals (and one may be pretty certain that even that would only be resorted to under very special circumstances) will be all what is required, and will lead to an agreed solution.



V. *Inter-communion*. This is certainly a vital point and has some special difficulties. You point to a distinction in section IV A & B between the united Church as such and the individual ministers and members thereof. This is so. In Section A we would readily have used precisely the same language on all sides, but found that this would not fit the facts. In fact, while in the Anglican conception various Churches as corporate bodies are in communion with each other, and this is expressed either by definite resolutions of Synods or other bodies or by formal acts of intercommunion, this does not hold among the Free Churches. So at least, we were assured at the Joint Committee. Hence in para 1 of IV (A) we used on the one side the phrase "in full communion" which has a well understood and defined meaning, and on the other side used as a more general phrase "such relations of communion and fellowship as are now maintained". Hence, on the side of the Free Churches the matter does mainly if not entirely seem to reduce itself to the question of the relation of the ministers and members of the united Church with other Churches.

Now at this point comes the question of what can and ought to be said now by the uniting Churches and laid down in the Basis of Union, and what must be left to the united Church itself. The line taken by the Joint Committee was, I think, definitely based on the view that it was impossible in fact to bind the united Church, and that if it were possible to do so it would be wrong. This, of course, cuts both ways, i.e., not only (as you hold) as not entirely guaranteeing your liberties, but equally (as the Anglo-Catholics are urging with great strength in England) as not finally determining matters on which they lay great stress. When the united Church itself makes decisions, it will always have to bear in mind their possible results on its relation with other Churches and on its own stability. On the one hand, if it were to make changes in the direction of too much rigidity, those of Free Church ancestry might break away; on the other hand, if they moved in the opposite direction the ex-Anglicans might find it impossible to remain in it. But, of course, the whole basis of the scheme, and the whole thing which makes it worth while, is the idea that with God's help it is possible for episcopal and other Churches to come together and stay together. Of course we do not believe that we have solved the whole

problem of re-union. I can quite see that our scheme could not, as it stands and at the present time, be accepted by some Churches. But it is in fact only dealing with three particular Churches.

It is not, perhaps, entirely relevant, but I should like here to say that the Anglican Church as a whole and certainly those Anglicans who took part in the Joint Committee are equally desirous of extending union towards the Free Churches and towards Churches such as the Greeks and Syrians and ultimately the Romans. What we do insist on is that union should always have the final goal in view, and that a partial union should not be such as would hinder further union. We Anglicans would not enter into this scheme unless it gave prospects of future developments of union with the Syrian Churches in India, but it is equally true to say that we would not enter into it unless it gave us prospects of development towards union with bodies like the Baptists and the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Yours sincerely,

FREDERICK TINNEVELLY.

The Anglican view regarding apostolic succession as explained by Bishop Western in II (2) above can be briefly stated in the words of Dr. Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester, who in the course of a critical analysis of the whole question has remarked as follows:—

"The idea of Apostolic Succession is really a deduction from the right theory of Orders, and the mistake has been to make Orders depend upon Apostolic Succession and transmission. The authority to consecrate and ordain, or to perform all spiritual offices, resides in, and comes from, the Church to which God has given His Spirit. The idea of transmission is an additional and later conception which, instead of expressing the idea of succession, has by its exaggeration of it led to a rigid and mechanical theory of the ministry. As the grace of Orders depends upon the authority of the Church and not upon a mechanical transmission, all objections from supposed irregularities of ordination are beside the point, and the opinions of churchmen

and others who have maintained that in certain circumstances a presbyter may ordain, are explained. Ordination depends upon the authority of the Church, and not the Church upon Ordination."

When the twelfth General Assembly of the South India United Church met at Bangalore in October, 1929, the delegates from the London Missionary Society in Travancore proposed amendments to the scheme and asked for the deletion of the word 'historic' from the phrase 'Historic Episcopate' as used in the scheme, and also for the omission of the expression 'without intending thereby to imply, or to express a judgment on, any theory concerning Episcopacy'.

As there was considerable debate on the proposed amendment, the Assembly resolved to appoint a committee to draw up a summary of the discussions, together with other points on which there were differences of opinion, and report to the Assembly during its sessions. This committee presented its report after two days suggesting that the words, 'in doing so, they declare that no particular theory regarding Episcopacy shall become the official doctrine of the united Church, and they do not commit themselves to the position that episcopal ordination is the dividing line between a valid and an invalid ministry,' be substituted for the expression which the London Mission delegates had proposed to omit. In view of this modification these delegates withdrew their motion to amend the scheme.

The ninth session of the Joint Committee was held at Madras in November, 1930, when the resolutions of the Wesleyan Synod and of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon were considered. In the light of those resolutions modifications were effected in the wording of a number of paragraphs. The second edition of the scheme, thus revised in the light of fresh criticisms and suggestions, was published in 1931.

CHAPTER VIII.

A VOICE FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

In the January number of 'The Review of the Churches', 1930, there appeared a helpful review of the pamphlet referred to in the preceding chapters by Principal Garvie, then Vice President of the World Conference of Faith and Order. Dr. Garvie wrote as follows :—

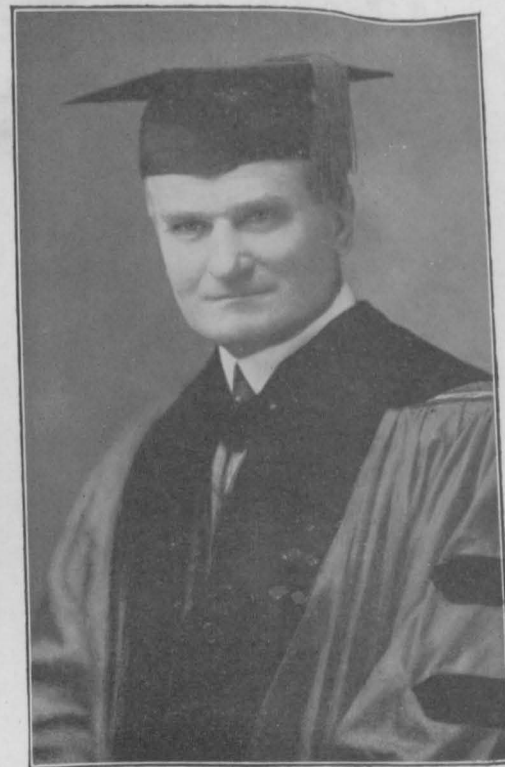
"If these proposals are to be discussed in the spirit which will be fruitful of good, and not bring forth mischief, there are certain general considerations which must not be even for a moment forgotten.

1. First of all let it be recognised that not only is the unity of the Church of Christ the dominant conception of the New Testament (a conviction which does not rest exclusively on the historical authenticity of the prayer of our Lord in John xvii but on the distinctive character of the Christian revelation); but that at the present hour there is a movement throughout Christendom to recognise the need, and to venture the endeavour of realising that ideal a movement which, if we accept the promises of Christ regarding the gift of the Spirit, we cannot but accept gratefully and obediently as of His leading. For me at least the vision of the one body of Christ as the completion of Him who is completing all things in all men is ever becoming more distinct and certain; and I dare not be disobedient to the heavenly vision. It is only as the churches become inspired by that vision that they will have wisdom enough to discover and devise, and grace enough to approve and adopt, the best conditions for the re-union of the churches.

Secondly, it is most significant that it is in the mission field that the desire for re-union is asserting itself most strongly. China, Japan and India have a need of, and a welcome for, Christ as Saviour and Lord; but no use for the divisions of Western Christendom, many of which can be understood only in the light of their history, and must be unintelligible to those who have not the same background in their past. He incurs a very serious responsibility who

because of his attachment to one or other type of Western Christendom sets himself to hinder or to delay that desire for a united Church. It is significant that the movement in India began with the group of thirtythree men, all Indians, except two. Whether the proposed scheme does or does not express the Indian mind, originally and independently active, is a question to which we shall return in examining it more closely.

Thirdly, as the Indian Christians are not yet so completely emancipated from the influence, theological and ecclesiastical, of the European missionaries, there does rest upon these latter the responsibility of advising and guiding. But in realising the responsibility it will be necessary for them to discriminate very carefully, with candour and courage, between principles, essentials to the being and well-being of the Church of Christ on earth, which have asserted themselves in the history of the Western Churches, and personal preferences and prejudices which are not rooted in the nature of Christianity, but spring out of the local and temporary conditions under which these principles found their first historical expression. To use a concrete illustration, I hold as essential to the being and the well-being of the Church that congregational principle should find recognition in its polity, and that so long as this principle is ignored, the ideal of the Church is not being realised. The principle is that the Church consists of believers, and that on them, dependent on, and guided by the Spirit, rests the government of the Church. On the historical occasion when the Independent or Separatist Churches came into being, that principle could be asserted only by the claim of "the gathered people" (gathered in the name of Christ) to be independent of bishop and king or queen in going on with the reform of the Church according to the New Testament pattern, as they understood it, "without tarrying for any". But from this principle I distinguish the practice of the Congregational Churches. The individual congregation need not, and ought not in all circumstances, to assert its independence. For more intimate fellowship, for more sustained order, for more effective working, it should be ready to surrender that independence. For I do not, and cannot believe, that the Spirit of God confines its guidance to the local church, or congregation, and withholds its leading from presbyteries, synods, assemblies.



Rev. John J. Banninga, D.D.



Fourthly, I must frankly confess that the missionaries of the London Missionary Society are least justified in insisting on the preservation of not only the Congregational principle, but of Congregational practices; for, although the Society now derives almost the whole of its income from Congregational sources, and has in recent years come into closer association with the Congregational organisations, yet, as at the beginning it was interdenominational, so it has continued to be in principle to the present day. It has always claimed that it is not concerned with sending to the ends of the earth Congregationalism, or any other Church polity, but only the Gospel of the grace of God. It is inconceivable that it could now narrow its basis, and object to the Proposed Scheme because it is not Congregational.

Lastly, one is, in my judgment, justified in making this distinction between permanent principle and temporary practice. At one time every type of polity was defended and commended by an appeal to the New Testament. I agree with those scholars (now a majority) who hold that the authority of the New Testament cannot be claimed for any one type; in the Primitive Church there are elements out of which each of the types could be developed. Each local congregation was called a Church, and exercised the functions of the Church locally. There were elders or bishops and deacons in the Churches; and an assembly or synod was held in Jerusalem to deal with the question of the circumcision of the Gentiles; the apostles exercised a decisive influence throughout all the Churches. No polity has an exclusive claim. The polity of a United Church should be comprehensive, leaving room for, and making use of, all the elements which these polities have preserved.

2. Coming now to a closer scrutiny, let me at once call attention, very briefly, to what seems specially valuable in these proposals. Dr. Banninga has set them out so fully that I need only refer to them; the recognition that the unity of the Church is spiritual, although it must seek manifestation, the acceptance of the Scriptures "as containing all things necessary to salvation and as the ultimate standard of faith," and of the two creeds only "as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith" (not subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, the Westminster Confession of Faith, or Wesley's Sermons); the abstinence from any definition of the subjects or mode of Baptism; the description of the ministry in terms

which I hold as a conviction rooted deep in my own experience; the acceptance of the historic episcopate qualified in two ways, the recognition that the presbyteral and congregational elements "should have their appropriate places," and the admission that no theory of episcopacy is by such acceptance implied or expressed; the inclusion in the initial ministry of the Church of all ministers of the uniting Churches as ministers of the Word and the Sacraments, and also in its membership of all members with "all the rights and privileges of membership"; the liberty accorded as to the forms of worship to be used; the independence of the Church of any civil government; the continuance of fellowship with the other Churches with which the uniting Churches now have fellowship; the consideration to be shown in the administration of the Church to "the conscientious convictions of its ministers and members"; the conservation for the ministers of all their present rights and privileges. When we compare these intentions with what we know in England of the relation of the Church of England and Nonconformity—in theory at least, for in many cases the practice is better than the theory,—we must gratefully recognise how great an advance has been secured. Should these proposals be adopted, dare we not hope that this South Indian Church would become a leaven among the Churches to promote Christian reunion? What I should suggest as the more Christian way is, not to think only or mainly of the concessions which we, as Congregationalists, for instance, are asked to make, but what are the concessions which Episcopalians, if they accept these proposals, will make. The renunciation of prejudices and preferences will not all be on one side. Let not each man look only on his own things, but also on the things of others.

3. Let me next frankly acknowledge the objections which have been, and can be, made. *Firstly*, there is truth in the statement of Rev. A. H. Legg, L.M.S. missionary at Trivandrum, in a pamphlet which he has issued in criticism of the Proposed Scheme. "The Scheme cannot be said to be an Indian Christian production. Though Indians have co-operated on the various Committees the scheme is undeniably in the main a production of Western missionaries" (p. 1). Although he offers this criticism as a reason for himself criticising it from a no less Western standpoint, yet he does call attention to a feature which is worth noting.

It may be that the Indian Churches have not yet developed a mind, original and independent enough, to desire and to secure such self-expression; and thus the Indian representatives have been led by their European colleagues. The missionaries, it is evident, have not been able to detach themselves sufficiently from their Western standpoint; or have had a prudent regard for what the Western supporting Churches would be prepared to concede. Or are we to understand that, Western as it seems, it is the best adapted to India's needs, so far as European missionaries and Indian converts can gauge that need? It is to be hoped that with self-government, and the growing influence of Indians in the Church, it will in due course become less Western, and more Indian. It is for that reason that I welcome the proposal that after thirty years the Church itself shall decide what (if any) exceptions to the episcopally ordained ministry shall be recognised; for I hope that by that time the home Churches, if they should still be sending out missionaries, will have enough wisdom and grace not to ordain them as ministers of the home Church, but to let them be ordained in India as ministers of the Church there.

Secondly, as a Congregationalist, as one who believes, and tries to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath set us free, I must express disappointment at the elaboration of the organisation which is presented in these proposals. It may be that the conditions of the Church in India at present demand all this provision of government, but the principle of episcopal authority seems to me to outweigh what should be companion principles, presbyterial equality, and congregational liberty. Without endorsing all Mr. Legg's criticisms, or sharing his spirit of suspicion of bishops and all their ways, or of fear that sacramentarian and sacerdotal theories will, through episcopal influences, be made to prevail, I sympathise with some of his practical suggestions. Knowing, as I do, the value of the Congregational order, I could wish that the proposals were more definite as to "privileges and obligations of membership", and "the conditions which the Synod or Diocesan Council might attach to the exercise of the privilege of participation in the government," and also the "provision for general meetings of each congregation for purposes to be defined by the Diocesan Council." This all seems to point to government imposed on the people, and not derived from them.

The admission of their fellow-members, the nomination of their pastors, and the administration of their own finances should, in my judgment, remain with the members of the Churches. (Here I am in agreement with Mr. Legg).

Thirdly, I am not quite sure whether the bishops have an absolute or only a suspensory veto on propositions vitally affecting the thought and the life of the Church. Are the two conditions, "If the bishops refuse to place such a proposition before the Synod for a final vote in any form whatever, or if the proposition fail to receive the support of the necessary majority" alternative or complementary? If complementary, I should certainly agree with Mr. Legg's suggestions: "the bishops' veto to become no longer valid if a measure be passed twice or thrice within a given period of years." Just as the absolute veto of the House of Lords has been abolished, so should that of the bishops, if that is what is intended. Because it seems so desirable that we should have an Indian type of Church as well as a British or American, do I deprecate the tendency in these proposals to too great rigidity.

Fourthly, it could also be desired that the superiority which the Anglican bishops seem to arrogate to themselves in the Inauguration of the Union should not be so asserted, but that in a spirit of humility in which the chief shepherds should be an example to the flock, they should accept some form of commission, the presbyters of the other Churches in some solemn act welcoming them as fellow-ministers of the grace of God (the Lambeth Conference appeal did express a willingness of the bishops to accept such an extension of their commission). I am afraid, however, that Mr. Legg is asking more than most Anglicans would bring themselves to concede when he asks for "the equal association of presbyters with bishops in all further consecrations" (p. 15). And to me it would seem ungracious to press for such a concession.

Lastly, as I felt myself driven to leave the Presbyterian Church because of the creed subscription required, I am very sensitive on that point; but the present proposals do not seem to me to lay any intolerable burden on the conscience, and it does not seem necessary to me to devise a means "of depriving the bishop of any right to demand any particular interpretation of a clause in the creed" (pp. 15-16), as such a provision shows a suspicion which fellow-

ministers of Christ should not cherish towards one another. The right to inter-communion with other Churches seems to me to be adequately provided for the present generation; and it is not desirable that we should legislate for generations yet unborn. I have felt it necessary to touch on the matters which Mr. Legg desires "to safeguard the vital elements in our position" (the Congregational).

4. There is one demand which he makes which seems to me to be absolutely unreasonable, and to show an intolerance of mind which I should not expect from a fellow-Congregationalist. "There must be a clause," he says, "definitely ruling out connection between the Historic Episcopate and the theory of Apostolic Succession" (p. 15). He admits that "the Proposed Scheme does not include belief in the theory of Apostolic Succession," and that "it bases itself on the Historic Episcopate in a constitutional form; and distinctly says that no particular theory concerning episcopacy is intended to be implied thereby" (pp. 6-7). What he is demanding is not freedom for himself to think of the episcopate as he will (for this is fully conceded); but bondage for the Anglican, who is not to be allowed to think of the episcopate in his own way. All prospect, not only of this particular union, but of any union among Churches of different traditions, would be ruled out as impossible by such intolerance. Nor is Mr. Legg justified in ascribing to Anglicans in their insistence on the Historic Episcopate, even if it rests on the belief in the Apostolic Succession, a magical view either of the sacraments or of ordination. Even if he himself feels that their view "imports into the rite an element of magic which is to be found in the rites of many non-Christian forms of belief and most powerfully perhaps in the lowest forms" (p. 5), he is not justified in assuming that that is how Anglicans regard the matter. The view which intelligent High Churchmen take is that Christ has provided His Church with an organisation (sacraments and ministry), and that He wills to use that, if not exclusively, as the channel of His grace; in obedience to His will they expect to receive His blessing as they should not expect it, were they using ways and means other than those of His appointing. While I myself do not hold this view, as I believe in the continued presence and guidance of His Spirit in the Church not "cribbed, cabined, and confined" to any organisation, this is something altogether

different from magic. That there may be Anglo-Catholics who incline to a superstitious view, I do not deny; but it is bearing false witness against a neighbour Church to represent a magical view as that which is generally held. Mr. Legg says of Congregationalists that "we do not believe that there are any functions of the ministry which cannot be properly and validly performed by unordained members of the Church" (p. 5). I should agree with him only with this qualification, that corporate functions of the Church, such as the administration of the sacraments, should not be discharged by an individual member at his own pleasure, but only when authorised in some way by the Church. Not Anglicans only, but Presbyterians and Wesleyan Methodists would restrict certain functions to ordained persons, not because of any magical view, but for the sake of order, that the Church shall authorise what is done in her name and on her behalf.

5. The impression Mr. Legg's pamphlet makes is that the Churches in South India will be deprived of their Congregational privileges by these proposals in deference to the claims of Anglicans. But he himself states that in the S.I.U.C. "independency has been markedly curtailed, though considerable elements of self-determination have been preserved to the individual congregation, especially if it is financially self-supporting." The administration of sacraments has been restricted to ordained ministers. A system of supervision somewhat reminiscent of the bishop and the Diocesan Council has grown up. "But because the system had been modified to suit practical considerations it must not be assumed that our theory has changed." (p. 14). I submit, however, that it is not a just method of argument to oppose the theory unmodified to the proposed scheme, when "to suit practical considerations" it has been modified. Whatever the merits of Congregationalism in theory, it has been found unsuitable in India. What seems to me to vitiate the argument of Mr. Legg's pamphlet is that the prejudices and suspicions against episcopacy, for which the history of the relation of the Church of England to the Nonconformist Churches offers some justification, hinder him in common with many Nonconformists from facing the actual situation, and judging the proposals simply on their merits. Let him in mind and heart transport himself out

of the England of past centuries into the India, China or Japan of today.

6. The alterations he asks for are much more moderate than the course and the tone of his argument would have led one to expect; and with all, except one of them, I feel a measure of sympathy, as I have already indicated, although I do not think all the changes he asks for necessary. There are respects in which the Scheme disappoints me. It hugs the shore of precedent and tradition too closely; it does not launch out into the deep of bold adventure to give India a Church that would express its genius, and not copy merely the principles and practices of Europe in the past; it does not trust fully enough for the future of the Church to the guiding and guarding Spirit of God. But, such as it is, it deserves to receive unprejudiced, unsuspicious, respectful and generous consideration. Rejection would, I fear, do untold mischief to the cause of Christ in India, and be a discouragement to union efforts generally. Unless for compelling reasons of conscience or conviction it must not be set aside. All Christians should pray that God's Spirit may so definitely and certainly guide all the Churches concerned, that the divine Will, through human illumination and consecration, shall prevail over human hindrances."

CHAPTER IX.

ANGLICAN REACTIONS IN ENGLAND

Subsequent to the publication of the first edition of the Scheme in 1929 there were reactions to it both by the Anglo-Catholic section and the Evangelical group in the Church of England.

Anglo-Catholic Manifesto, September 1929¹

A paper of comments on an earlier draft (Bangalore, June, 1928) of this Scheme, signed by most of the signatories of the following document, was presented in January, 1929,

¹ Pronouncements of the Quarter—The South Indian Scheme—*The Review of the Churches*, Vol. VII, No. 1; January 1930, pp. 177-179.

and published in English newspapers in April. It will be observed that we are now dealing with the Scheme in the final form prepared for presentation to the governing bodies concerned.

1. We wish first of all to express again our deep sympathy with Indian Christians in that, while Europeans have brought them the gospel, they have brought it by no means as the message of the one Catholic Fellowship, but burdened and obscured by our longstanding divisions and controversies. It is altogether right that they should resent these divisions in which they find themselves involved and which do not much interest them, and that they should resent them more and more as there awakens among them the desire that the Indian Church should stand on its own basis, and not be forced to regard itself as dependent on foreign Churches. We therefore welcome whole-heartedly the efforts being made in South India to terminate some at least of our existing divisions by working out a scheme of reunion which all the uniting bodies can accept without what they regard as a sacrifice of principle. Further, inasmuch as the influences under which those Indian Christians whom we are now considering have been brought, have been for the most part of a distinctively Protestant character, it is natural that their outlook should be of a like nature, and that they should take no account of the Roman Catholics of India who remain quite outside their purview. Even the Syrian Christians, who are their near neighbours, and form a very large group, are unfortunately not now included in the negotiations.

Home Interests

But it is obvious that the whole Anglican Communion must be interested in these negotiations, and is bound to examine them. What is proposed is a union of South Indian Christians, which would leave the united Church in full communion simultaneously with the Anglican body throughout the world and with a number of Protestant, non-episcopal

bodies. The provision that "none of the ministers or members of the united Church shall, because of the union, forego any rights with regard to inter-communion and inter-celebration which they possessed before the union," should also be noted. Thus we are directly concerned in the negotiations. The Anglican Communion is the home of Catholic-minded as well as of Protestant-minded people; and has, largely because this is the case, a special vocation to minister to the cause of general reunion. We are bound, therefore, to examine carefully any proposals for reunion in one direction to see if they contain anything which would render them impossible of acceptance by some considerable body of Anglicans, or anything which would render futile any efforts towards reunion in the other direction. If this is regarded as a drawback to the free development of the Anglican Communion—as it is—it is a drawback inherent in its professed comprehensiveness. It is, moreover, obvious that though the proposed Scheme of union is limited in its scope to a particular district—South India—it would, if approved, become a decisive precedent to be followed in many parts of the world.

3. While we are conscious that the Madras Committee has made some attempt to meet previous criticisms, and that some phrases in the Bangalore Report to which exception has been taken have disappeared from the Madras Report, yet the point of view evidently remains the same. There can, we fear, be no question that certain features remain which Catholic-minded persons must view with great anxiety, and some which may be found so inconsistent with their principles that they could not remain in communion with any Church which formally sanctioned them. We desire to call attention to some of the features in the proposed Scheme which in this respect have the most importance.

4. (a) The point of view expressed throughout the Report is that of the full recognition of the different ministries of the united Church. Thus we read: "That all the other ministers (i.e. other than the bishops) of the uniting Churches in

the area of the union shall be acknowledged as ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments in the united Church, each retaining the standing (whether as a minister authorised to celebrate the Holy Communion, or as a deacon or a probationer) which he had before union in his own Church." And the bishops are to take responsibility for the different types of ministry and give authorisation to the ministers. Now we gladly recognise that "the fruit of the Spirit" and His activity have been abundantly apparent in non-episcopal communions and their ministries—not least among the Friends, who repudiate sacramental ordinances—and we welcome the principle that "God is not tied to His Sacraments," but can give His gifts as and where He will; we recognise also how often separations from the Church have been due in great measure to the Church's own fault. And we do not feel any desire to ask of anyone, minister or layman of a non-episcopal communion, any expression of doubt as to the reality of the spiritual gifts which he believes himself to have received. But we must ask that they on their part should recognise that it has been the constant belief of Catholics that an episcopally ordained ministry which has descended in orderly succession from the Apostles is the only legitimate ministry of the Church, and that its recovery, where it has been lost, is the necessary condition of union.

Rewording necessary

Such of us as hold this belief cannot conscientiously accept any form of settlement which implies that there is no essential difference between one ministry and another, as if that were agreed upon by both parties and were the basis of union. We, therefore, think it would be necessary, if due regard is to be shown to a conviction which the Anglican Church has always hitherto respected, that there should be such rewording of various clauses as should make it evident that our Church is not being asked to commit itself to the principle of the equal validity of all ministries.

(b) It appears to us also that the possibility of holding in the Church of England the belief that an episcopally ordained ministry is essential would be definitely prejudiced if the Church of England were in full communion with a Church being, as is proposed, in full communion also with non-episcopal Churches. It should be made clear that, even in the proposed "United Church," so long as differently ordained ministers subsist side by side, union in the full sense would not have been attained. There would still be two different classes of ministers ministering side by side to different congregations; and they would obtain no fresh status in communions outside the area covered by the Scheme.

(c) When once the union is formed, it is proposed that all henceforth who are to be ordained to the ministry of the Church are to be ordained by bishops. After a time, therefore, all will have been so ordained. But during an interval, reckoned at thirty years, a large number of those who are to be fully recognised as ministers of the Word and Sacraments will have received no episcopal ordination, and during that period at least it will be possible for them to be admitted to the pastoral charge of (hitherto) Anglican congregations if it should not appear that this arrangement "would offend the conscientious convictions of any persons directly concerned." It is added, "or . . . would hinder the development of complete unity within the Church or imperil its subsequent progress towards union with other Churches." It is plain that these two latter conditions might operate in more than one direction. It will be remembered that the tradition among the Indian Christians of our communion would not in all cases have led them to resent such a suggestion. On the other hand, the General Council of the Church of England in India carefully excluded this very contingency. They asked for "a proviso that no non-episcopally ordained minister shall either temporarily or permanently be placed in charge of a congregation accustomed to an episcopally ordained minister" (with a corresponding proviso on the other side).

It is, then, in our judgment essential that the restriction contemplated by the General Council should be recognised unconditionally; if this is not done, the Anglican position would be compromised.

(d) We consider that the words "intention and expectation" do not adequately express a definite agreement that eventually all the ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the united Church are to be episcopally ordained. This agreement should be unequivocally expressed as the basis of union, and not as an "intention and expectation" only. Further, the clause concerning "the ministers of any Church whose missions have founded the originally separate parts of the united Church" to the effect that "after this period of thirty years, the united Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry," seems to us inconsistent with such an agreement as to the future, and should be omitted.

What has enabled the Anglican Communion to hold together in the past is the rule that "no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful bishop, priest or deacon in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined and admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following (i.e. in the Ordinal in the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England) or hath had formerly episcopal consecration or ordination". Its power of holding together in the future depends on the observation of this rule. It is equally true that its prospect of restoring inter-communion with, for instance, the Orthodox and old Catholic Churches depends on the same condition.

Catholic Tradition

5. In the proposed Scheme it is left entirely open whether in the united Church, Confirmation will be eventually required. Confirmation is equated with the services of admis-

sion to full membership or recognition of new members which have been in use in the existing South Indian United Church or among the Wesleyans, and indiscriminate freedom for Communion is accorded to unconfirmed persons. The rule of the English Church definitely requires Confirmation (or the desire for Confirmation) as the preliminary to Communion; and we do not believe that the Church has any right to treat as indifferent an Apostolic ordinance which has been constantly believed to be the completion of Baptism and the Sacramental means for the conveyance of the seven-fold gift of the Holy Spirit, and, therefore, a necessary and indispensable element in the life of the Church.

6. The matters treated of above seem to us to be of supreme importance. There are others which require serious attention, but can wait till a later stage. At present we have thought it right to speak only of matters which seem to us to concern the essence of the Catholic tradition.

7. In conclusion, we desire to repeat that it is most distasteful to us to suggest objections to any scheme which has reunion for its object. But it is obvious that we cannot refrain from regarding every local scheme in the light of its bearing on the whole field or from asking the question whether a particular method of healing one existing schism may not result in producing another. Studying carefully the proposed Scheme as a whole, we find it necessary to ask whether there is among those proposing to unite a degree of fundamental agreement as to the nature of the Church, the ministry, and the Sacraments, sufficient to form a basis for such a union as would satisfy the requirements of the standards to which we have hitherto been pledged; and since we consider that this question is one which can receive a satisfactory answer only from persons of responsible judgment who are familiar with the conditions on the spot, we should welcome a full and careful pronouncement about it by the General Council of the Church of England in India.

(Signed by)

The Rt. Rev. Charles Gore, D.D.
 The Rev. Prebendary F. E. Brightman, D.D.
 Fr. H. P. Bull
 The Rev. B. J. Kidd, D.D.
 The Rev. Prebendary Mackay
 The Rev. G. A. Michell, D.D.
 The Rev. Leonard Prestige
 The Rev. W. J. Sparrow Simpson, D.D.
 Mr. Will Spens, C.B.E., M.A.
 The Rev. Darwell Stone, D.D.
 Dr. Cuthbert Turner

The Statement of the Anglo-Evangelical Group Movement

The following statement, after it had been carefully considered in the various groups, was unanimously approved by the annual winter conference of the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement held in the Church House.

The proposals for a united Church in South India which is to include the Anglican branch of the Church in that area must be viewed not only against the background of the general situation in India, but also in the light of the mind of Christ, apprehended through the Spirit who is His interpreter. The South India United Church, the South India Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and the responsible leaders of Anglicanism in India, confronted with the duty of extending Christ's Kingdom, have come to the conclusion that unless Christian forces are united the Church has little hope of accomplishing its task in that country. They believe that throughout their negotiations they have been guided by the Holy Spirit.

These proposals should be examined in connection with the 'Appeal to all Christian People' put out by the Lambeth Conference of 1920, and with the principles which underlie it. We are thankful that all the uniting Churches have ac-

cepted the basis for union laid down by the Lambeth Conference in 1888 and re-affirmed in 1920. This basis had in view the ultimate reunion of the older Churches of Christendom, and there appears to be nothing in the proposals which will render that aim more difficult of attainment hereafter.

The crux of the South Indian Church Scheme is the proposal that in the interim period, while the uniting Churches are growing into fuller unity, the non-episcopally ordained ministers of the uniting Churches shall be regarded as ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the united Church. The ultimate goal is a united Church under a constitutional episcopate. The interim policy is justified because, as was recognized at the Lambeth Conference of 1920, and still more clearly in the discussions between Anglican and Free Church leaders which followed the conference, facts clearly prove the value and reality of the Free Church ministries within the universal Church. Moreover, the situation in South India is one which entitles the Church to meet new needs with new methods.

That episcopacy belongs to the well-being of the Church, and that it provides the most hopeful means for securing reunion we cordially recognize; that it is essential to the existence of a Church we deny. We also gladly admit that the Spirit of God guided the early Church to adopt, as the result of its experience, the episcopal form of government; but that same Spirit has used and blessed other forms of Church government.

The desire in South India is to conserve within the united Church, for its enrichment and greater catholicity, the 'three scriptural elements—the Congregational, the Presbyterian, and the Episcopal'. We recognize the historical succession of the threefold ministry as a fact, and the importance of preserving that succession if reunion is ever to be complete. But we believe that the theory of 'apostolical succession' which regards the bishop as the sole channel of the grace essential for the transmission of valid ministerial authority

rests upon no demonstrable historical basis, neither does such a theory, in our opinion, underlie the formularies of the Church of England.

It should be frankly recognized that in South India all parties to the Scheme have made real advances. Within the sphere of ecclesiastical order and tradition it is an advance on the part of the Free Churchmen in India to be ready to accept episcopacy. It is equally an advance on the part of Anglicans to be ready to acquiesce in the proposals for the interim period. The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon is not being asked to make any advances which have not sufficient precedent in the history of the Church of England and justification in the history of the primitive Church.

If the proposals are rejected by our branch of the Church a great opportunity for advancing the growth and welfare of the Indian Church will have been lost. Further, the growing readiness on the part of the Free Churches both in India and elsewhere to accept the historic orders of the ministry as the basis for unity will receive a check. Also, since the Christian forces in foreign field cannot but unite, union Churches, in which the Church of England has no place, will inevitably come into being. The consequence will be that the contribution which the Church of England has undoubtedly to offer to these Churches would be greatly diminished. If the South Indian proposals are accepted, the way will be opened up for a more rapid advance of the Gospel and the whole cause of reunion will receive a fresh impetus.

A NEW ERA

The following resolution was passed unanimously by the Conference :

We, the members of the A.E.G.M., welcome the proposals for a united Church which have now been set forth in constitutional form by the Joint Committee in South India.

We recognize the independence of the Church of India,

Burma and Ceylon and its right to enter into communion with other Churches on a basis which shall have approved itself to its own bishops, clergy and laity; and we desire respectfully to express our admiration for the steps which the Anglican representatives on the Joint Committee have taken and the action of the General Council in approving the main principles of the proposed union. In our judgment a new era of courageous action has been inaugurated, and the 'Appeal to all Christian People', which so greatly encouraged us at the time of the last Lambeth Conference, has in India been wisely and nobly translated into action.

We are impressed by the care which has been taken to preserve the essential elements of Anglican polity and doctrine, and at the same time to welcome the rich heritage of Free Church organisation and spiritual experience. We are especially grateful to our Indian brethren who, at the conference at Tranquebar in 1919, were chiefly responsible for initiating this scheme, and who boldly faced the risks that were involved. We also appreciate the courageous co-operation in this scheme of many whose ecclesiastical outlook otherwise differs from our own, and we regard this as an indication that Churchmen of different views may not only conscientiously but zealously join in this unique effort to fulfil the prayer of Christ 'that they all may be one . . . that the world may believe'.

We recognise that with the coming of a period of experiment there is still much to be learnt, and unity schemes more perfect in detail may possibly in the purpose of God be devised, and in obedience to the Spirit of Christ carried through in the future; but we are confident that this particular scheme, so happily conceived and generously supported, should be acted upon without delay. We hope that the principles embodied in the Scheme may serve as a further step towards Christian unity at home and in other parts of Christendom to which this advance in the mission field points the way.

Meanwhile, we shall unite with other members of the Church in praying that the Bishops who are shortly to assemble in conference at Lambeth may be guided to a right decision as to the advice they will offer on this vital and critical issue, and that the reality of our union in the Spirit may be so recognized in Christendom that the present toleration of our existing divisions may give way to a determined seeking after manifested unity.

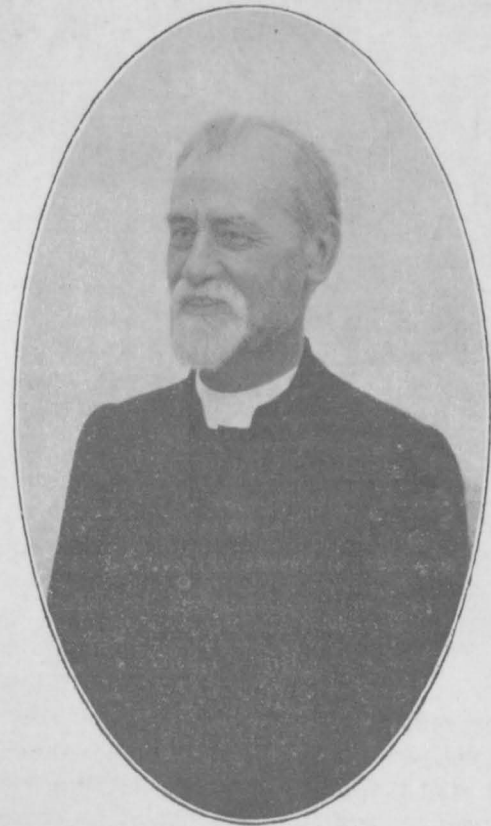
CHAPTER X.

THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE

The Wesleyan Methodist Conference met at Leeds in July 1930 and in the representative session there was considerable discussion of the South India Union Scheme. The following resolutions were adopted without discussion in the Pastoral Session of the Conference in the following week:—

1. The Conference has received with profound thankfulness the "Proposed Scheme of Union" prepared by the Joint Committee of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, the South India United Church and the South India Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church for presentation to the governing bodies of these Churches in India and elsewhere. The Conference believes that organic union is in the interests of the Kingdom of God in India, and rejoices at the spirit of union which the Scheme manifests. It renders thanks to the great Head of the Church, Who by His Spirit has guided the representatives of these Churches to so large a measure of agreement on questions of such great importance to the Church of Christ in South India and to the spread of His Kingdom there.

2. The Conference authorises the South India Provincial Synod to continue the consultations with the representatives of the other Churches concerned, and will watch with the



Rev. H. Gulliford

most sympathetic interest the further progress of such consultations.

3. The Conference instructs the Joint Committee of the Missionary Committee and the Committee on Faith and Order to continue their consideration of the whole scheme, and also to receive and consider any recommendations or information which may be received from the South India Provincial Synod or other sources, and to present a report to the next Conference.¹

The Conference of 1931 met in August in Birmingham, and the interim report¹ on the South Indian Church Union Scheme was presented. The Joint Committee of the Missionary Society and the Committee on Faith and Order asked the Conference to agree that organic union was desirable in the highest interests of the Church in South India, but they went on to say that the Scheme had not caught the imagination of our people in South India and particularly of the Indian ministry; and that they regarded that as a most desirable preliminary. The Report asked the Conference to say strongly that they held the view that presbyters should take part in laying on of hands with bishops at the consecration of a Bishop. The Conference was further asked to agree with the South India Provincial Synod that it is eminently desirable that inter-communion should precede, and not merely follow, union.

The report also asked the Conference to declare that the Methodist Church in England would continue to regard the work begun by itself in South India, with deep concern and interest and would continue to give to the work men and money as hitherto provided.

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The view of the Church represented by what was known as the 'Catholic Order' did not cover all the views of the

¹ See Church Union, News and Views, Vol. I, No. 2, September 1930—The Wesleyan Methodist Conference and the Proposed Scheme of Union.

Church for which good grounds could be found in the New Testament. Those who held these views would regard the Bishop as the first among equals, and if the new Church was setting men apart to the order of Bishops, the Committee held that it was fitting that not only bishops should take part in the ordination, but that the whole ministry should be represented in the ordination. They further held that whatever grace was communicated in the act of ordination would be communicated as much from the ordaining company as from the Bishop. That, they believed, was the Methodist opinion and they had suggested that in the ordaining and setting apart of Bishops, the Presbyters should always be represented. If this view seemed controversial, it was not controversial inside the Methodist Church. By Methodists it had been held all along and they set it forth in order that their friends might safeguard themselves. They had to think, not of the present only, but of the whole Christian community in fifty or a hundred years time.

* * * *

The adoption of this report marked another stage in the progress of the South Indian Union Scheme. That the Wesleyan Conference in general was in deep sympathy with the movement had been made abundantly clear in those debates. The Conference had taken the matter seriously and was already concerned about the practical difficulties involved in the working out of the Scheme and its committee was to give its mind to those problems.¹

¹ See *The Wesleyan Conference and Church Union in South India* (Church Union, News and Views, Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 58-61).

CHAPTER XI.

LAMBETH 1930

I.—The Unity of the Church, South India¹

(a) The Conference has heard with the deepest interest of the proposals for Church Union in South India now under consideration between the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, the South India United Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South India and expresses its high appreciation of the spirit in which the representatives of these Churches have pursued the long and careful negotiations.

(b) The Conference notes with warm sympathy that the project embodied in the proposed Scheme for Church Union in South India is not the formation of any fresh Church or Province of the Anglican Communion under new conditions, but seeks rather to bring together the distinctive elements of different Christian Communions, on a basis of sound doctrine and episcopal order, in a distinct Province of the Universal Church, in such a way as to give the Indian expression of the spirit, the thought and the life of the Church Universal.

(c) We observe, further, as a novel feature in the South Indian Scheme, that a complete agreement between the uniting Churches on certain points of doctrine and practice is not expected to be reached before the inauguration of the union; but the promoters of the Scheme believe that unity will be reached gradually and more securely by the interaction of the different elements of the United Church upon one another. It is only when the unification resulting from that interaction is complete, that a final judgment can be pronounced on the effect of the present proposals. Without attempting, therefore, to pronounce such judgment now, we

¹ Extracts from the Resolution of the Lambeth Report (Church Union, News and Views, Vol. I, No. 4, pp. 146-154).

express to our brethren in India our strong desire that, as soon as the negotiations are successfully completed, the venture should be made and the union inaugurated. We hope that it will lead to the emergence of a part of the Body of Christ which will possess a new combination of the riches that are His. In this hope we ask the Churches of our Communion to stand by our brethren in India, while they make this experiment, with generous goodwill.

(d) The Conference thinks it wise to point out that, after the union in South India has been inaugurated, both ministers and lay people of the United Church, when they are outside the jurisdiction of that Church, will be amenable to the regulations of the Province and Diocese in which they desire to officiate or to worship, and it must be assumed that those regulations will be applied to individuals in the same manner as they would now be applied to similarly circumstanced individuals, unless any Province takes formal action to change its regulations.

(e) The Conference, fully assured in the light of the resolutions of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon adopted in February 1930 that nothing will be done to break the fellowship of the Churches of the Anglican Communion, confidently leaves in the hands of the Bishops of that Church the task of working out in detail the principles which are embodied in the proposed Scheme.

(f) The Conference gives its general approval to the suggestions contained in the Report of its Committee with regard to the proposed Scheme for Church Union in South India, and commends the Report to the attention of the Episcopal Synod and General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon.

* * * *

II.—The South India Scheme

It is with reference to the principle we have already set forth that we have considered the proposed Scheme of Union affecting the southern dioceses of the Church of India, Burma

and Ceylon, the South India United Church and the South India Province of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

First, it is important to make clear the way in which this Scheme came before the Lambeth Conference. It was not submitted for acceptance or rejection. The Lambeth Conference has no constitutional authority to accept or reject such proposals; the responsibility for action lies with the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. (cf. Resolution 11 of the Lambeth Conference of 1920. 'The Conference recognizes that the task of effecting union with other Christian Communion must be undertaken by the various national, regional or provincial authorities of the Churches within the Anglican Communion'). That Church has throughout fully recognized this fact. But before exercising its responsibility it has desired, in the spirit of fellowship, to ascertain the views of the bishops belonging to other Provinces of the Anglican Communion, inasmuch as the whole of that Communion may be greatly concerned in, and affected by, what takes place. Accordingly, the Episcopal Synod of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon submitted the proposals to the Lambeth Conference, together with certain resolutions of the General Council and certain expressions of its opinion on special points by which it desires that its own delegates may be guided at future meetings of the Joint Committee of the uniting Churches, in order that the assembled bishops might offer their advice. The Episcopal Synod further asked for such advice with reference to four specific points and communicated one other on which the General Council desired to obtain the opinion of the Conference.

Secondly, it should be plainly understood that 'the Scheme is frankly an outline.' In its present form it is the work of a Joint Committee on which representatives of the Churches concerned have been serving since 1920. It is an endeavour to state the central points on which agreement is necessary for union, for presentation to the Governing Bodies of the

Churches concerned in India and elsewhere. No final conclusions have been reached on these central points by any of the Churches concerned. And, as the Joint Committee itself declares, even after agreement on the central points, many details would still remain to be worked out.

One very important fact, however, as to the general position of the united Church is impressed upon our minds at the start. We find in the proposed Scheme a conception which is alike bold and new. The Joint Committee definitely intends that the Church in which the uniting bodies are to converge shall be autonomous in the fullest sense. It is to be free from any control, legal or otherwise, of any Church or society external to itself. The Anglican dioceses concerned are to be no longer a part of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. The suggestion that the united Church should form a new province of that Church is rejected, on the ground that such an arrangement would have the appearance, and even something of the reality, of the absorption of the South India United Church and of the Wesleyan Church of South India in the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. Those dioceses will, therefore, not be Anglican dioceses in which we are asked to recognize elements foreign to the Anglican system; they would go forth from the Anglican Communion in order to make their own distinctive contribution to the faith and order of the new united Church. Moreover, the Church in which those dioceses are to be embraced will be itself 'a distinct province of the Universal Church,' with a rule and character of its own. It is understood on all sides and is recognized in the Scheme itself that no province of the Universal Church is free to act according to its own choice in contravention of the faith once for all delivered to the Saints or without regard to the preservation of the fellowship of the Church Universal.

From the position thus frankly stated follow certain results. The Anglican Communion consists of various provinces and dioceses in full communion with the Church of

England. At the present time the Lambeth Conference is the visible bond which unites the different portions of the Anglican Communion to one another. It consists of bishops in full communion with the Church of England and exercising oversight over Anglican dioceses. But the united Church in South India will not be a part of the Anglican Communion.

This does not, however, involve anything in the nature of schism, for even though the united Church will not be an integral part of the Anglican Communion, the fact of the formation of the united Church will not deprive any members of the united Church, whether Bishops, Clergy or Laity, of any privilege of communion which they have hitherto enjoyed with the Church of England and with the Churches in communion with it.

Though the representatives of the Anglican Communion assembled in this Conference are not ready to express approval of every detail of the Scheme, they are (we believe) desirous that the venture should be made and the Union inaugurated, and they hope that it will lead to the emergence of a part of the Body of Christ which will possess a new combination of the riches which are His. In this hope they wish to stand by the Church of India while she makes this experiment with generous good-will.

We should hope that when the inauguration of the Union takes effect, the united Church will at once enjoy communion with the Churches of the Anglican Communion in the following ways:—

1. No censure should attach to any member, ordained or unordained, of a Church of the Anglican Communion who may be in South India or go thither, if he communicates with the united Church or takes work of any kind in it.
2. No Church of the Anglican Communion should establish Churches or congregations in the area of the union apart from the united Church.
3. If communicant members or ordained ministers of the united Church should go into any diocese of the Anglican

Communion, the Church of that diocese should receive them to communion whenever this can be done consistently with the regulations of each Province or extra-Provincial diocese, and episcopally ordained ministers of the united Church should be qualified, at the discretion of the Bishop, to officiate, subject to the regulations of the diocese for its own ministers.

These provisions represent certain restrictions upon full communion, that is to say, upon complete interchangeability of ministers and complete mutual admissibility to communion. We hope that when the unification within the united Church, contemplated in the proposed Scheme, is complete, full communion in that sense will be secured between the united Church and the Churches of the Anglican Communion.

We proceed to offer the comments and advice for which we have been asked.

We rejoice that those who have combined to draw up the proposed Scheme have endeavoured to follow the method of incorporating the distinctive elements of all the uniting bodies, for we are convinced that this method alone corresponds to the facts of the situation.

We associate ourselves with the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, when it declares that it 'recognizes with great thankfulness that the Joint Committee has been guided by Almighty God to base the Scheme of Union upon the acknowledgment of essential truths and principles of the Christian Religion which the Church has ever held; namely, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and of the Incarnation of the Son of God, the authority of the Holy Scriptures, the Creeds as witnessing to and safeguarding the Faith, the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion, and Christ's gift of the Ministry of His Church'; and also when it declares that 'it observes with equal thankfulness that the Committee has been guided to seek the achievement of union by unifying the Ministry

through adoption of the rule of episcopal ordination; and it desires to express its grateful appreciation of the service which has been rendered to the common cause by those who have been willing to change their customs in order to make this possible'.

We, therefore, thank the Episcopal Synod and General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon for the courage and wisdom which they have shown in sanctioning the negotiations at various times. We know how closely they have studied the needs of the Church, and the local circumstances in which the union is projected. We are impressed by the very careful consideration which they have given to the proposed Scheme in its present form, and are in general accord with the opinions and instructions which they have furnished to their delegates. We are prepared to encourage the General Council and the bishops to continue to seek union, on the lines which their own resolutions suggest, without committing ourselves to particular propositions or provisions in the proposed Scheme. And we trust that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit such a union may result as may fulfil the desire of those concerned in the negotiations 'so to organize the Church in South India that it shall give the Indian expression of the spirit, the thought, and the life of the Church Universal'.

In giving our general endorsement to the resolutions passed by the General Council, and the opinions expressed by it with reference to the proposed Scheme, we desire to call special attention to the following points:—

1. We assent to the provision that those who unite in acceptance of the Episcopate with the functions assigned to it in the Scheme could not be required to accept any one particular interpretation of it.
2. We approve the method of proceeding towards union by means of a pledge given in mutual trust, to respect the long-established traditions and conscientious convictions of the uniting Churches. Among such long-established traditions of our own we number the preface to the Ordinal, and,

therefore, understand this pledge to secure that the rule which the Anglican Church has inherited, that an episcopally ordained ministry is within our Church required for the due administration of Holy Communion, will be preserved for those congregations which have in the past been bound by that rule.

3. We welcome the principle of the Scheme, which is that of uniting the Churches through unification of ministries so that eventually every minister exercising a permanent ministry in the united Church will be an episcopally ordained minister, and inasmuch as the actual words in the Scheme dealing with this point have been challenged as indecisive, we hope they may be so modified as to put an end to all doubt. Similarly, we suggest that the words referring to possible exceptions after the period of thirty years, which are left to the judgment of the united Church at that time, should be so modified as to make it clear that the intention is to reach finality in the unification of the ministry of the united Church.

4. We approve the method by which it is sought to commend the use of Confirmation; we assent to the provision that the acceptance of Confirmation should not be insisted on as a pre-requisite term of union; but we most earnestly commend the use of it, both because of its association from the time of the Apostles with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and also because of the benefit which it has bestowed on individual members of our Church and the enrichment which it brings to the pastoral ministry of the Bishop.

Certain matters were specifically referred to us by the General Council or by the Episcopal Synod of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. With regard to these we offer the following advice:—

1. It is pointed out to us that if the united Church comes into being on the basis of the proposed Scheme, which includes the provision 'that none of the existing Churches should cease to enjoy such privileges of fellowship with other Churches as they enjoyed before the Union,' an anomalous situation will arise; the Anglican Communion will, at least to the extent already described, be in communion with the united Church, which will itself be in communion with bodies not in communion with the Anglican

Communion. There is no doubt that this is anomalous. But we hold that as part of a movement towards general and complete union, to which the proposed Scheme looks forward, such a situation may be covered by the principle of 'economy'. (Economy is a technical term representing administrative action to meet a temporary situation without prejudice to any principle of ecclesiastical order). Accordingly, we are agreed that the situation described by the General Council constitutes no bar to the Church of India taking such action as it may think right.

2. On the question of Consecration *per saltum*, that is, consecration to the Episcopate without previous ordination by a Bishop to the diaconate and priesthood, our view is that while undesirable in the normal course of the Church's life, such consecration is not invalid and in the special circumstances of the inauguration of the united Church is justifiable.

3. With reference to the question whether Confirmation is a necessary pre-requisite of Ordination, we wish to say that the prevailing custom of the Anglican Communion is to require Confirmation before Ordination, and we desire to commend this custom. But, inasmuch as there has been great variety of practice in the Church with regard to Confirmation, and it has not always been regarded as an indispensable preliminary to Ordination as Priest or Consecration as Bishop, we do not see sufficient ground for urging the Episcopal Synod to insist upon it as a necessary part of the initial agreement.

4. With reference to the participation of Presbyters in the Laying-on of Hands at the Consecration of Bishops our advice is as follows:—

(a) We regard as legitimate the proposal that, in the inaugural service of Consecration, Presbyters should take part in the Laying-on of Hands, as we think that this would symbolize the full concurrence of the uniting Churches, the passing on to the Episcopate of the authority which Presbyters have hitherto exercised in their own communions to confer Ordination, and the coming together in the ministry of the united Church of the spiritual blessings previously enjoyed by the ministries of the several Churches in separation.

(b) With regard to subsequent Consecrations, we hold that the participation by Presbyters in the Laying-on of Hands could not, in any way, affect the validity of the Consecration, provided, of course, that three Bishops take part in the Laying-on of Hands; but we prefer that it be not adopted lest it should tend to confusion, and we would urge that, if it be adopted, care should be taken to make it plain that the Presbyters do not take part as Consecrators.

5. With regard to the question whether it is in order for bishops to grant authorizations to non-episcopally ordained ministers, we suggest that the difficulty might be avoided if the existing ministers of the uniting Churches who will continue to minister in the unified Church 'provided that they assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the united Church' are not required to receive any fresh authorization or licence for that purpose, and if non-episcopally ordained ministers who are received during the period of thirty years are, at the request of the Church or Society entitled to send them, received without episcopal ordination or licence, the ministers in both cases agreeing to work under the 'pastoral oversight' of the Bishop; but the Committee is unwilling to condemn the action of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon if with its consent Bishops of South India give such authorization or licence to non-episcopally ordained ministers after the inauguration of a union agreed to by the Church, and in consequence of the exceptional circumstances created by the Union.

Having thus offered the counsel asked of us, we thank God for the signs of the guidance of His Holy Spirit as manifested by the degree and nature of the agreement already reached with regard to the proposed Scheme of Union; we pray that the bishops and other members of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon may still receive that guidance in the decisions which they will be responsible for making in this regard, and that in the result the united Church of South India may by God's blessing be brought into existence to His glory and the extension of His Kingdom.

CHAPTER XII. A CONGREGATIONALIST'S VIEW OF THE SCHEME

In 1931 Prof. Vernon Bartlet suggested some modifications to the Scheme. He believed that if those modifications were accepted by the Joint Committee the views of the Congregationalists who were going into the Scheme would be fully met. Dr. Bartlet's suggestions were as follows:—¹

As I see it, Lambeth 1930 receded at no point from the prophetic Appeal made by the Anglican Episcopate in 1920. True it made more explicit, especially in the Report of its Committee on 'The Unity of the Church', what was implied in its indispensable requirement, 'a ministry acknowledged by every part of the Church as possessing—the authority of the whole body'. But this had already been done in the Joint Conferences with Free Church leaders in the years immediately ensuing. Further, if it made no correspondingly explicit statement as to 'the spiritual reality of the ministries' of the non-Episcopal Communion which in those Conferences its representatives had acknowledged to possess 'real ministries of Christ's Word and Sacraments in the Universal Church', the Archbishops' Committee, which reported on Lausanne 1927, had reiterated that phrase (with its original qualifications as regards 'irregularity' or incompleteness of authority). Finally, the Chairman of the Special Committee concerned has frankly explained in the *Review of the Churches* for October, that Lambeth's silence on the point in 1930 was due to anxiety not to mar the unanimity of its general approval of the South India Scheme.

After all, 'deeds speak louder than words'; and Lambeth in 1930 drew nearer than even in 1920 by the resolutions in which it sanctioned co-operation in religious effort but even inter-communion, on special occasions, between Anglicans and non-Episcopalians. In fact the permission which it gave under certain conditions—the carefully limited nature of

¹ Church Union News and Views, November 1931, Vol. II, No. 3, pp. 90-95.

which is only added proof of the momentous significance of the principle for many Anglican consciences here being conceded—is epoch-making in its importance: for it implies that non-Episcopal communion services are treated as means of sacramental grace for Anglicans also. This has never before been recognised expressly by the Anglican Church in modern times. Nay, more, in its whole attitude to the South India Scheme it made clear that it looked hopefully to those responsible for it to 'pioneer' the way forward for the Church at large, by proceeding on the general lines sketched out in that Scheme. Thus encouraged by Lambeth 1930, may you set yourselves afresh, in the spirit of the Appeal of 1920, to the high but difficult task of adjusting more perfectly the details of your Scheme, on the great new principle of 'mutual deference to one another's consciences'. And may I remind you that upon the candour and wisdom with which you apply that principle, to the maximum degree needful to reassure all sorts of consciences must depend under God, the abiding success of your pioneer labours for a really united Church? There must be, if loving consideration can possibly avert it, no dissenting minority in the end, no new schism. You are pledged to each other to do nothing, now or in the future, which will make the freedom of conscience for any part of your united constituency more restricted in principle than it is at present—whether in faith or order—but rather, by the suggestion of others' consciences, enlarged in outlook and permissive practice. What you are called to sketch out is in truth a Catholicism *larger in spirit and more varied in order* than any known type, because one built more consciously on a truly Evangelical basis, in its fulness of love for living conscience towards God. So be very patient in framing and adopting your working constitution.

Revision of the Scheme up to date should start from Lambeth's definition of the larger united Church in South India as 'not a part of the Anglican Communion', but 'a definite province of the Universal Church, with a *rule and character of its own*.' That character it further defines as 'a part of the Body of Christ which will possess a *new combination of the riches* that are His'. Those riches are made up of the joint *positive* excellence of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational traditions, each with its own distinctive emphasis on that which aims at safeguarding one

or other feature of the New Testament ideal of the Church and Church Fellowship in characteristic Christian life and worship. All aim in fact at Church unity and fellowship, though each in its own way and with special regard to a certain area or unit of Church life.

Episcopacy, as it exists today, as the outcome of continuous historic development hence called 'the historic episcopate' (apart from any doctrinal theory of 'apostolic succession') has as its unity the diocese, made up of a number of local 'churches' each under its own pastorate and so analogous to the episcopate as known to Ignatius, viz., as the unit of normal local fellowship and habitual common worship (the episcopate of Congregationalism).

Presbyterianism, again, also has as its unit a grouped sisterhood of local churches and pastorates (analogous to a diocese), but with a conscious view to the co-operative duty of *mutual* edification, in the full sense. This it aims at securing without loss to normal autonomy in the local church, inclusive of its ministry, or of general control through the latter by the larger units above both, the Provincial Synod and finally the General Assembly. Thus its method of collective oversight is on a more strictly representative basis.

Finally, Congregationalism is primarily concerned for the smallest normal unit of Church life, but the most vividly real of all, the sphere of everyday Christian fellowship, the local family of common worship and fellowship. In order to realise these ends the more fully, it lays its stress on congregational corporate responsibility, and, therefore, autonomy immediately under Christ as Head of the Church; yet not, in theory at least, so as to forget the due claims of the wider brotherhood of the Church Universal.

Now in their positive ideals these three historic Church polities largely overlap, and differ ultimately rather in emphasis than in intention; in other words, in what they explicitly provide for and fail to provide for without necessarily being indifferent to it. Here is where the 'combination

of the riches' proper to each comes in. But, that this may be realised in fact, 'the internal fusion of the ideals' must really pre-exist, and adequate provision for its growth in actual working must be frankly provided for in the constitution on which corporate union comes about. Speaking for myself, as a sympathetic student of all these three polities, both in history and in the present, and also as having inside knowledge of Congregationalism, I would express my considered opinion that the Scheme as drafted provides more adequately both for Episcopacy and Presbyterianism than for the third and youngest sister of the trio in the modern world, Congregationalism. This must be remedied if the union we desire shall be as real and as well adapted to present and future conditions as it may and should be. I shall speak my mind the more freely that I represent the optimistic minority, as it is at the present moment—especially since the last Lambeth Conference, owing to temporary misunderstanding as to its attitude as compared with the Appeal of 1920—both in the Free Churches generally and in Congregationalism in particular. Hence my suggestions should be taken as of the nature of the minimum needful to reassure Congregationalists as to the Scheme in itself and as preparing the way for wider reunions. In putting them forward I would add three governing considerations :—

1. In the constitution itself the organic principles of the Scheme (as set forth in the Foreword, p. viii of 1931 Edition and Section II) must, in fairness to all the Communions agreeing to merge their separate being, be treated as unalterable subsequently. This would meet the fear of the Kanarese Church Council touching 'the permanence of the Free Church Contribution', or 'separation from the Free Church Churches abroad, to which it owed its life'.

2. In conceding Episcopacy, the non-Episcopal Communions are making a greater and more far-reaching sacrifice of their special traditions, for the sake of a better future for the whole Church in South India, than any which they are asking in return, save from quite a small minority on the Anglican side (as regards views not in fact shared by

the bulk of their fellow-Churchmen). This must be borne in mind all along.

3. On some points, like the participation of Presbyters in the consecration of Bishops, the Diaconate, and Confirmation as the door to the status of Communicant, the non-Episcopal case has the support of usage in an Episcopal Church already in communion with the Anglicans, the Swedish, which may also be viewed as in its own way 'a bridge-Church'.

'If', says the Lambeth special Committee in its Report on the South Indian Scheme, 'the "customary teachings" on Church order proper to each Church are to be combined in the united Church, they will inevitably be to some extent re-shaped in the process'. This re-shaping has now to be carried further on the lines of the 'give and take' visible in the present draft Scheme. The Lambeth Report (p. 126) cites with approval the appreciation expressed by the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, for the sacrifice made by the non-Episcopal Communions in accepting the diocesan type of episcopate (as distinct from the Congregational) in the interests of greater unity, and 'the rule of episcopal ordination' as the basis for a unified ministry. As regards the initial consecration of fresh bishops, I welcome the deference to non-Episcopal consciences involved in the Lambeth Report p. 128 (4) (a). But as regards (b), in the Anglican Report as just cited, I would plead that the like symbolism be continued on the Swedish analogy and as expressive of the special interest of the ordinand's diocese, from which the presbyters in question should be chosen for the purpose. No negative statement, such as is there suggested (and as negative seems undesirable), would be needful if the rule were permissive and customary, not unconditional.

As regards p. 127 (2) of the Lambeth Report, I hope it will not be adopted, but the intention of the existing draft maintained, which allows *all* congregations within the united Church freely to choose for themselves in the matter.

This is truest to the whole spirit of the Scheme, and is made the easier by Lambeth's ruling that this Church will not be any longer part of the Anglican Communion but one 'with a rule and character of its own'. For the same reasons I think the recommendation in p. 127 (4) should not be adopted.

As to p. 127 (3), 'similarly . . . Church', which might lead to that which the Kanarese Council dreads, viz., a 'time when ministers not episcopally ordained would not be welcome', I think that the wording of the closing words in both cases is ambiguous. It would violate the basal principles in the Foreword and Section II, if such ministers were ineligible for temporary ministry as visitors, but not if they were excluded from permanent service save on the ordinary conditions ruling in the united Church.

Another point raised by the Kanarese Council is of special moment, viz., the ministry of women. On every ground both in India and elsewhere, it is essential not to restrict *a priori* the application of the Christian principle of sex equality of opportunity, as it is coming to be understood. This should be borne in mind when filling out Section VII, II (e), remembering also the existence of women presbyters in some parts of the early Church, and their functions. The original parity of male or female 'deacons' is pretty clear. At this point I would like to refer to matters touching the Diaconate and lay 'Elders' and 'Leaders or Pastoral Assistants' raised in the 'additional suggestions' (paras 6-8). To these I would add the suggestion that in all these cases the concurrence of the congregation to which the candidate belongs should also enter into his election. It is in keeping with New Testament principles and early practice, and a safeguard of value all round."

CHAPTER XIII. AMERICAN REACTION

Action of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign
Missions (Boston, Mass.)
on
The Scheme of Union

The following letter¹ was received by the Officers and Members of the Madura Church Council of the South India United Church in August 1931 :—

Dear friends,

The American Board desires to acknowledge the receipt of the proposed Scheme of Union (Revised Edition of 1930) forwarded to it by the Madura Mission at the request of the Madura Church Council. As suggested in the Scheme itself and in the covering letter of Dr. Banninga, we have given it careful and prayerful study. We have submitted the Scheme to many representative leaders of the Church in America and have had their replies before us in formulating our opinion.

We rejoice with you in the continued evidence of the presence and leading of the Spirit of God as you have gone forward with plans for union with the Southern Dioceses of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, and the South India Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. It is a matter for profound thanksgiving that the co-operating Committee, overcoming many obstacles that stood in the way, has been able to prepare a Scheme that gives strong promise of furnishing a basis of a spiritual as well as an organic union between these Churches. The significance of this achievement can scarcely be overemphasized. We earnestly desire to co-operate with you in carrying it forward.

¹ Church Union News and Views, Sept. 1931, Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 44-48.

With the principles underlying the proposed union as they are presented in the first sections of the Scheme, we find ourselves in complete accord. The co-operating Committee desires unequivocally and strongly for a union of comprehension, in which the varying gifts of the uniting Churches may all have place. It expresses the purpose to maintain the relations of communion and fellowship which are now maintained by each of the uniting Churches with other Churches. It seeks to guard the consciences of the participants against being overridden by any action of majorities in the proposed united Church. It relies upon the continued guidance of the Spirit of God in solving the many problems and entering the many opportunities of the proposed united Church. With all this we heartily agree. We also recognize that the historic episcopate in a constitutional form as defined in this Scheme is necessary to such a union, and believe that our American Churches will be ready to continue their co-operation with the united Church under an episcopal organization.

It seems to us that the Committee is wise in inviting from those who are involved either directly or indirectly in the plans for this Church still further suggestions. So far as we are concerned, the decision of these matters must rest with the Church in India, yet because of your desire and our own that American Churches should continue to have a close relation with the proposed united Church, and because of the tendency which is already manifesting itself to regard the South India Scheme as a basis for similar negotiations in other parts of India and of the world, our Churches have a vital interest in the provisions of this plan. We are, therefore, taking this opportunity to express ourselves in regard to some elements in the present draft which might raise questions in our Churches and make less spontaneous and effective their continued co-operation. What we are writing is in the nature of impressions and questions rather than settled opinions. We are too far away to come to any definite conclusions. Yet we do want to suggest possible ways in

which some alterations in the plan might make it a better instrument for the accomplishment of its purpose of comprehensive union.

The first suggestion which we desire to make is in line with recommendation No. 9 of the South India United Church, which the Joint Committee was unable, for lack of time, to consider at its last meeting. This recommendation reads as follows :—

That with a view to reassuring those in the Church who are afraid that within a short time after the union the Synod might by a majority take action which would be contrary to the principles which at the time of union belong to one or other of the uniting Churches, it is hereby declared that it is contrary to the intention of those who make the union that any question on which the uniting Churches as such are divided or have differing practices (such as admission to communicant membership) be brought up within thirty years from the date of the union.

This subject is also dealt with in a general way in parts of Section IV B of the Scheme in the following sentences :—

'It is equally the intention of the uniting Churches that the united Church shall in its legislation and executive acts respect the conscientious convictions of its ministers and members.'

'If during this process difficulties and anomalies arise, the united Church will be careful not to allow any overriding of conscience by Church authorities or by majorities; nor will it in its administrative acts knowingly transgress the long-established traditions of any of the uniting Churches.'

Matters which would come under these provisions would include any requirement that the historic creeds must be a part of public worship or that presbyters must subscribe to them in any more specific way than that proposed in Section VII (3) of the draft Scheme; namely :—

'Every person about to be ordained in any diocese of the Church will be required to affirm his sincere belief in the truths witnessed to by the Nicene Creed.'

As the South India United Church said with admirable clearness in its statement for the Lausanne Conference in 1927, it is a part of the fundamental spirit of this Church to place ultimate reliance not on any formulation of belief, however ancient and however valuable, but rather on the ever-present Spirit of God and His leading. A use of the Nicene Creed as a witness of Christian truth seems to us justifiable and valuable. We note, however, that the Synod has authority to draw up further standards for its presbyters. In accordance with this provision the Synod might require of its presbyters a verbal affirmation of the Nicene Creed. In our judgment such a requirement would do violence to the spirit of the Scheme and, in particular, to the assurances of Section IV which we have quoted. A way to make specific in this connection these assurances might be, first, to add under Section VII D words similar to the explicit provision contained in Section VI (6);—‘It is not necessary that, in answering questions with regard to their faith, candidates for baptism should use the actual words of either of these Creeds in affirming their belief,’ and second, to add to the second paragraph of Section IX D, the words ‘or require it’, making the last phrase read as follows:—‘No authority of the United Church may forbid their use or require it.’

In the second place, as we read through the Scheme, there seems to be some discrepancy between the statement of underlying principle of the earlier sections and the actual constitutional provisions of the later ones. In the earlier sections the importance of the contributions to be made by each of the uniting bodies and the value of variety of expression are emphasized. In the later sections, on the other hand, there is a tendency to look forward toward uniformity of practice and to provide for a high degree of centralization in control. A comprehensive plan of union should, in our opinion, recognize a degree of diversity in organization and practice not only as a necessity for union, but as a definite good to

be fostered. We hope, for instance, that the united Church would not look forward to developing a single form of the Communion Service as the draft suggests, but would continue to recognize the validity of different forms. We also hope that the intricate provisions for dealing with matters of faith and doctrine that come to the Synod may be modified in the direction of simplicity and greater control by the Synod. The religious history of India seems to indicate that Indians desire the maximum of local freedom with a minimum of central machinery. The Scheme in its present form seems to us to embody western ideas of central organization rather than the more distinctive Indian idea of spontaneity of expression, and we, therefore, question whether it carries out in the best way its purpose ‘so to organize the Church in South India that it shall give the Indian expression of the spirit, the thought and the life of the Church Universal’. We would suggest for the consideration of the Committee the possibility of simplifying the central organization in favour of larger liberty in the different dioceses.

It seems to be intended that in the initiation of the united Church those who are now diocesan bishops will retain their present jurisdiction, while new bishops will be elected by a body representing the three uniting Churches. The present bishops have been appointed to their dioceses by an organization outside of the proposed union. We clearly recognize that it is essential to the plan of union that the status of these bishops as bishops of the united Church should be taken for granted. It is not clear to us that it is necessary that their present jurisdiction should be so taken for granted. It is obvious that the union would start on a more even basis if the existing diocesan bishops should resign their present jurisdiction so that the representatives of the three uniting Churches might have, from the start, a voice in determining the jurisdiction of all the bishops. It seems to us quite conceivable that the united Church, if it could survey the entire field, might decide that one or more of the present diocesan

bishops could serve the united Church more effectively in some other capacity, say, in the training of ministers, than in his present work. On the other hand, the Church might reassign them to their present dioceses. Even though such an act as we here suggest were no more than a gesture, it would seem to us to be highly valuable both for the present diocesan bishops and for the uniting Church, since it would mean that in a very real sense all the bishops of the Church would be the chosen agents of that Church. The real question that we are here raising is whether some means cannot be devised whereby the three uniting Churches may actually have and may feel themselves to have more nearly an equal voice in determining the jurisdiction of its bishops. If something of this sort can be done, it seems to us that it will add very greatly to the sense of spiritual unity of the proposed united Church and, in particular, to the feeling of the members of the two non-episcopal bodies that the present bishops are really their bishops, to whom they are united by spiritual as well as ecclesiastical bonds.

In conclusion, we desire to assure you once more of our deepest interest and sympathy as you go forward. You have well expressed the source and motive of Christian union in the following statement :—

‘Jesus Christ is the Person in Whom Churches unite. His life and death and ever-living presence must be central in the thought, life and devotion of each member of the Church as in that of the Church as a whole. His Cross is the place of meeting. The united Church will, therefore, desire to bring together all the different types of spiritual experience represented in the uniting Churches, and to keep together in the one Brotherhood those who emphasize the individual experience of the Christian heart, those who place the Cross in the centre of their worship, investing with every solemnity of ritual the sacramental presentation of the great act of man’s redemption, and those who bid the Church take full account of all new knowledge of the world which God’s Spirit imparts to the human mind by channels other than those of organized religion.’

It is our prayer that the union of all His followers in Christ may become increasingly effective and power-giving, and that your efforts in South India may be richly blessed to this great end.

Your brethren in Christ,
(Signed) ROCKWELL HARMON POTTER, D.D.,
President of the American Board
ALDEN HYDE CLARKE, D.D.,
Secretary for India.

CHAPTER XIV.

ALL-INDIA CONFERENCE ON CHURCH UNION

The year 1931 was remarkable for the holding of the first All-India Conference on Church Union at Nagpur. At this meeting representatives of the Church Union Movement in South India, consisting of Anglican, Wesleyan and South India United Church delegates had the opportunity to meet representatives from North India, consisting of delegates from the united Church of North India, the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Society of Friends. This Conference was held in accordance with a resolution of the Round Table Conference on Church Union held at Delhi in 1930 at which the following eight denominations were represented: The Australian Methodist Church, The Baptist Churches associated with The English Baptist Missionary Society, The Church of the Brethren, The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, The Methodist Episcopal Church, The Society of Friends, The United Church of Northern India and The Wesleyan Methodist Church. It was also at the special request of this Round Table Conference that representatives of the South India Union Movement attended the Conference at Nagpur. The main object of the Conference was ‘to consider the

principles that should be adopted in the formation of a united Church for India.'

The Conference unanimously adopted the following Report of its proceedings:

This Conference of members of Churches in North and South India, appointed to 'consider the principles that should be accepted in the formation of a united Church for India', records the following Resolutions:

1. That in Christ individual Christians in the various Churches in this land are already joined together in faith and experience.

2. That, since the barriers that keep the members of the various Churches from a fuller and more effective realisation of their essential unity are the result of the conflicting types of Church polity that have grown up in the West, it is imperative that these differences should not be perpetuated in India.

3. That the present situation constitutes a call to earnest prayer for unity and for God's guidance and blessing in all efforts to promote union, to the end that the Church in India, realising that Christ is the Head of His Church, ever supplying new energy and wisdom by the Holy Spirit, may bear victorious witness to the saving grace of God and thereby hasten the coming of His Kingdom in this land.

4. That, in order to promote the cause of union, the Conference urges:—

(a) That definite steps be taken to associate members of the various Churches in united evangelistic efforts and other forms of Christian service.

(b) That, since such co-operation will reveal the need for closer association in worship, the Churches should give opportunity for, and make every endeavour to promote, common acts of worship, including the partaking together of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

(c) That a definite system of commendation of members, applicable to all Churches, be devised, whereby the members of any Church, owing to change of residence, may not drift away from Christian worship and fellowship.

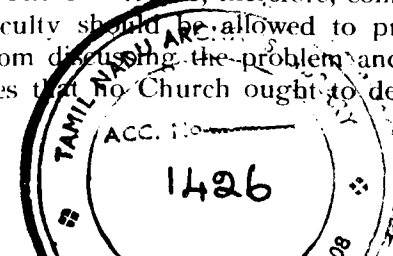
(d) That definite opportunities be provided for the interchange of ministries in the preaching of the Word and other forms of service, in order that all the Churches may share the gifts of the Spirit which have been so abundantly manifested in the ministries of the various Churches.

(e) That, inasmuch as the present restrictions to Christian fellowship largely arise from different conceptions of the ministry, and it is only by a solution of this problem that the Church can be united, it is essential that the question of the unification of the ministry be examined and agreement reached regarding principles of Church organisation and government.

5. That, with regard to the type of organisation that may ultimately prove acceptable for a united Church in India, the Conference records its opinion that this would be found through the general adoption of a constitutional episcopate responsible to representative assemblies and synods, in a form that would comprehend, as far as practicable, the advantages of the episcopal, presbyterian and congregational modes of government.

6. In Resolution No. 5 the phrase 'a constitutional episcopate' is not used as a synonym for *the historic episcopate*. There are Churches in India which are by no means ready to accept the latter phrase or its supposed implications. On the other hand, there are some who value the phrase, *the historic episcopate*, as expressing their belief in the necessity for securing continuity with the ministry of existing episcopal Churches.

While the Joint Committee of South India has found it possible to adopt the phrase on the distinct understanding that no doctrinal implications of apostolic succession, sacerdotalism, or the three Orders of the ministry are implied by its use, it is still possible that a further solution of the problem may be found. The Conference, therefore, considers that no such initial difficulty should be allowed to prevent the various Churches from discussing the problem and working for union. It believes that no Church ought to demand the



abandonment of a doctrine held in another Church as a preliminary to such discussions. No union can hope to be successful where conscientious beliefs are stifled. A united Church must aim at inclusion, not exclusion. The existence of the difficulty constitutes an added call to prayer.

7. God wills unity. Jesus Christ prayed for unity. The Holy Spirit urges us to unity. The Conference, therefore, concludes these resolutions by calling once more upon all Churches that constant prayer be made for the consummation of His purpose in and through all negotiations for Church union in India.

CHAPTER XV. A CRITICAL STAGE

The tenth session of the Joint Committee, held at Bangalore in June, 1932, was one of great importance. It was at this meeting that the Committee felt that it could not possibly agree on the matter of the Thirty Year Period as laid down in the Scheme—(see p. 15, Proposed Scheme—Basis of Union)—There was continuous debate on this question for hours together, and yet no agreement could be reached. Afterwards the Committee spent a few minutes in silent prayer. When the discussion was resumed a proposal made by one of the members was found acceptable to all. That proposal was adopted and now remains embodied in the Scheme, providing that at the end of thirty years the Church, in deciding whether there should be any exception to the rule of an episcopally ordained ministry, should consider two points:—(a) the unity of the ministry within the Church (b) the maintenance of communion and fellowship with the Churches outside the union. To the members of the Joint Committee this experience was another evidence that the Holy Spirit, in answer to definite prayer, was guiding the Committee in its work.

There were also other occasions, at this meeting and even prior to it, when the sections representing the different Churches felt that they could not come to an agreement on certain vital questions. These were not vain contentions. All the sections thought that they could not agree without sacrificing some of those principles for which their Church had stood for centuries past, and which had become a great and precious spiritual heritage to them. Their ancestors and spiritual fathers had passed through severe trials for the sake of those principles, and even purchased them with their blood. No wonder, then, that these men, however, earnest and keen they might have been in striving for the consummation of this union, could not easily come to an agreement. The leaders of the negotiating Churches, Anglicans, Wesleyans and the S.I.U.C. churchmen, who came to know of the grave difficulties through which the Joint Committee was passing, naturally looked forward to the next meeting of the Joint Committee with anxiety and fear. The prayers of God's faithful people in different parts of the world, however, sustained the Committee in those difficult times and enabled it to continue its labours.

The following news paragraph and editorial appeared in *The Madras Mail* of December 28, 1932:—

CHURCH UNION IN INDIA

London, December 28, 1932.

Critical Stage in Negotiations—

Bishops Ask for Prayers

“A letter to *The Times* signed by twenty English Bishops draws attention to the critical stage in the negotiations for Church Union in South India, and asks that prayers should be offered throughout the Churches in Britain that Indian Diocesan Councils should give their final approval to the proposal—Reuter.”

Editorial

"Twenty English bishops have asked that prayers be offered throughout the Churches in Britain for the success of the Church Union Movement in South India. The negotiations have now reached a stage at which it may be fairly claimed that union is in sight, provided the general approval of the membership of each of the negotiating Churches be forthcoming. The Bishops' appeal makes it clear that whatever opposition may have formerly existed in Great Britain towards the Scheme of Union has now died down."

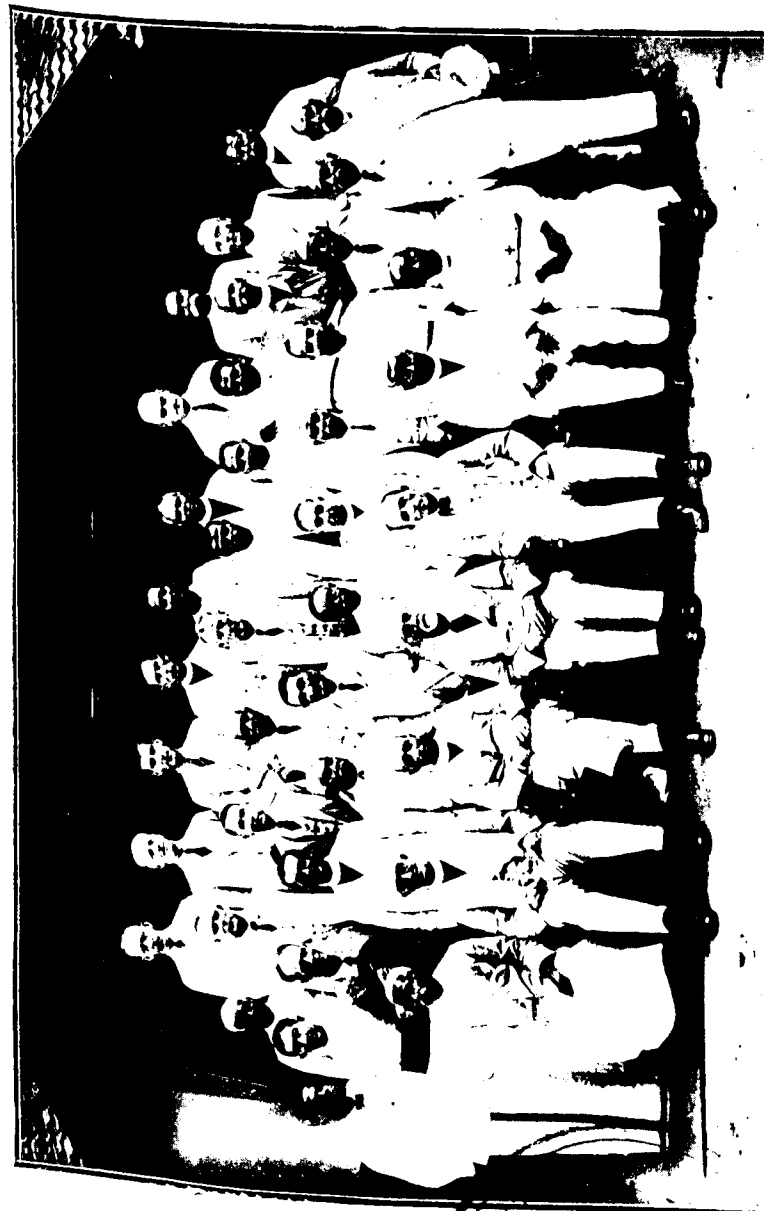
The eleventh session of the Joint Committee sat at Madras from the 29th of November to the 3rd of December, 1932. It was at this session that a drafting committee was appointed to re-arrange all materials in the proposed Scheme in two documents—the Basis of Union and the Constitution. The Basis of Union was re-arranged and re-drafted so as to contain the fundamental principles approved by the negotiating Churches as the basis on which they were prepared to unite. This is a permanent document unalterable in the future and will always stand as a monument to the three Churches that negotiated for union. The Constitution of the Church which forms the second document contains the details of organization, which can be altered in the future according to necessity.

Two other important items of business were also transacted at this meeting.

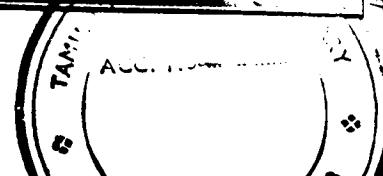
(i) Presbyters in the Consecration of Bishops

On behalf of the Wesleyan delegation a resolution was moved, demanding that, in the consecration of bishops, presbyters should always join with the bishops in the laying on of hands. The proposal was subsequently modified by adding that dioceses which so desired might adopt the laying on of hands by bishops only. In the discussion the Anglican delegates stated that, in view of the advice given to the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon by the Lambeth Conference, it would be extremely difficult for that Church

JOINT COMMITTEE ON UNION, MARCH, 1929



Back Row.—Sackett, Tomlinson, Scops, Emmet, Ananta Rao, Gnanajivu, Banninga, Paul Daniel.
Second Row.—Jeevaratnam, Canon Fisher, Hooper, Masilamani, Thorp, Gurushanta, Sumitra, John Samuel, Simon, Organe, Devadoss.
Third Row.—Rangaramanujam, Archdeacon Beven, Foster, Bishop Tubbs, Gnanapragasam, Canon Western, K. T. Paul, Evans, Lucas, Father Winslow, Ponnaya, John Kurien, Santiago.
Front Row.—(Sitting) Meshach Peter, Monahan, Bishop Waller, Gulliford, Maclean, McClelland, Bishop Azariah.



to accept such a proposal, and consequently the proposal was withdrawn and the provision left as originally drafted.

(ii) Service of Commissioning for existing Bishops

While withdrawing the proposal that presbyters should take part in all consecrations of bishops the suggestion was made that it would help matters if the present Anglican bishops received a commission at the inaugural service of the united Church at the hands of presbyters representing both the Methodist and the South India United Churches. The whole Committee, especially the Anglican section, welcomed and approved of the general idea that in some solemn and formal way representative presbyters of those two Churches should signify their recognition of the bishops, as bishops of the united Church; but the Committee postponed consideration of the exact form which that commissioning should take.

This eleventh session of the Joint Committee had two special features which deserve mention. One was the presence of nine visitors from various sections of the Lutheran Church, who had been invited by the Committee as it had learned that they were interested in the Union Movement. These visitors remarked that they had all along been watching the progress of the negotiations for union and had realized that ultimately the Lutheran and other Christian bodies must again come together. They felt that, though there were many difficulties in the way, the Holy Spirit would finally reveal the solution to all. The second point of interest was the news that a conference in East Africa at which representatives of the episcopal and other Churches of that area were present had proposed to negotiate for Church Union. It was gratifying to the Joint Committee to learn that this group in East Africa, under the convener-ship of the Bishop of Mombasa, had definitely accepted the South India Scheme of Union as the basis of their negotiations.

CHAPTER XVI. THE WEST COAST CHURCHES

I. *The Invitation to Union*

At the eleventh session of the Joint Committee it was reported by the Bishop of Madras and by the Secretary of the Committee that they had had conferences and correspondence with individual members of the Basel Mission and its officers with reference to an important development on the West Coast. It was a probable union affecting the whole area of the Basel Mission including Malabar, South Kanara and South Mahratta. In view of the facts revealed by those consultations the Joint Committee invited the Basel Mission and the authorities of the Churches in South Kanara and South Mahratta to send their delegates to the next meeting of the Joint Committee, either as visitors or as members of the Committee.

When the Home Board of the Basel Mission advised the Malabar Church in 1932 to become reunited with their sister Churches in South Kanara and South Mahratta, the Malabar Church Council had to approach the Executive Committee of the General Assembly of the South India United Church for permission to do so. The Executive Committee took immediate action, and the draft constitution of the United Basel Mission Church in India was referred to a special committee which studied it and suggested a few alterations. The Malabar Church Council adopted many of them, and then gave the assurance to the Executive Committee that the Malabar Church would continue her membership of the South India United Church. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the fourteenth General Assembly, which met at Calicut in September, 1933, passed the following resolution :—

“It is resolved to approve the action of the Malabar Church Council in uniting with the Churches in South

Kanara and South Mahratta on the understanding that such action will probably lead to union with the S.I.U.C., and that this union will lead to a larger union.”

It is obvious that this resolution implied an invitation from the General Assembly to the Churches in South Kanara and South Mahratta to enter into union with the South India United Church, and thereafter into that wider union which was under negotiation.

It is also clear that the union sought by the Malabar Church in 1932 with the Churches in South Kanara and South Mahratta was in reality a reunion of Churches which had been in organic connection with one another from very early times. For these Churches were established by the Basel Mission, which began its work on the West Coast of India in 1834. As mentioned above it was the Great European War of 1914 which caused their separation in 1919.

II. *The Heritage; Undenominationalism*

The Basel Mission was from its very inception a Union Mission, and has continued to remain so to this day. It is called a Union Mission in the sense that it came into being from the earnest desire for evangelism of the Lutheran Church in South Germany and the Reformed Church in Switzerland. As early as 1852 the pioneers of this Mission laid down that in establishing and bringing Churches in the fields of their missionary labours on the West Coast of India, they should refrain from impressing upon those Churches any distinctive mark of denominationalism. This is clearly seen in a statement made by them in the Preface to ‘The Liturgy of the German Evangelical Mission Churches in South Western India’ which reads as follows :—

“The Basel Committee of the German Evangelical Missionary Society, being an association of Christians in communion with different Protestant Churches established in Germany and Switzerland, formed for the sole purpose of carrying on missionary operation in non-Christian countries, and disavowing the intention of establishing an ecclesiastical

union resting on a new Confession of Faith superseding the articles of established Churches, has no wish to impose upon the congregations collected in non-Christian countries by the preaching of the Word of God, the creed of any European Church, be it named Lutheran or Reformed or United, but desires that the Mission Churches abroad should keep the Word of God, which has been preached to them and believed by them in sincerity of heart and grow in the knowledge of the same Word of God which is the pure and all-sufficient source of Wisdom in divine things. On the other hand, it is the Committee's wish and hope that the congregations established in those non-Christian lands through the agency of its missionaries may become and remain a Church united in the bonds of Christian love and fellowship."

Here we find a breadth of vision which allows sufficient freedom to these Churches to define a doctrine for themselves based on the Word of God, at some time in the future when their opportunity will come from God. The foresight which allowed ample margin for the future growth and self-determination of these Churches has vouchsafed to them also a comprehensiveness whereby they are able to accommodate different aspects of the same truth. This comprehensiveness has been acknowledged and exemplified in the doctrinal basis of these Churches which comprehends both the Lutheran and Reformed doctrines.

For more than a century these Churches have uninterruptedly confessed their faith in God by continuing to acknowledge the absolute truth revealed in Jesus Christ in the interpretation of which these two doctrines blend and supplement each other. The brief doctrinal document commonly called 'The small Catechism of Luther' is recognized as the authoritative formulary of these Churches. While, therefore, disavowing any particular doctrine which may distinguish them as a special denomination, they earnestly and unceasingly strive to safeguard the purity of the true Apostolic faith, handed down through centuries, as an inestimable treasure of the One Holy Catholic Church.

CHAPTER XVII.

TEN THESES ON CHURCH UNION, 1930

In advising the Malabar Church to enter into the wider union with the Anglicans and the Methodists, the Rev. K. Hartenstein, D.D., the then Director of the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society, Basel, prepared and sent them the following theses on Church Union :—

Part I

First Thesis :—Christ created His Church on earth by His Spirit at Pentecost. Wherever His pure Word is proclaimed and believed in, and wherever His Spirit moves human beings, there His Church is formed amongst all nations. This Church is the *Una Sancta*. Today this unity is still hidden; but we know that in God's new world it will be a visible reality (John 10. 16).

Second Thesis :—The unity of the Church in which we believe has a threefold basis :—

(a) The Church has one Lord (I Cor. 12; Eph. 4). He is the Son of God, who came in the flesh, died for the world, broke through the bonds of death, the Victor and the Lord, Who will come again and gather His Church into His Kingdom.

(b) The Church has One Word of God, as it is given unto us in the Old and New Testaments. Here alone, but all-sufficiently here does the Lord give to His Church what she needs for time and eternity.

(c) From her earliest days the professing Church made herself a creed, an epitome of the divine message of the Bible. She needs this to be able to understand clearly the Word of God, to keep herself from any syncretism, and to train coming generations in the right way, the so-called 'Apostolicum'.

Third Thesis :—Church History tells us of a whole variety of individual and diverse Churches. Each has its own parti-

cular characteristics which have developed under the leading of God. Each confesses one and the same Lord, but as perceived by each from its particular point of view. Thus the denominational differences have become the wealth of the Church. The one Church is not a Church rendered uniform. But all the Churches should know, therefore, that they are only members of the one body, Christ, that the Lord is greater than their thoughts, and His Kingdom more comprehensive than any single Church. According to the will of the Lord (John 17) the Churches should all lay their stress, not on the disuniting factors, but on the One Who unites them, the mediator crucified for the world, and on their faith in Him that the spirit of unification may grow ever stronger.

Fourth Thesis :—The true Christian, therefore, must be a unity, created by the Lord and not manufactured by men. It must be a unity of Faith and Doctrine; not a rendering uniform of the frame and the constitution. The aim of this unification must not be earthly power and grandeur. The Church must remain beneath the Cross; it must be a light for the world and a sign of the coming Kingdom of God.

Part II

Fifth Thesis :—The Indian and the European leaders who for eleven years have been striving after Church Union have evidently been working in the spirit of earnest prayerfulness and of hearkening to the voice of God (see Foreword to the Proposed Scheme). Their aim is the union of all true believers, and their will to gather together and unite all forces for the evangelizing of South India. It is their purpose to unite the Congregational, the Presbyterian and the Episcopal elements.

Sixth Thesis :—The fact is of decisive importance that the historical heritage of these three denominations is to be retained and taken as a contribution to the structure of the Church in India. The Anglicans bring their foundation of

a clear doctrine and their accentuation of the ministry especially of the Episcopate; the Presbyterians emphasize the importance of the ministry of elders and of the responsibility of the Synod; the Congregationalists realize the importance of the individual religious community and of the individual layman. Of all this an organic, though not a uniform, whole is to be developed; one that does not do away with the value of individualistic characteristics, but that seeks to emphasize, above all, the unifying factors.

Seventh Thesis :—The foundations of this new Church are to be the following :—the Scriptures, the Apostolic Creed, the two Sacraments, and the Episcopate. It is to be an Indian Church that is independent of the State and of other societies; but by that it does not lose its connection with the mother Churches. The problems concerning the constitution and the outer framework are set forth in the 'Proposed Scheme'; but almost all of them are still under discussion.

Eighth Thesis :—In special, there is a lack of clearness on the following points :—

(a) The significance of the Episcopate, and the proper meaning of the expression, the Historic Episcopate, (rather the Biblical Episcopate) are still left quite vague.

(b) The proposed transition period of thirty years, during which the way is gradually to be paved for a unity in structure, constitution and ministry, as well as for intercommunion within the union and with other Churches outside it—these seem to be vague ideas.

(c) The question regarding the leadership in the Church—the powers of the individual bodies (Pastorate Committees, Diocesan Council, Synod, Episcopacy)—has not been yet settled.

(d) The form of Divine Service, Confirmation, etc. are still open questions.

(e) The question whether the Lutherans and the Evangelical Syrians as well as the Baptists should take part in the union has not been settled. Without these Churches no union of the Christians of South India would be a real one

Part III

Ninth Thesis :—In dealing with the question whether we should join in a union of the Churches in India, if we are called to do so, we must distinctly bear in mind three dangers:

(a) The Danger of Sacerdotalism:—The strong accentuation of the ministry, especially of the Episcopate, may be a great gain for the Church. But here lies also the great danger of the Church becoming rigid and bound up in formalism. We may not give due weight to the necessity of personal conversion, the importance of the living community, and above all, the realization that the Word of God must retain its pre-eminence above everything.

(b) The Danger of Secularism:—Here dangers are imminent even before the union may become an accomplished fact. It is to be feared that the union brought about would become one of power; that untrue spiritual compromises may be made, and that more stress may be laid on questions concerning the constitution than on the purity of faith, and the working of the Holy Spirit. A Church may be ever so well-organized; yet it may be a dead Church, if it lacks the Word, and 'the Spirit that quickeneth.'

(c) The Danger of Syncretism:—It is important that an indigenous Indian Church should come into existence. But in aiming at this, the fact should not be disregarded that nationalistic ideals do not count in the Kingdom of God (Gal. 3. 28), and that, in particular, the Indian spiritual heritage must, by complete conversion, pass under the judgment of the Cross. Christ is not the crown and fulfilment of Hinduism; He stands for its condemnation and its recreation by His Spirit alone.

Part IV

Tenth Thesis :—In the matter of a union on biblical lines we have to acquiesce. Further, we must acknowledge that denominations do not play such an important part in India as in the history of the Western Churches. There are three things we must consider in asking ourselves what we are to do.



Praelat K. Hartenstein, D.D.

(a) The character of the Basel Mission and her Churches is that of a union of Reformed and Lutheran, of Ecclesiastical and also Pietistic characteristics and peculiarities. This union was created—and it was also maintained during the War—for the sole purpose of service in the Kingdom of God by mission work. The basis of this unity is personal faith in our Saviour, Jesus Christ, the hope of the coming Kingdom of God, and a resting on the entire Word as revealed in the Scriptures. This character must by all means be maintained.

(b) Our Churches in India are, by the leading of God, an indivisible whole. Therefore, they should join the new union only as one Basel Mission Church.

(c) The vague and unclear state in which the discussions on union still are (see Thesis Eight) must keep us from taking any rash step. We do not know how far still the way may be to the goal. Important questions must needs be cleared up first. Above all, however, we may not take any step precipitately, but must watch and wait to see how the Lord may direct our Churches.

KARL HARTENSTEIN

CHAPTER XVIII.

“THE ACID TEST”

In 1932 the Episcopal Synod of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon gave liberty of action to the members of the Joint Committee on union with reference to participation in Communion services celebrated by non-Anglicans. This action of the Episcopal Synod was very strongly vindicated by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Palmer in his letter¹ to the London Times early in 1933. The Bishop appears to have used modern scientific language in place of the figurative language of the Lord Himself when He said: ‘Ye shall know them by their fruits’. A true copy of the Bishop’s letter is given below.

¹ Church Union News and Views, March 1933, Vol. III, No. 5, pp. 171-173.

Hendre, Cheltenham,
4th January, 1933.

To

The Editor of The Times,
LONDON.

Sir,

Your correspondents have cleared up a part of the present situation about the projected union of Churches in South India. The Lambeth Conference, the only existing body which represents the whole Anglican Communion, has told the Church belonging to the Communion in India to go on with this project; two large organizations of the Anglo-Catholic party in England have said, 'No; if we can prevent you, you shall not'. Have they reasons for this attitude?

Dr. Kidd and his fellow-signatories have answered questions quite properly addressed to them by members of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon on points related to the Scheme. Their answers were drafted with a view to being widely circulated, and have been so circulated. They are sometimes described by the Anglo-Catholic Press as manifestos. The one which you published last Saturday is too technical to be answered in detail in your columns. But I ask leave to present the issues that really matter.

The Scheme for union in South India aims at maintaining 'the traditional ministry' of the Church. 'The Historic Episcopate', it says, 'will be effectively maintained' in the United Church. No ordinations or consecrations will be made in that Church except by Bishops. It is not episcopal ordination from which the Scheme departs, as Dr. Kidd wrongly wrote, in your issue of December 31. What the Scheme rejects is the theories that it is impossible that a Eucharist can take place without an episcopally-ordained minister, and that the Church must forbid any person in any circumstances to receive Communion from a minister not episcopally-ordained. The Scheme proposes to recognize the non-episco-

pal ministers of the Churches which enter the union as ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the United Church, and to allow anyone who wishes, but to compel no one, to resort to their ministrations. Those are the points which are anathema to the objecting Anglo-Catholics.

The acid test of a Church's life is whether it does not convert pagans at home or abroad. The non-episcopal Churches have (to our knowledge) done as much of this work as the episcopal. Is it credible that they would have been enabled by God to do this if He had regarded their Communion services as acts of rebellion, imposture, or self-deception, or as empty forms? No, Sir, those who framed the Scheme cannot believe that. They think that those Churches, their neighbours, if not their colleagues, in the conversion of India, were regarded by God as doing their best to fulfil His Son's command, and that He, by using their ministers in this Sacrament, has Himself consecrated them to it. So long as Churches are deliberately maintaining separation their members cannot with consistency or good conscience share the Sacrament of unity. But when all separation has been removed our brethren in India propose to accept these non-episcopal ministers from God's hands. They are strengthened in this judgment by observing that there is nothing in the New Testament, even where, as in I Corinthians and I Timothy and Titus, one would expect it, to show that the Apostles confined the presidency at the Eucharist to any class of persons, such as presbyters. The indications of the phraseology used (e.g. throughout the Acts) are against such an assumption. However widely or however long the opinion that the Eucharist cannot take place without an episcopally-ordained minister may have been held in the Church, it appears to be devoid of support from Scripture and inconsistent with the experience of the non-episcopal post-Reformation Churches. If this be genuinely arguable, that opinion cannot claim a higher position than that of a permitted opinion, and that position is

what is accorded to it in the South Indian Scheme. Any one in the United Church may teach it as his own opinion and act upon it, but he will not be able to teach it as the United Church's doctrine, because, with nearly half its members not accepting it, it clearly will not be so. The last revision of the Scheme, made at Madras last December, expresses this as follows:—

The uniting Churches recognize that the act of union will initiate a process of growing together into one life and of advance towards complete spiritual unity. One essential condition of the attainment of such complete unity is that the members of the United Church should be willing and able to receive Communion equally in all its Churches, and it is the resolve of the uniting Churches to do all in their power to that end. But they are convinced that this can only take place on the basis of freedom of opinion on debatable matters and respect for even large differences of opinion and practice such as exist at present—for example, with regard to forms of worship or the conditions regarded as necessary for the valid celebration of Holy Communion.

Your readers can judge whether the Anglo-Catholics have not got in the Scheme everything that it is reasonable for them to have. The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon has always wished to carry them with it in this Scheme. Long years of common labour and affection bind the Anglo-Catholics in that Church to her heart. But no man in the Church can ask for more than free opportunity to convert it to an opinion of his which is debatable. I affirm that it must be so treated because God's action in the non-episcopal Churches appears *prima facie* to be against the Anglo-Catholic view.

Your readers should also consider the Scheme in its widest bearings. The division between Catholic and Protestant is the most potent reason why the Church has so little influence today and is not bringing the modern world to Christ, who alone can save it. That division is the strongest point in the devil's plan of campaign. Some obscure persons in

South India are willing to make the first attempt to end that division. They are like men asking leave to go over the top. They know that they may die in the attempt, and that their attempt will fail if they are not followed. In other words, it is possible that the United Church will go wrong itself after union. It is also possible that the Churches in other lands will not follow the example and join themselves into one Church. Our fellow-Christians in South India are willing to take both these risks. Who says to them, 'Stop'? Those who do not wish to have to follow them. Who says to them, 'Go'? Who is it Who died deserted by all, to save all? Who is it Who wants one body with which to complete His saving work?

EDWIN JAMES PALMER
Bishop

CHAPTER XIX. THE DEADLOCK OF 1935

1. *General Approval of the Scheme by the General Assembly in 1933.*

The fourteenth General Assembly which met at Calicut in 1933 heard the report of its Committee on the Scheme of Union and adopted the following resolution:—

"In view of the changes that have been made in the Scheme of Union the General Assembly is glad to find itself in a position to express general approval of the Scheme as published in January of this year. In giving this general approval the Assembly regards the Scheme as involving the acceptance by the uniting Churches of two principles, namely, (1) the value of a constitutional Episcopacy which maintains continuity with the past and (2) the full spiritual equality and value of the ministries of the three uniting Churches.

"Further, in view of the difficulties expressed in certain quarters, the Assembly instructs its Committee on Union to

press for a clear statement in the Basis of Union, embodying also the second principle, since the first is already sufficiently expressed. This action would bring great relief to many members of the South India United Church.

"The Assembly commends the Scheme, as now revised, to the Church Councils with the request that the Councils consider the whole matter carefully and prayerfully, and report their views to the convener of the Union Committee not later than the 25th of August, 1935".

II. Reports from Church Councils

The twelfth and the thirteenth sessions of the Joint Committee were held in February, 1934, and February, 1935, respectively. As instructed by the General Assembly of 1933, the Scheme had been commended to the eight Church Councils under it for consideration and comment. The Assembly's Committee on Union also had, meanwhile, endeavoured to secure a clearer statement regarding the full spiritual equality and value of the ministries of the three uniting Churches. This matter was, accordingly, placed before the twelfth session of the Joint Committee in 1934, and an effort was made by that committee to meet the wishes of the General Assembly. When the new formula was communicated to the Church Councils, it was found that, even as modified, the statement was still unacceptable in some quarters. Consequently, the statement was placed before the Joint Committee at its thirteenth session in 1935, and modified. The statement regarding Episcopacy also had to be altered so as to meet the objections raised by the General Assembly.

In spite of these and other modifications effected in the Scheme, it was found from the reports received from the Councils of the South India United Church that only three of them had accepted it. Three others were not prepared to adopt it while two had not expressed their views at all.

The North Tamil Church Council: With reference to four important questions, namely, (1) mutual recognition of mini-

stries (2) credal clauses (3) lay ministry (4) powers of the Bishops in the Synod, they found that the Scheme was not acceptable to them.

The Telugu Council: Their difficulties with regard to Historic Episcopacy and the inter-celebration of Holy Communion had not been met and, therefore, they had finally come to the point of rejecting the Scheme.

The Travancore Council: The revised Scheme did not yet give effect to the principle of absolute equality of the ministers of the negotiating Churches, and the adoption of the Scheme was likely to obstruct, and, perhaps, eventually to end the fellowship which the South India United Church had established with the London Missionary Society of Travancore and with their mother Church in England, and, therefore, they expressed their inability to approve the Scheme in the existing form.

The two Councils that did not report at all were those of Jaffna and Malabar.

III. The Deadlock

In September, 1935, the fifteenth General Assembly of the South India United Church met at Madras and the consolidated report of the S.I.U.C. Committee on Union, which contained the above-mentioned reports from the various Church Councils under the Assembly, was discussed at length. The question at issue was whether the time had come for the definite acceptance or rejection of the Scheme. It was keenly felt that the abandonment of the proposals would surely bring great disappointment to many within the South India United Church itself, while it would be deeply deplored by the other two negotiating Churches, the Anglican and the Wesleyan Communions. (Of these, the last, by the Union accomplished in Britain in 1933, had come to be known as the Methodist Communion). Then again, it would be a profound disappointment to many well-wishers in other parts of the world who had looked upon the Churches in South India as pioneers in a movement unprecedented in the history of the Church. Still, believing that the union was

the will of God, and feeling that an effort in which the South India United Church had been engaged for sixteen years could not be so abruptly abandoned, the Assembly resolved as follows :—

“(i) The General Assembly, having heard the report of its Committee on Church Union, and the discussion which took place in the Assembly, and having before it the resolutions of six of the Church Councils, finds that a considerable section of the Church still has grave difficulties about a number of points in the Scheme of Union.

“(ii) The General Assembly, accordingly, puts it on record that it seems necessary to allow some years more for the discussion of these points within the Councils and Churches of the S.I.U.C., with a view to arriving at such a degree of unanimity as will make union possible.

“(iii) In the meantime the Assembly instructs its Committee to endeavour, while continuing negotiations with the representatives of the other two Churches, to lead the Churches into contacts of fellowship and service, in order that by such means the members of the different Churches may even now grow into an increasing measure of unity and mutual understanding.”

CHAPTER XX.

AN URGENT CALL TO UNITY

After the meeting of the General Assembly in 1935, a World Conference on Faith and Order was held at Edinburgh (1937) in which delegates of the General Assembly took part. That majestic body, consisting of four hundred and fourteen delegates from one hundred and twenty-two Christian Communions in forty-three different countries of the world, placed on record how, on the one hand, they deplored the unhappy division of Christendom, and, on the other, rejoiced that God in His infinite mercy was paving

the way for its re-union. The following is quoted from the report¹ of the Conference.

“We believe that the divisions of Christendom in every land are such as to hamper the manifestation of the unity of Christ's body. We deplore this with all our hearts; and we desire this conference to summon members of the Churches to such penitence that not only their leaders, but the ordinary men and women who hear their message may learn that the cause of Christian unity is implicit in God's Word, and should be treated by the Christian conscience as an urgent call from God.

“We rejoice that a sense of kinship is now drawing Christians nearer to each other, and that in many partial ways a foretaste of full fellowship between several communions is even now being sought and found.”

Referring to the South Indian movement in particular, the Conference resolved as follows :—²

“This conference has heard, with deep appreciation, of movements towards Church Union in many parts of the world. It regards the Scheme of Church Union in South India, about which three Churches are now negotiating, as deserving of particular attention and study, because in it an attempt is being made to include within a United Church communions holding to the episcopal, the presbyteral and the congregational principles. The importance of prayerful study of this Scheme is further shown by the fact that union negotiations based on its principles are in progress in other parts of the world. In dealing with this and with similar cases the Churches of East and West alike may be called upon for great acts of trust.”

As the latter half of the Report of this Conference directly dealt with the question of Church Union two of its most important findings³ are noted below :—

¹ Report of the Second World Conference on Faith and Order, p. 14.

² Ibid, p. 43.

³ Report of the Second World Conference on Faith and Order, (Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937), pp. 20-21.

1. *On the Validity of the Ministry*

(i) We agree that the Sacraments practised by any Christian Church which believes itself to be observing what Christ appointed for His Church are means of grace to those who partake of them with faith.

(ii) Confusion has sometimes been introduced by the use of the term "valid" in the two following senses :

(a) It is sometimes used synonymously with "efficacious", so that the term "invalid" would imply that a sacrament has no spiritual value and is not a means of grace.

(b) It is sometimes used to imply that the sacrament has been correctly performed.

In so far as Christians find themselves obliged by loyalty to Christ and to His Church to judge that the Sacraments practised by other Christians are invalid, or doubtfully valid, they should, in the cause of Christian truth and charity, do all in their power to see that the precise meaning of their judgment, and the grounds on which they are obliged to make it, are clearly understood.

Many of us are of opinion, and desire to record our belief, that, although it is the duty of a Church to secure that Sacraments should be performed regularly and canonically, yet no judgment should be pronounced by any Church denying the "validity" of the Sacraments performed by any Christian Church which believes itself to be observing what Christ appointed for His Church.

A special difficulty in regard to union arises from a great difference in doctrine which must not be under-estimated. Those Churches which adhere to the doctrine of the Church from the age of the Great Councils to the Reformation regard it as one of the conditions for the validity of any sacrament except baptism (and in some cases, marriage) that it should be performed by a validly ordained or consecrated minister. Thus to them the validity of Holy Order is one

of the indispensable conditions of the validity of other sacraments. On the other hand, some other Christians do not hold ordination to be a sacrament of Christ's institution, yet hold that an ordained minister is the proper minister of the Eucharist. Other Christians again hold that ordination is a sacrament, but do not hold it to be an essential condition of the validity of other sacraments, that they should be ministered by a validly ordained presbyter or bishop.

(iii) We believe that every sacrament should be so ordered that all may recognize in it an act performed on behalf of the universal Church.

(iv) To this end there is need of an ordained ministry recognized by all to act on behalf of the universal Church in the administration of the Sacraments.

Note.—The Orthodox delegates submit the following statement :

Validity.—As regards the validity of Sacraments the Orthodox delegates would like to confine themselves only to the following statement : According to the Orthodox doctrine valid Sacraments are only those which are (1) administered by a canonically ordained and instituted minister and (2) rightly performed according to the sacramental order of the Church.

They regard it, therefore, as unnecessary to accept any other document on this matter presented by the Conference.

* * * *

2. *On the Likeness in Faith or Confession as a Basis for Unity*¹

(a) Likeness in faith or confession is not necessary for co-operative action, but we find that essential unity in faith or confession is a necessary basis for (b) full intercommunion and for (c) corporate union.

¹ Report of the Second World Conference on Faith and Order, (Edinburgh, August 3-18, 1937), pp. 31-32.

Such essential unity in faith would be sufficiently expressed for many of the Churches represented in this Conference by such a statement as the following :

We accept as the supreme standard of the faith the revelation of God contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and summed up in Jesus Christ.

We acknowledge the Apostles' Creed and the Creed commonly called the Nicene, as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith, which is continuously verified in the spiritual experience of the Church and its members - remembering that these documents are sacred symbols and witnesses of the Christian faith rather than legalistic standards.

We further affirm that the guidance of God's Holy Spirit did not cease with the closing of the canon of the Scripture, or with the formation of the creed cited, but that there has been in the Church through the centuries, and still is, a divinely sustained consciousness of the presence of the living Christ. (Note: Known in the Orthodox Church as the Holy Tradition).

Finally, we are persuaded, in the classical words of one of the non-confessional communions, that "God has yet more light to break forth from His Holy Word" for a humble and waiting Church. We Christians of this present age should, therefore, seek the continued guidance of the Spirit of the Living God, as we confront our troubled time.

Some of the Churches represented in the Conference hold that Scripture is not only the supreme but the sole standard and source of Christian faith; they reject any suggestion of the equivalence of Scripture and tradition and any implication that the ancient creeds contain a sufficient interpretation of the Scriptural faith. Some of these Churches regard certain later confessions as possessing an importance and authority at least equal to that of the ancient creeds.

Note: We call attention here to the following statement in Section IV of the Lausanne Report:

"It is understood that the use of these Creeds will be determined by the competent authority in each Church, and that the several Churches will continue to make use of such special Confessions as they possess." (*Faith and Order*, edited by H. N. Bate, p. 467).

The Orthodox and certain other Churches can accept the Nicene Creed only in its uninterpolated form without the *filioque* clause, and those Churches and others hold that the "Holy Tradition" must be acknowledged as a standard and source of the faith complementary to, though wholly consonant with, the revelation in Scripture."

The sixteenth General Assembly of the South India United Church, which met at Trivandrum in October, 1937, acknowledged receipt of the report of this second World Conference on Faith and Order, referred it to its Committee on Union with instructions to assist the Church Councils in the study thereof, and further asked the Committee to submit resolutions to the next meeting of the Assembly for its consideration and action with reference to the matters in the report.

That the report of the World Conference had quite an unexpected effect on this meeting of the Assembly in regard to the Union question can never be doubted. For the discussions which followed made it clear that the deadlock of 1935 was being resolved. This was unmistakably indicated in the following resolution of the General Assembly:—

The General Assembly of the S.I.U.C. notes with deep satisfaction the growing desire on the part of Christians for closer fellowship with each other, and the real desire also for actual corporate union. The Assembly wishes to re-affirm its genuine desire to do all in its power to promote the union of the three Churches now negotiating.

Realizing that there were still a few vital points in the Scheme that were not acceptable to some of the Councils of the S.I.U.C. or to some of their parent Societies and Churches, the Assembly urged the Joint Committee to adopt certain changes, believing that such changes would enable the Churches under the Assembly and its Councils to empower the Assembly in 1939 to give its approval to the Scheme and proceed with the steps leading to the consummation of Union.

Of the five changes proposed by the Assembly, two are noted below :—

(i) *Inter-Communion and Inter-Celebration before Union*

As a confirmation of the mutual recognition of the ministries of the Word and Sacraments in the three negotiating Churches, so clearly expressed in different ways in the Basis of Union and the Governing Principles of the Church, the General Assembly urges the Joint Committee to take steps to secure the adoption of the practice of Inter-Communion and Inter-Celebration between the negotiating Churches before Union.

(ii) *Lay Celebration of the Lord's Supper*

It is at present the practice in some areas of the S.L.U.C. to license suitable men to conduct the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The Assembly urges that provision be made in the Scheme to permit a Diocesan Council, if it so desires, to frame rules with due safeguards for the granting of licences to laymen of approved Christian character and experience to conduct the celebration of the Lord's Supper in particular places and for definite periods of time.

The General Assembly authorized its Committee on Union to submit the foregoing resolutions and observations to its Councils for their consideration and necessary action, and asked those Councils to report to the Assembly through its Committee on Union whether they were prepared to accept the proposed Scheme of Union if these modifications were embodied therein, so that after receiving the requisite approval from the Councils, the Assembly at its next meeting in 1939 might proceed with the steps necessary for the consummation of Union.

CHAPTER XXI.

PARENTAL ADVICE TO THE WEST COAST CHURCHES

The Rev. Karl Hartenstein, D.D., Director of the Basel Mission, who came to India in December 1938 as a delegate to the World Missionary Conference held at Tambaram, near Madras, returned to Basel in the spring of 1939 and after conferring with the Home Board on the question of Church Union in South India, communicated their advice to the Churches on the West Coast in the following encyclical :—

To the Ministers, Co-workers and Members
of the
United Basel Mission Church in India

Dear Brethren,

It has been a great joy for me to take part in the Synod of the United Basel Mission Church in Calicut from the 8th to the 12th of March. There we considered carefully the question whether the United Basel Mission Church should join a larger ecclesiastical body in India. I have submitted this important question to the Home Board of the Basel Mission after my return. After careful consideration the Home Board wishes to send you, dear brethren, the following message :—

1. Perhaps the most important gain which we had from the World Missionary Conference at Tambaram was a new understanding of the situation of the younger Churches in every mission field; this situation calls for closer connection and union of the Churches. A letter which the leaders of the younger Churches unanimously submitted to the Conference, speaks of the very painful results of the divisions among the Protestant Churches, of competition between denominations and of sects coming up everywhere. The Conference was asked to do everything in its power to lead the younger Churches towards Union, and also to examine whether the continuation of our divisions is still justified, or

whether that which is common to us does not outweigh the dividing forces. The younger Churches declared that in loyalty to their mother Churches they would not proceed on the way towards union without their consent but at the same time they implored the elder Churches to do everything possible to overcome the painful divisions, to bridge the differences between the denominations and to lead the way to the unity of the Church. The two main reasons for this request are:—(1) that the anti-Christian forces all over the world are gathering momentum, and that a Church divided in itself cannot withstand them; and (2) that our Lord Himself had prayed at His last gathering with the disciples "that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me". It was often said during the deliberations that the message of salvation in Christ to the whole of mankind can be accepted by mankind, only if this message is proclaimed by a Church which in itself reveals the miracle of inner unity. Thus the Tambaram Conference has become in itself an earnest summons to the Christian Churches to reconsider the question of their denominational divisions, and to pray and work for the unity of the body of Christ among the nations.

2. Can the Basel Mission join in this world-wide union movement? To this question the Home Board's answer is a full and joyous "Yes". From its beginning the Basel Mission has been a union Mission founded on the Scriptures. Christians belonging to German, Swiss and French Churches have even co-operated in the Basel Mission. Further, the Basel Mission is a fellowship in which Lutherans and Reformed Christians and also members of the so-called Free Churches have joined together for the propagation of the gospel in all the world. For this reason the Basel Mission has not established denominational Churches in any of the five mission fields in which it is working, but congregations and Churches on a broad evangelical basis, bringing to them the pure gospel and believing that God's Holy Word and Spirit will lead them on in the right path. The Basel Mission is thus in Europe the trustee of many congregations belonging to different denominations. Thus the aim of the true biblical union has been pursued from the beginning in our Missionary Society, and is now again joyfully acknowledged.

3. Do we need Union in India? Also to this question the Home Board answers with a unanimous and joyous "Yes".

In our area on the West Coast the situation is comparatively easy, as we are practically the only Evangelical Mission there. Anglican congregations are small, and the sects have not become anywhere a real danger to our Churches. But there are other difficulties, and one of these is that we are very isolated. Outwardly we have little connection with other Churches in South India, and receive little spiritual help from them. We are also a comparatively small Church in a numerically large non-Christian environment. These are circumstances which call us to earnest self-examination and raise the question whether we should not enter into closer contact with other Missions and Churches, for the strengthening of our spiritual life and evangelistic witness. We have had at Tambaram many conversations about these questions with leaders of the Indian Churches. We were also invited by the representatives of the Lutheran Federation to come into closer contact with them. But it became clear to us that we cannot join them, as they themselves are a denominational body. The members of the Lutheran Federation have to accept as the standard of doctrine a statement drawn up in 1530, which is partly directed against the Reformed Churches. The acceptance of this standard of doctrine would estrange us from the reformed members of our Mission, and to this the Home Board would never agree. God has blessed the union between Lutherans and Reformed Christians during a hundred years in our own midst, and so we shall never give up this fellowship. One evening at the Conference the leaders of the South India Union Movement spoke to us. We were much impressed by the earnestness of this quest for union, by their readiness to learn from each other and to make sacrifices. We had the strong feeling that it will be a great blessing if our Church will become a member of this large Church that is to be.

4. Shall we accept the South India Church Union Scheme? With regard to this question the Home Board wishes to give you, dear brethren, the following for your consideration. At this decisive moment we must examine ourselves in the presence of God, and ask His Holy Spirit to purify our motives. It would be easy to think on the following lines: We are a small Church, and would like to become a large, strong and powerful Church. We are a poor Church, and would like to become a wealthy Church.

We are an Indian Church, and would like to become, through this Union, free from the Western denominational teaching. But these are all considerations which will not bear the test. If we enter the Union with such considerations, we shall not have God's blessing.

Then what considerations should lead us? Apostle Paul says: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin". This expression 'of faith', means that we cannot think of external benefits, but that we must be ready, even in this larger Church, to bear the cross of contradiction, and of obstruction to the message of our crucified Lord.

This expression, 'of faith' tells us that we are, and will ever be, pilgrims on this Earth, and that though we shall be members of an Indian Church rooted in Indian soil, "we have here no continuing city, but seek one to come."

This expression 'of faith' further means that we shall treasure the spiritual inheritance of our fathers and hold fast the full, clear and pure gospel in this Union guarding against all dangers of compromise.

Let us, therefore, give you two words of advice. The first is that our Synod may give a clear expression to our faith. Here we should try to explain the full message of the Apostles' Creed in such a way that it applies to the present day problems in India, and draws a clear line of demarcation against Syncretism, worldliness, and non-Christian religious heritage. Then we may place this confession before the Joint Committee on Union with the question whether they will give room within the Union for a Church with such a confessional basis and are ready to allow this as a standard of teaching in the theological institutions of the Union.

Let us further make a clear statement with regard to Episcopacy. We fully appreciate the need for an independent spiritual authority in the younger Churches. But we would emphasize that it is to be a shepherd's office, a pastor ministering to pastors, a spiritual leadership, as we see it in the New Testament. We believe that the Joint Committee on Union will have full sympathy for both requests and enable us to contribute our special gifts to this future Church.

In any case, it is a venture of faith. We believe that God's Word and God's Spirit will shape the future life of the South India Church according to His Will. We must, there-

fore, in all our problems, turn to the Bible, and take our guidance from its teaching.

We believe in particular that this Union will become a blessing to our Church in so far as we shall come into living contact with other Churches; for we shall be strengthened with their spiritual gifts, and better fitted for the essential task of evangelizing our non-Christian brethren. Let us not forget the purpose of our Lord's Prayer for the unity of His disciples, "that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me". If, in this way, and with these motives and these hopes, we enter into the Union, God's Holy Spirit will bless us abundantly.

Dear brethren, we thus give you the counsel to approach the Joint Committee on Union in this sense, and, if they agree to our requests, to enter into the negotiations as a fourth partner, in the expectation that soon the hoped-for results may be achieved. We shall be glad in future also to assist the United Basel Mission Church in solving all important questions, and help it to find that way which is in accordance with His will.

I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, as your brother and co-worker in the Church of God.

(Sd.) *K. Hartenstein*

This message of the Home Board was duly translated into the vernaculars of the three districts of South Kanara, Bombay Karnatak and Malabar and printed copies of it were distributed among the members of the Church.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE COUNCILS OF THE SOUTH INDIA UNITED CHURCH

The seventeenth General Assembly of the South India United Church met at Madras in September, 1939. The sixteenth session of the Joint Committee on Union was also held in the same year at Madras. The deliberations of both these meetings had to be conducted under the clouds of war. In Europe and the Far East, battles were raging which seemed to be the beginning of a world-wide conflagration. The uncertainties and perplexities attendant on international hostilities cast their shadow on those deliberations as well.*

At this meeting of the General Assembly its Committee on Union presented the reports from the various Church Councils. The Madura and Kanarese Councils had approved the 1936 Scheme, and were ready to unite on that basis. The Madras, North Tamil and Jaffna Councils were prepared to approve the Scheme, if the resolution passed in 1939 were fully accepted. The Travancore Council was not satisfied with the Scheme and asked for considerable modifications. Malabar wanted further changes along doctrinal lines. The Telugu Council did not send any reply.

The Assembly, having discussed the recommendations of its Committee, passed certain resolutions and authorized the Committee to present those resolutions to the Joint Committee on Union at its next meeting for its consideration.

After about ten weeks' time the sixteenth meeting of the Joint Committee was held at Madras in November, 1939. The Committee considered the resolutions of the General Assembly as well as the recommendations of the Consultative Committee of the Lambeth Conference, and adopted the following amendments to the Scheme :—

I. *The Faith of the Church*

With reference to two resolutions of the General Assembly of the South India United Church on the faith of the Church, and with reference to a communication from the Malabar Church Council relating to the Confessional basis of the Church, it was resolved to substitute the following for Section 3 of the Basis, with consequential changes in Chapter II, Section 5 of the Constitution, as printed in the 1936 edition of the Scheme :—

“The uniting Churches accept the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary for salvation and as the supreme and decisive standard of faith; and acknowledge that the Church must always be ready to correct and reform itself in accordance with the teaching of those Scriptures as the Holy Spirit shall reveal it.

“They also accept the Apostles' Creed and the Creed commonly called the Nicene Creed as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith; and they thankfully acknowledge that same faith to be continuously confirmed by the Holy Spirit in the experience of the Church of Christ.

“Thus they believe in God, the Father, the Creator of all things, by whose love we are preserved;

“They believe in Jesus Christ, the incarnate son of God and Redeemer of the world in whom alone we are saved by grace, being justified from our sins by faith in Him;

“They believe in the Holy Spirit by whom we are sanctified and built up in Christ and in the fellowship of His body;

“And in this faith they worship the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity.

Notes :—(i) The uniting Churches accept the fundamental truths embodied in the Creeds named above as providing a sufficient basis of Union; but do not intend thereby to demand the assent of individuals to every word and phrase in them, or to exclude reasonable liberty of interpretation, or to assert that those creeds are a complete expression of the Christian faith.”

(ii) } Same as former Notes (i) & (ii)
(iii) }

II. *The Ministry in the Church*

The following should be substituted for the first clause in Section 5 of the Basis of Union, and, *mutatis mutandis*, for the first clause in Chapter II, Section 7 of the Constitution:—

“The uniting Churches believe that the Church is a royal priesthood of believers and all its members have direct access to God; all have their share in the commission and authority of the whole Church, and, therefore, they all have their duty to perform in order that the priestly work of the Church may be fulfilled.

“The uniting Churches believe that the ministry is a gift of God through Christ to His Church which He has given for the perfecting of the life and service of all its members”.

III. *The Episcopate in the United Church*

After considering Resolution (D) of the General Assembly of the South India United Church, it was resolved to substitute the following for the opening clause in the second paragraph of Section 9 of the Basis, and, *mutatis mutandis*, in Chapter II Section 11 of the Constitution:—

“Whatever differences there are, all the uniting Churches are agreed that, as Episcopacy has been accepted in the Church from early times, it may in this sense fitly be called historic, and that it is a form of Church government which at the present time is expedient for the Church in South India. Any additional interpretations, though held by individuals, are not binding on the United Church. The meaning in which the uniting Churches thus officially accept a historic and constitutional Episcopacy is that in the united Church.”

IV. In the last sentence of the same paragraph in Section 9 (p. 9), the Joint Committee, accepting the recommendations of the Consultative Committee of the Lambeth Conference, resolved to substitute the words ‘any judgment upon’ for the words ‘the denial of’. The Joint Committee did not, however, accept the other proposal of the Consultative Committee to amend the wording of the 4th paragraph in Section 1 of the Basis.

V. *Relation of the United Church to other Churches*

After considering Resolution I of the General Assembly of the South India United Church, the Joint Committee resolved that the following amended form of Sections 17 & 18 of the Basis of Union be accepted and that consequential changes be made elsewhere before a new edition of the Scheme was issued.

“Section 17. *Relation of the United Church with Churches in India*: The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon has permitted the severance of the Dioceses of Madras, Tinnevely, Dornakkal and Travancore and Cochin from its provincial organization in order that those dioceses should become part of the autonomous United Church of South India, this severance being accepted for the sake of unity and in the full expectation that the United Church of South India will welcome and endeavour to assist movements for similar union in North India. Such unions in South India and North India would naturally have their consummation in a fuller union on an all-India basis, in which the several parts of all the Churches will come together again.

“Meanwhile, it is hoped that cordial relations will always exist between the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, and the United Church of South India, and that, whenever suitable occasions arise, there will not be any hesitation in taking counsel with one another.

“Similarly, the uniting Churches wish to assure the Methodist Church in North India, Burma and Ceylon, and the Churches in North India with which the South India United Church is now in fellowship, that the United Church will always be ready and glad to respond to any proposal for taking common counsel.

“Any question of arranging for formal or regular consultation is left to the decision of the United Church after union.”

VI. *Consecration of Bishops*

The Joint Committee accepted the first part of Resolution (E) of the General Assembly of the South India United Church to substitute ‘three presbyters’ for ‘two presbyters’ in Chapter IV, Section 25 of the Constitution. But the pro-

posals to omit the clause in the same section permitting a diocese to have a consecration by the laying on of hands of Bishops only was rejected.

VII. *Composition and Membership of the Synods*

After careful consideration of Resolution (A) of the South India United Church, as well as its resolution on the same subject passed in 1937, the Joint Committee resolved to substitute the following for Chapter IX, Rule 2 of the Constitution :—

“Every diocese shall be represented in the Synod by not fewer than two presbyters and four laymen, and shall have one additional presbyter and one additional lay representative for every complete 10,000 baptized members in the diocese above the first 10,000 up to a maximum of six presbyters and eight laymen representing any one diocese.”

VIII. *Conduct of Business in the Synod*

After consideration of Resolutions (B) & (C) of the General Assembly of the South India United Church, the Joint Committee resolved to substitute the following for Chapter IX, Rules 22 & 23, and that in view of this provision further consideration of voting by houses be dropped :—

Rule 22. When any proposition is brought before the Synod which directly concerns

- (a) the faith and doctrine of the Church;
- (b) the conditions of membership in the Church, and the rules which govern ex-communication from the Church;
- (c) the functions of the ordained ministers of the Church;
- (d) the worship of the Church and any forms of worship proposed for general use in the Church;

the matter shall be discussed in the Synod in the usual manner and amendments thereto may be passed; but the proposition as approved, whether amended or not, shall be referred to the Diocesan Bishops sitting separately for that purpose. The Bishops shall transmit the proposition to the Synod, if approved by a majority of them; or they may, by a majority of two-thirds, either modify it and transmit it to the Synod for final voting or refuse to transmit it in any form. In either case, they shall submit reasons to

the Synod why they urge the acceptance of the proposition in a modified form or why they refuse to submit it in any form. If the Synod accepts the proposed amendment of the Bishops, the proposition may then be passed and become an act of the Church.

Rule 23. If a proposition has been referred to the Bishops sitting separately under the provisions of Rule 22, and the Bishops have refused to submit it in any form to the Synod for final voting, or if the proposition fails to receive the support of the necessary majority, the matter shall be dropped. If desired by a Diocesan Council, the matter may be again proposed at the next ordinary session of the Synod; and after discussion and amendments, if any, shall again be submitted to the Bishops. If the Bishops again refuse to submit it to the Synod in any form for final voting, a vote of the Synod shall nevertheless be taken on the proposition in the form in which it was originally referred to the Bishops. If in such voting the proposition obtains a three-quarters majority of the members of the Synod present and voting, this vote shall be recorded, and the proposition shall be referred to the Diocesan Council, together with the special report made by the Bishops. If the proposition so referred be accepted in substantially the same terms by not less than two-thirds of the Diocesan Councils, it shall again be considered by the Synod at its next ordinary meeting, and when so considered, Rule 22 of this Chapter shall not apply, but it may be adopted by a three-quarters majority, and if so adopted, shall become an act of the Church.

IX. The Joint Committee considered also the following resolution of the General Assembly :—

Resolved that we request the Joint Committee to substitute the following for the short paragraph in 8 on page 7 of the Scheme of Union, and related places in the Scheme :

‘It will be the rule of the United Church on the grounds of Church order that presbyters administer the Holy Communion, but this does not preclude the Church from granting a licence to a particular layman to celebrate the Communion in a particular place or places for a definite length of time.’

There was considerable discussion on this question of the lay celebration of the Lord's Supper, and finally, the Joint Committee adopted the following resolutions:--

(a) With regard to the rule in para 7, page 7, of the Basis of Union that none except bishops and presbyters have the right to celebrate the Holy Communion, there are deep differences of opinion among the members of the uniting Churches. As in the case of the Episcopate (pages 7 and 8 of the Scheme) there are some who regard the rule as a matter of faith, others who regard it as a usage of great antiquity widely observed in the Church, and of great value in itself; others again who hold views between the two. In accepting the rule the Joint Committee wishes to make clear that it does so on grounds of Church order; the Joint Committee as such is not committed to doctrinal views that are for some the ground of their acceptance. The Joint Committee recognises that exceptional arrangements will continue until permanent arrangements can be made by the Church after union. The Synod of the United Church will have full authority to make what provision is needed for the administration of the Sacraments in all its congregations.'

'(b) Resolved that a committee of nine members be appointed to make a thorough study of the questions involved in the practice of lay celebration of the Holy Communion and that this committee report to the Joint Committee as soon as possible, so that, if God will, a final decision on Union may be reached in the very near future.'

After the sixteenth session of the Joint Committee in November 1939 quite a large number of people in South India who had been for many years connected with the Union movement had hoped that a satisfactory solution would be found to the most controversial problems connected with the Scheme. But in the course of the succeeding few months the whole situation became changed, being heavily clouded with reports of controversy. It was on the question of lay celebration of the Lord's Supper that differences arose. As soon as the Congregationalists found that the Sub-Committee appointed by the Joint Committee to consider and advise with regard to the proposal of the General Assembly on the

question of lay celebration did not feel able to recommend that proposal to be incorporated in the Scheme of Union, they felt their religious liberty actually invaded, and themselves deprived of a goodly heritage in the United Church to be. Hence, on their side, a vindication of the real congregational position became necessary. Their protest was particularly voiced in a booklet published by Dr. H. C. Lefever, Principal of the Theological Seminary, Trivandrum, in 1940 and had formed part of the data for the discussions of the Sub-Committee. The author after clearly setting forth the biblical background of the doctrine of "the Priesthood of all believers" and describing at length its application to Christian life in the history of the Church critically analysed the chief objections to the principle of lay celebration. In the preparation of this booklet the views of a large number of representative theologians in Europe and America have been available to the author. The last chapter¹—"The Oecumenical Church of the Future" deals with the question of Lay Celebration from a congregational point of view.

The Sub-Committee on Lay Celebration appointed by the Joint Committee in 1939 had had also before them during their discussions in September 1940 a booklet on Lay Celebration of the Lord's Supper by the Rev. Marcus Ward, Professor of the United Theological College, Bangalore. A careful perusal of the author's well-balanced contentions from the methodist point of view, embodied in Part II of his booklet², will give the reader a further insight into the question under discussion.

¹ See Appendix D.

² See Appendix E.

CHAPTER XXIII. A CLEARER PERSPECTIVE

Since the meeting of the Joint Committee in 1939, the supreme governing bodies of two of the negotiating Churches have met and discussed the proposed Scheme and also considered practical measures to facilitate its adoption. The Provincial Synod of the Methodist Church met at Royapettah, Madras, in February, 1941, and the General Assembly of the South India United Church at Vadukoddai, Ceylon, in September of the same year. The seventeenth session of the Joint Committee on Union was also held in Madras in October, 1941. The total delegation to the Committee from the three negotiating Churches numbered forty-two, fourteen from each, of whom forty were present. A Holy Communion service for the members of the Committee was held on the second day; and it was celebrated by one of the ministers of the South India United Church.

At this session of the Joint Committee the following subjects were discussed:—

1. Reports from the Conveners of the three Delegations

1. The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon:—As the General Council had not met since the last meeting of the Joint Committee, no further action was taken.

2. The Methodist Church:—The Church Union Committee had met twice. A resolution passed at its second meeting, which was approved by the Provincial Synod in February, 1941, and later by the Methodist Conference in England, involved unreserved acceptance of the basis of the present scheme, and a determination to enter into negotiations for bringing about the consummation of union on that basis at the earliest possible moment.

3. The South India United Church:—The report of the Committee on Union, which had been accepted by the General Assembly of the South India United Church in September, 1941, was presented, and printed copies were circulated. It showed that of the eight councils, five had

voted in favour of the Scheme of Union, and one for acceptance on certain conditions. Of the two councils which did not agree, the Travancore Council had a majority of sixty-three per cent in favour of acceptance, but according to the rules a majority of seventy-five per cent was required. The Telugu Council alone had rejected the Scheme by a majority.

The report contained a few requests to the Joint Committee, of which the following were the most important.

(i) Presbyters Participating in the Consecration of Bishops

The General Assembly resolves to ask the Joint Committee to consider the question, and make participation of Presbyters compulsory in all consecrations.

(ii) Inter-Communion and Inter-Celebration before Union

The resolution of the Madras Council that inter-communion and inter-celebration be allowed as soon as the three negotiating Churches had taken their votes on Union was recommended to the Joint Committee. The General Assembly also wished to state that, as several Church Councils had already voted in favour of union, and other councils would be largely helped if this was conceded, a larger degree of inter-communion and inter-celebration would be fitting, and that an acceptable solution of this problem would remove one of the few remaining barriers to union.

(iii) Lay Celebration

The report on Lay Celebration by the Sub-Committee appointed by the Joint Committee was considered by the General Assembly. The Assembly approved of its being incorporated into the Scheme in such a form as would best preserve the principles there enunciated.

(iv) Size and Distribution of the Proposed Dioceses

The following resolution of the Executive Committee of the Malabar Church Council was approved by the General Assembly:—

It was unanimously resolved to request the General Assembly to move the Joint Committee to reconsider the question of the size and distribution of the proposed dioceses with a view to having smaller dioceses where the Bishops would be better able to maintain personal contact with the members.

II. *The Proposed Scheme of Union*

The following Statement and Parts I, II and V of the report on Lay Celebration were considered:—

“It is clear that in the minds of many, Lay Celebration of the Holy Communion is inseparably bound up with the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. It must be pointed out that this connection is not inevitable. All the Reformed Churches, including the Anglican, hold the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, or, as sometimes expressed, the priesthood of the whole Church. But several of the churches which hold this doctrine most strongly, such as the Lutheran and Presbyterian Churches have maintained it for centuries without finding it necessary to safeguard it by the practice of Lay Celebration.

One of the purposes of this Scheme of Union is to bring into being one ministry of the United Church, in which the Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregational heritages are genuinely combined; a ministry which will be recognized and accepted throughout the whole area of the United Church, and of which every member will have equal rights and status. It is felt that the practice of Lay Celebration may imperil the unity of this ministry.

The Committee surveyed the practice of different Churches and Council areas in South India and ascertained that, though celebration of the Holy Communion by unordained pastors was authorized in mass movement areas of the Methodist Church, and found in some councils of the South India United Church, in most of these areas this custom was of recent origin and restricted in scope. The Committee was of opinion that the emphasis laid on Lay Celebration at the present time by some in the negotiating Churches was due, not so much to any urgent need for practical action to provide sacramental ministrations in the congregations as to a deep-rooted fear that the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers was not adequately safeguarded by the Scheme of Union, and that there was, therefore, a real danger that the doctrine may be crowded out by an almost magical view of the dignity and authority of the individual ordained minister, and of the efficacy of the words pronounced by him in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The Committee, therefore, felt that what was needed was to make clear the theological issues, and to draw out more fully the true doctrine of Priesthood, rather than to try

and insert into the constitution of the United Church further legislation with regard to the ministers of the Lord's Supper. The Committee, therefore, requests that room should be found in the Scheme for paragraphs, containing in general, the following substance and meaning.

Part I.—Priesthood in the Church

The only priesthood recognized in the Church is the heavenly High Priesthood of the risen and ascended Christ. The Church, the body of Christ as participating in His risen life, is a royal priesthood and to it is committed the task of fulfilling on earth His priestly work. All Christians are sharers in this priestly function, and are equally called to show forth by life and word the glory of the redeeming grace of God in Christ. No individual and no one order in the Church can claim exclusive possession of this heavenly priesthood. But in the Church there have been at all times special ministries to which men have been called by God and set apart by the Church. Those who are ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments can exercise their office only in and for the Church through the power of Christ, the one High Priest.

Part II.—The Holy Communion

In every Communion the true celebrant is Christ alone, who continues in the Church today that which he began in the Upper Room. In the visible Church the celebration of Lord's Supper is an act of the Church, the company of believers, redeemed by Christ, who act as the local manifestation of the whole Church of Christ in heaven and on earth. It has, in experience, been found best that one minister should lead the worship of the Church and pronounce the words of consecration in the service of the Holy Communion. From very early times it has been the custom of the Church that those only should exercise this function who have received full and solemn commission from the Church to do so; this commission has ordinarily been given by the laying on of hands in ordination.

Part V.—The Sacraments in the Church

The only indispensable condition for the ministration of the grace of God in the Church are the unchangeable promise of God Himself and the gathering together of God's elect people in the power of the Holy Ghost. God is a God of order; it has been His good pleasure to use the visible

Church and its regularly constituted ministry as the normal means of the operation of His Spirit, but it is not open to any to limit the operation of the grace of God to any particular channel or to deny the reality of His grace when it is visibly manifest in the lives of Churches and individuals.

While accepting Parts II and V of the report on Lay celebration, the Joint Committee discussed Part I and resolved to amend Section 5 of the Basis as follows :—

The uniting Churches believe that the ministry is a gift of God through Christ to the Church which He has given for the perfecting of the life and service of all its members. All members of the Church have equal access to God; all, according to their measure, share in the heavenly High Priesthood of the risen and ascended Christ, from which alone the Church derives its character as royal priesthood. All alike are called to continue upon earth the priestly work of Christ by showing forth in life and word the glory of the redeeming power of God in them. No individual and no one order in the Church can claim exclusive possession of this heavenly priesthood.

But in the Church there has at all times been a special ministry, to which men have been called by God and set apart in the Church. Those who are ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments can exercise their office only in and for the Church, through the power of Christ, the one High Priest.

The vocation of the ordained ministry is to bring sinners to repentance, and to lead God's people in worship, prayer and praise, and, through pastoral ministrations, the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments—all these being made effective through faith—to assist men to receive the saving and sanctifying benefits of Christ and to fit them for service. The uniting Churches believe that in ordination God, in answer to the prayers of his Church, bestows on, and assures to, those whom He has called, and His Church has accepted, for any particular form of the ministry, a commission for it and the grace appropriate to it.

III. *Inter-Communion*

1. The Joint Committee was of opinion that a definite advance towards union had been made (a) by the decision of

the conference of the Methodist Church in England, according to the request of the Provincial Synod of the Church in South India, that permission should be granted to proceed to the consummation of union (b) by the vote of five councils of the S.I.U.C. in favour of the Scheme of Union and (c) by the generally favourable attitude of the S.I.U.C. General Assembly.

2. In view of the widespread desire that this advance should be marked by wider facilities for intercommunion, the Joint Committee resolved that, although full intercommunion would be possible only after all the negotiating Churches have given their final vote in favour of union, the possibility of extending the existing facilities should be considered. For, according to the practice in vogue, intercommunion was regularly permitted only at meetings of the Joint Committee and retreats or conferences directly arranged by it.

3. It was also resolved that the Joint Committee was of opinion that the cause of Church Union would be forwarded, if this permission was extended to include certain other services, not organized by the Joint Committee, such as :

(a) United services arranged in various localities where members of two or more of the uniting Churches might be brought together for worship;

(b) Conferences such as the Regional Conferences arranged under the auspices of the Madras Representative Christian Council and other Provincial Councils;

(c) Conferences of the Student Christian Movement in which students of the uniting Churches take part.

The Joint Committee reaffirmed the desire that, when once the three Churches had voted to enter into union, every effort should be made to secure the adoption of full intercommunion immediately.

IV. *Distribution of Dioceses*

The proposal for smaller dioceses was considered, and it

led to considerable discussion both on the desirability of increasing the number of dioceses and on the advisability of city dioceses. A tentative scheme for division into sixteen dioceses was brought forward, but it was finally agreed that the whole subject should be referred to the Continuation Committee for further investigation and report.

Finally, the Joint Committee felt that it had brought the labours of two decades to a conclusion by evolving a scheme which could reasonably be expected to receive the assent of the three negotiating Churches. While submitting the Scheme to the Churches for their vote, the Joint Committee thought it desirable to issue the following appeal:—

An Appeal for Decision

(The following decisions were adopted *nem con*)

1. We give thanks to God for the many signs that our Churches are nearer to union than they have been ever before. We believe that the time has come to decide whether on the Basis of the Scheme, as it now stands (Parts I & II) these Churches will enter into corporate union with one another.

We, therefore, earnestly request that the three Churches will agree that the time for negotiation, by way of criticism and amendment of the Scheme, is now past, and that they will proceed at the earliest possible opportunity to decide, through the responsible Church bodies, whether they are prepared to unite on the Basis of the Scheme (Parts I & II), as now submitted by the Joint Committee.

2. In view of the grievous and urgent need of the world for reconciliation, we affectionately suggest that, wherever necessary, power be sought to convene extraordinary meetings of Councils and Synods with a view to their reaching a definite decision by the Spring of 1944.

The success already achieved, however, justified the hope that the prayers and labours of all these years have not been in vain. For example, a report on Church Union presented by the India Committee of the London Missionary Society

to its Home Board in December, 1942, contains the following words of encouragement:—

“India Committee has given some attention to the final edition of the Scheme and makes the following observations for the information of the Board. There has emerged a conception of the United Church far richer than was envisaged when discussions began in 1919. Gains in understanding are of significance far beyond India. The newest features in the Scheme all imply greater recognition than hitherto of those principles which the Joint Commission of the London Missionary Society and the Congregational Unions (1930-1936) wished to see more fully embodied in the Scheme. Some of the amendments go beyond what was asked for in this Commission's report.”

The following resolution of the Board on this report also inspires us with hope:—

“The Directors receive the foregoing report with thankful recognition of the gains in understanding which have been achieved through the years, and with clear appreciation of the difficulties which remain. They would remind the Church Councils with which the Board is associated, that, under the Society's 'fundamental principle', our brethren in India are free to assume such form of Church government as to them shall appear most agreeable to the Word of God. In the exercise of this freedom, whatever the final decision may be, the Directors wish it to be clearly understood that they pledge their continued co-operation in the fullest manner with the Church in India. They will follow the remaining discussions with deep and affectionate interest and with the prayer that their friends in India may be led into a clear understanding of the will of God for His Church.”

CHAPTER XXIV.

IS CHURCH FEDERAL UNION THE ANSWER?

The General Assembly of the South India United Church was to have met in the Telugu area in October, 1943. But owing to famine, lack of water and other difficulties there, the meeting had to be postponed till September 1944. During this interim period the Churches under the Assembly had been seriously thinking about union, and some people felt that the difficulties in the way of organic union were insurmountable. Therefore, it was but natural that such should turn to the idea of federal union as an alternative. In 1943 Dr. Stanley Jones, the well-known author and missionary in South India published an article in *The Fellowship*, in which he propounded a scheme of union of Churches on the federal basis. Following on the heels of this suggestion appeared two successive articles in *The South India United Church Herald* by the late Dr. J. H. Maclean, a great missionary statesman in South India and one of the founders of the World Student Christian Federation, who had been connected with the South India Union Movement from its very inception. Dr. Maclean opposed the proposal for federal union. The contentions of both these missionary leaders are recorded here.

I. Dr. Stanley Jones' suggestion as condensed from *The Fellowship*¹ was as follows:

"If the Churches hope to shape the future, they dare not come with a divided life, for the future—if there is to be any future—will belong to real co-operation. Across the shape of things to come are written three decisive words: "Co-operate or Perish". The Church cannot hope to guide a co-operative future with its own inner life competitive. We simply must have Church Union. But how?"

¹ Reprinted in the South India United Church Herald, Vol. XXXV, No. 7, pp. 106-108.

There are three possibilities—amalgamation, federation and federal union.

Union by amalgamation would mean that the Churches would lose themselves as separate entities into one body which would sum up the good points of all the combining Churches and produce a polity and government which all could accept. If we are hoping for union by amalgamation, then, I am afraid Church union is a far-off dream. I cannot visualize a Church polity which the Baptists or the Quakers and the High Church Episcopalians could accept. And it wouldn't be Church union without them all. Moreover, if we did get union by amalgamation, then the process of breaking up would begin over again as various elements within the union would begin to feel that their particular emphasis was being forgotten. Union by amalgamation seems impossible.

Union by federation is hardly union. Federation leaves the constituent bodies intact. They have not surrendered their sovereignty to the union. The states forming the League of Nations tried to have a world brotherhood, but each constituent nation refused to surrender any sovereignty to the League. Every decision had to be unanimous. The League broke on this law of the Kingdom of God: "He that saveth his life shall lose it." Federation makes the great refusal of self-surrender to a larger whole, and hence federation will inevitably break down.

Federal union seems to be the answer, for it combines the truths of amalgamation and federation in a living blend. There are two great driving urges within man: a desire for union with the herd, and a desire for independence. Amalgamation satisfied the desire for union with the herd, but leaves unsatisfied the desire for independence and local self-expression and self-government. Federation satisfies the desire for local self-government but leaves unfulfilled the desire for union.

Federal union meets both needs in giving real union and

in giving local self-government. Amalgamation is the thesis of which federation is the antithesis, of which federal union is the synthesis. Federal union obeys that law of the Kingdom of self-losing to achieve self-realization.

What would federal union of the Churches mean?

It would mean that the various denominations would make the central renunciation and cease to be separate Churches. There would be one Church and only one Church. "The Church of Christ in India" would be the sovereign body.

Under this union we would have branches: "The Lutheran Branch of the Church of Christ in India," "The Baptist Branch," "Episcopalian Branch," "The Nazarene Branch," and so on. They would no longer be Churches; they would be branches of the one Church.

Over these branches would be the sovereign body, "The General Assembly of the Church of Christ in India," made up of delegates *pro rata* from the branches. Provision might be made for the representation of smaller bodies by giving two each to all, plus proportionate representation according to membership. "The General Assembly" would have the powers assigned to it by the constitution-making assembly plus the powers and functions assigned to it by the branches. Its powers would be delegated.

The already existing national Christian Council could easily be transformed into the executive of the "General Assembly".

Within the branches there would be local self-government. If any branch desired to have bishops, it could have them and assign them any rank or function it might desire. If any branch wished adult baptism by immersion it could be free to practise it. But in neither case would the branch compel the other branches to adopt its practice as the price of union.

Under "The General Assembly of the Church of Christ in India" there would be provincial, district and city assemblies. In the district and city assemblies matters of over-

lapping and duplication by local Churches could be dealt with. This could be done in two ways: either by amalgamation of local Churches or by assignment of territory. Since the local Churches would be members of the one Church the folly of competing against oneself would be apparent. Where amalgamation of competing Churches is impossible now, it would become more possible under federal union, since the Churches would have internally changed from competition to co-operation.

As to intercommunion and interchange of members and ministers, this would probably take place at once among ninety-five per cent of the constituent branches. The remaining five per cent we would leave to time and the Spirit of God. They would be within the stream of union and the whole tendency would be to break down remaining barriers.

As to the question of the doctrinal basis on which the union would be made, we would use the basis that Jesus laid. Any branch that would confess that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God" we would count upon the Rock.

Under federal union, if two or more branches desired to amalgamate, they would be free to do so. There would be then many fewer branches in "The Church of Christ in India". So union by amalgamation could still go on under federal union as far as it can go, but the point is that we would not have to wait for union by amalgamation *before* we had union."

II. In reviewing this suggestion for Federal Union Dr. Maclean wrote¹ as follows:—

..... The idea of a Federation of Indian Churches, however, is not new, and it may be well, before spending time on the consideration of the new proposals, to consider what has been done already.

¹ The South India United Church Herald, Vol. XXXV, No. 8, pp. 115-118.

It may be a surprise to most of our readers to learn that the idea of federal union was suggested by the very first General Assembly of our Church (July, 1908), and that a definite plan of federation was adopted by the second Assembly (Dec. 1909). *This approval has never been withdrawn*, and at four subsequent Assemblies delegates were appointed to the Federal Councils which, in accordance with the plan, were to be brought into existence. After that, such appointments ceased, and no further reference to the plan is found in the records. Why? Because it had been found that the plan had not been brought into operation, and there seemed no likelihood that it would ever come into being. To account for its disappearance in this strange fashion, without being rejected, we must tell the story a little more fully.

Our present union was consummated, as we have seen, in July, 1908. It was an organic union between two Churches in South India, each of which in turn was itself a composite body. To put the history of the movement in the most concise possible way, Presbyterian had joined with Presbyterian (in 1901 in the South, and on an all-India scale in 1904), and Congregationalist with Congregationalist (in 1902), and finally Presbyterian with Congregationalist at this Assembly. One of the speakers at the Assembly, Dr. W. A. Wilson of the Canadian Presbyterian Mission, came as a delegate from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in India, which a few months earlier, had graciously agreed to hand over its South India Synod to be united with the General Union of the South India United Churches. Dr. Wilson urged that the union now achieved should not be regarded as the goal, but that a strong effort should be made to find some means by which the spiritual unity of Churches which were not ready for organic union should find expression through a large measure of mutual recognition in such matters as the ministry and the sacraments, with special stress on intercommunion. In particular, he urged that immediate steps be taken to unite the Presbyterian Church in India

and the South India United Church "in close federal or other union." At the same meeting several who were present as fraternal delegates expressed regret that it was not practicable to bring the Churches which they represented into organic union with the United Church, but said at the same time that they hoped that closer union could be effected through federation. At a public meeting held in connection with the Assembly, accounts were given of union movements in other lands, especially England and America, and it was shown that in these countries some sort of federal union had been achieved. The general impression left on the minds of the members of the Assembly was that there seemed no immediate prospect of further progress in the direction of organic union, but that the possibility of federal union, as a *second best*, should be explored, and with this in view a committee on federal union was appointed.

At the next General Assembly, which was held about eighteen months later, the committee was able to report that a meeting of great importance had been held—the Jubbalpore Conference on Federal Union—in April, 1909. It was found that there was so large an amount of agreement that a single day sufficed for the adoption of a constitution, drafted in advance. The credal basis proposed was the following:—

"All Churches and Societies that believe in God through Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord and Saviour, and that accept the Word of God as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme rule of faith and practice, and whose teaching in regard to God, sin and salvation is in general agreement with the great body of Christian truth and fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, shall be eligible for fellowship in the Federation."

Following on this came the statement on the relation of the federating Churches to the Federation:—

"The Federation will not interfere with the existing creed of any Church or Society entering into its fellowship, or

with its internal order or external relationships. But in accepting the principle that the Church of God is one, and that believers are the body of Christ and severally members thereof, the federating Churches agree to recognize the validity of each other's ordinances, ministry, membership, and discipline, without committing themselves to approval of particular methods or practices."

Provision was made for the formation of a Federal Council for the whole land and of a Provincial Council for each area.

To our Assembly this plan was so acceptable that it was adopted unanimously. Several other Churches gave similar approval. Why, then, was it allowed to drop? For this several reasons may be given. Some time was required for the consideration of certain amendments proposed by Churches which accepted the plan in principle but were not satisfied with one or more of the Articles. Before the necessary adjustments had been made the world war was on, and further delay was involved. From the first it had been recognized that a Federation on the lines proposed would be unacceptable to three of the largest communions—Anglican, Lutheran, and Baptist—and it became increasingly clear that no plan would be acceptable to them which involved intercommunion. The English Baptist Mission, indeed, though not represented at the Jubbalpore meeting, accepted the plan, as slightly modified. In the other bodies individuals or groups might long for a larger liberty in this matter; but that they had not the liberty which they desired was clear. In view of this it was proposed that, in addition to the Federal Union proper, there be an outer circle comprising those who, though not ready for intercommunion, were willing to join with other Churches in a large measure of co-operation. But by this time other means of securing such co-operation had come into being; for in less than four years after the Jubbalpore meeting a significant event took place—the establishment, as a result of Dr. Mott's visit to India, which took place in 1912, of the National Missionary Council with its

affiliated Provincial Councils. These Councils were at first representative of Missions rather than of Churches, and they refrained from any interference in ecclesiastical matters. And so for several years the promoters of the federal plan continued their work, believing that for both forms of co-operation there was room and need. But as time went on, the doubts which were in the minds of many as to the value of a federal plan which left out the three large bodies already mentioned became stronger. The essence of the Federation, it was felt, was in the provision it made for intercommunion. For more general forms of co-operation provision was now made by the new Councils. By this time, two large movements for organic union were being considered, one arising from the Tranquebar Conference, the other promoted by the Presbyterian Church in India. The great majority of the bodies concerned would rather, if possible, go further in the matter of organic union, and if the time for that was found not to be ripe, they would be content with the measure of co-operation now provided by the National and Provincial Councils. And so it came about that the plan for Federation was dropped. But, it may be said, although that particular attempt at Federation came to nothing, should we not, on the principle of "Try, try, try again", look for some other form now? With regard to this my experience of the Jubbalpore plan, as it came to be called, makes me very doubtful.'

"Let me note in passing that Dr. Jones' plan for a federal union is not brought forward for the first time. Eight years have passed since he published in several numbers of *The Fellowship*, a proposal for what he then called the Branch-unity plan. It met with some approval and some disapproval; but no attempt to bring it into operation seems to have been made. Apart from a slight difference in names—for Dr. Jones

¹ The South India United Church Herald, Vol. XXXV, No. 9, pp. 134-137.

now prefers the phrase "Federal union" to that used formerly "Branch unity"—the scheme as set forth now is essentially the same as that of 1935; so without further preface we may proceed immediately to its discussion. But surely there is something significant in the fact that during these eight years it has lain "quiet."

Dr. Jones begins by mentioning three methods of aiming at the co-operation which is such an important necessity in our time—amalgamation, federation and federal union. He has no hope of union by amalgamation. He despairs of a Church polity which the Baptists or the Quakers and the High Church Episcopalians could accept, and it would not, he says, be Church union "without them all". To this latter statement I demur. Organic union of the type already achieved in India and many other lands—which may be described as amalgamation—is, of course, only partial, but it is none the less real. To wait till we can get all the extremists to unite is, indeed, to wait for what may never happen. But in my last article I showed that our union in the S.I.U.C. was the result of going step by step, and others have had the same experience; and the advocates of the South India Scheme believe that its adoption will take us a long way forward in the direction of union, and is likely to lead to other steps, though some will still remain out. I do not know of any attempt at an immediate union on a world-scale, or even a national scale, which has succeeded.

Further, when Dr. Jones goes on to say, "Moreover, if we did get union by amalgamation, then the process of breaking up would begin over again as various elements within the union would begin to feel that their particular emphasis was being forgotten." I beg leave, with all due respect, to challenge this statement. Many unions have taken place within the last hundred years. I do not know of a single instance of the Churches which united falling apart. Some individuals, indeed, as in Scotland, have refused to enter upon union; I do not know of any Church which, having

entered a United Church, has afterwards withdrawn from it. In view of this, have we any reason to suppose that what Dr. Jones fears is likely to happen in India, especially if it is so clear as it is in the South India Scheme that a very large measure of liberty in worship and even in Church government is provided for?

Passing to federation—of which Dr. Jones has no more hope than of amalgamation—we note that he says, "It fails because it leaves the constituent bodies intact. They have not surrendered their sovereignty to the union". He goes on to explain the failure of the League of Nations on the ground that "each constituent nation refused to surrender any sovereignty to the League." Federation, he adds, "makes the great refusal of self-surrender to a larger whole, and hence federation will inevitably break down".

Having thus condemned amalgamation and federation, Dr. Jones goes on to claim that his plan of federal union combines the truth of amalgamation and federation in a living blend. He proposes that all the uniting Churches regard themselves as branches of one Church of Christ in India, which would be the sovereign body. This body "would have the powers assigned to it by the constitution, but within the branches—Anglican, Lutheran, etc.—there would be local self-government." This he illustrates by saying that "if any branch desired to have bishops it could have them, and if any branch wished adult baptism by immersion it could be free to practise it. But in neither case would the branch compel the other branches to adopt its practice as the price of union."

This proposal is plausible, but it seems to me to be beset with difficulties.

Firstly, no attempt is made to say how the sovereign power, which is to be vested in a central General Assembly, is to be exercised. I find it difficult to imagine that any existing communion—Anglican, for instance, or Lutheran—

would "surrender the sovereignty to the union" without knowing exactly what this surrender would involve.

In the second place, I am sure that some of the bodies concerned would repudiate Dr. Jones's description of their present attitude. The "High Church Episcopalians," for instance, whose adhesion to the Scheme Dr. Jones regards as essential, would never admit that episcopacy was merely something which they "desired". They adhere to it not as something they desire, but as something which is the will of their Lord. Many of them are prepared to adopt the South India Scheme, because it conserves this element, which they regard as essential, though it is conserved in a way that the others who propose to enter the union look on as not inconsistent with their own fundamental principles. I cannot conceive of such people agreeing to have their Church regarded as simply a branch on the same terms as other branches, such as the Baptists and the Quakers. So with some other large bodies whose presence from the beginning Dr. Jones regards as essential.

Thirdly, I cannot share Dr. Jones's optimism as to the solution of the pressing problem of intercommunion. Regarding this he writes: "As to intercommunion and interchange of members and ministers, this would probably take place at once among ninety-five per cent of the constituent branches. The remaining five per cent we would leave to time and the Spirit of God." In my former article I showed that one reason why the federal plan which had been drawn up, and agreed to by a number, was laid aside, was that three of the largest bodies in India could not accept its fundamental principle of intercommunion. Are they ready for it now? Without these the number of those who, even if they enter the union at all, will immediately adopt intercommunion will fall far short of ninety-five per cent. The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon cannot adopt it at present. It will do so immediately if it adopts the Scheme now before its Diocesan Councils, for then it will *immediately*

be in full communion with the Methodists and the S.I.U.C. This will surely be a great step on the way to the final goal, but it will not be taken on Dr. Jones's plan. So with the other two large bodies—Lutherans and Baptists. Some of their members are perhaps more desirous of intercommunion now than their predecessors were thirty years ago; but that ninety-five per cent of them, even if they adopted the plan now proposed, would immediately adopt intercommunion, seems to me an utterly unfounded expectation.

Something might be said too about the impracticability of Dr. Jones's proposal. In one of his earlier articles he proposed having a General Assembly for all India, to which even the smallest of the bodies entering the union would send two delegates and in which the larger bodies would have proportionately larger representation. This body would have five hundred or even a thousand members, and would meet every two or three years. Is this a practicable proposal?

The only way, it seems to me, by which Dr. Jones can prove that my doubts are not well-founded is to try his scheme out. Meanwhile, we shall watch with interest the proposal recently made for the formation of a Church of Christ in Ceylon, of which the denominational bodies at work in the island would be branches. Let us be thankful if it succeeds, though success in a small area like Ceylon will be no guarantee of success in India. But we are on far surer ground if we persevere with our efforts at organic union, on the basis of our Scheme or of any other which may be found practicable, and leave the rest in God's hands.'

CHAPTER XXV. PROPOSAL FOR MUTUAL SUPPLEMENTAL ORDINATION

Since 1943 interesting developments took place both in the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon and in the South India United Church. The Methodist position, however, remained unchanged, as that Church had already in February 1941 voted in favour of union on the basis of the Scheme. The attitude of the Methodist as a whole is indicated in the following resolution¹ of the British Conference held in July 1943 :—

“The Conference reaffirms its belief that the consummation of the proposed union of the three Churches in the South India Province, as set forth in the present Scheme, at the earliest possible date, will be for the highest welfare of the work of God in that area.”

Both in the Anglican Church and in the South India United Church voting on the Scheme had taken place. So, in July 1944 it was found that nine of the fourteen dioceses of the Anglican Church had voted in favour of the Scheme, and one (Nagpur) against. The dioceses which had still to vote were Madras, Calcutta, Assam and Rangoon, of which the Council of the last-mentioned diocese was not likely to meet in the near future owing to conditions caused by war. In addition to this voting by the Diocesan Councils in India the matter had also been referred to the authorities of the Anglican Church throughout the world. Most of these including Canterbury and York had replied and their replies were all in the sense of giving liberty to the four South Indian dioceses, Dornakal, Madras, Tinnevely and Travancore, to go ahead into the union.

¹ See Church Union, News and Views, March 1944, Vol. XIV, No. 3, p. 29.

As regards the South India United Church it was reported by the Convener of the Committee on Union that five of the eight councils had voted in favour of the Scheme and that the remaining three had definitely voted against it. The Convener, however, felt that this situation was likely to be altered before the next meeting of the Central Assembly, if in August 1944 the Travancore Council made a new move towards union.

The exact position of the Anglican Church in regard to the Scheme will appear clearer in the light of the events which followed.

The General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon met at Nagpur in February 1944. The delegates to that Council heard from the Bishop of Assam a deep moving call to a new attitude of spirit on the whole question of union. He called them to penitence for past sins of pride and self-sufficiency in relation to the other Churches and to a new turning towards these other Churches, not in a spirit of bargaining but in a humble desire to receive those gifts which God has given to them. To those present this call came with the compelling power of a word from God. There was a convincing sense that this was the work of the Holy Spirit, and even those who only heard of it at second hand found themselves sharing in this conviction. The Council responded by an act extremely rare in the history of ecclesiastical councils. With practical unanimity they passed a resolution expressing their penitence for the sins of their Church in this matter, and stating their desire that, as a visible token of their penitence, the bishops and other clergy of the Anglican Church should present themselves before the authorities of the Methodist and South India United Churches, “that we may receive through prayer and the laying on of hands the spiritual endowment which in separation from them we lack”. In other words, they publicly proclaimed that their own ministry was a defective one, and sought humbly the help of God’s grace through their brethren. At the same time they

earnestly commended this suggestion to the other Churches, "asking them to consider whether this is the will of God for us, and whether we may not hope by this means to be brought very much nearer to that perfect reconciliation and union which we all earnestly desire." At the same time the Council had before it a letter from Bishops Palmer and Western, two old members of the Joint Committee, in which a proposal for mutual supplemental ordination was worked out in some detail. The Council agreed to commend this proposal to the Joint Committee, as offering a new and hopeful solution of the problem of a fully united ministry in the United Church. The Council also requested the Metropolitan to summon a special session of the Council as soon as the required two-thirds (that is, ten) voted in favour of the Scheme. The Council's final decision on the subject of the Union will be given by that session.

Resolutions¹

Resolved :

1. That the General Council instructs its delegates to the Joint Committee to communicate to that Committee the letter of Bishop Western and Bishop Palmer on supplemental ordination and to convey the opinion of the General Council that this offers a new and hopeful solution of the problem of a fully united ministry in the United Church.
2. That the General Council instructs its delegates to the Joint Committee to communicate to that Committee the resolution and recommendations of Diocesan Councils on the Scheme of Union.
3. That the General Council instructs its delegates to the Joint Committee to ask that in view of the wide disquiet and anxiety caused in many parts of the Anglican Communion by the recent changes in the section of the Scheme on the Faith of the Church, that section of the Scheme be restored to the form in which it was set forth in 1936.

¹See Church Union, News and Views, March 1944, Vol. XIV, No. 3, pp. 34-36.

A Statement on the Unification of Ministries

We, the Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the Anglican Communion in India, Burma and Ceylon assembled in Council at Nagpur have been burdened with a sense of frustration, as we have considered the failure of twenty-five years of effort to bring union to divided Christians in South India. But in this Session, there has been given to us a new vision of the unity of Christ's people, and a new hope as to the means by which that unity can be achieved. It has been laid upon us that we are still depending too much on human contrivance, and that we must learn to trust more fully in God's creative power to do new things and to give to His Church that unity which is one according to His will.

We and those with whom we desire to unite are all one as members of the body of Christ and through faith in the redemption wrought by God through His only—begotten Son, Jesus Christ; but so long as we remain out of communion with one another we are all defective in spiritual power. This is true in a special way of the ordained ministry; the ministries of all separated Communions are by the fact of separation imperfect and limited in authority. As a result of this defect the witness of us all to Christ is seriously compromised and the work of setting forward God's purpose for the redemption of all mankind is grievously hindered.

We acknowledge that in the past we have failed in manifold ways to forward the work of reconciliation. For these sins of the past we earnestly repent and desire to atone; and we desire to express that penitence not only in words but also in action. We believe that when separated Communions come together again, their ministries should be united by a solemn act of humility and re-dedication, in which through the mutual laying on of hands with prayer they seek from God the enrichment of all those ministries.

If this method of achieving a united ministry commends itself to the mind and conscience of the Churches, those of

us who are ordained ministers, bishops, and presbyters, desire to present ourselves to those duly authorised in these Communion which are seeking to restore the unity of the body of Christ, that we may receive through the laying on of hands and prayer the spiritual endowment which in separation from them we lack. We would earnestly commend this suggestion to our own Communion and also to those in other Communion who sincerely desire the union of the faithful, asking them to consider whether this is the will of God for us, and whether we may not hope by this means to be brought very much nearer to that perfect reconciliation and union which we all earnestly desire.

¹ *Letter from Bishop Western and Bishop Palmer*

Re-Mutual Commissioning of Ministers at the Inauguration of the Union

We think that you would like to know of some work that we did in the Archbishop's Overseas Advisory Committee last year on this very subject. There is no doubt that if a satisfactory unification of the ministries can be brought about, it will greatly improve the prospects of general approval of the Scheme both in India and here.

(1) We strongly recommended the acceptance of both the idea and the phrase of "supplemental ordination", and the description of its implications given by the Americans—

'It is proposed to make it possible for clergymen of both Churches to administer the Word and Sacraments to all members of the United Church. The rite by which the aim is accomplished shall not be regarded as ordination *de novo*, but as a supplemental ordination. The expression "supplemental ordination" is intended to imply that he who receives it is recognized to have been truly ordained to the ministry of Christ's Church, and that by the supplemental rite he receives such further grace of orders, and such authority for the wider exercise of his ministry as, according to God's will, may be conveyed through the action of the Church, in and by which the rite is performed.'

On the other hand, we were and are, clear that the direct statement in the preamble to the form of commissioning proposed in Iran that that 'Such a commission does not in any sense imply re-ordination' would make it impossible for any bishop who used the suggested formula of commissioning to use it with the intention of conferring Orders, whether or not the words of the formula in themselves admit of this interpretation. And we must insist on the point that the essence of the problem is to find a way by which, on the one hand, Orders such as we Anglicans have inherited from the undivided Church should be given to those who have not previously received them; while, on the other hand, it should be recognised that their ordinations have made them true ministers of Christ's Word and Sacraments, and also that Anglican ministers should receive something more than an extension of jurisdiction such as could be given by constitutional enactment without any prayer or laying on of hands.

(Note.—The reason for the need for such Orders as Anglicans possess being possessed by the whole ministry of the United Church is partly consideration for the congregations which have always been ministered to by clergy possessing those Orders and many of which attach great importance to them, and partly that world-wide reunion must—so far as we can foresee—be based on the world-wide ministry possessing such Orders.)

(2) For such a supplemental ordination, our committee worked out the following revision of the original Australian formula, making it, we hoped, more satisfactory than that which was proposed in America.—

'Receive the Holy Ghost for the work of a presbyter in the Church of God, both for the continuance of that work which thou hast done hitherto, and for the performance of that work which is now committed unto thee by the laying on of our hands. Take thou authority to preach and teach the Word, to fulfil the ministry of reconciliation and to minister Christ's Sacraments in the congregations whereunto thou shalt be further called or lawfully appointed; and see that thou do all these things in brotherly partnership with God's fellow-workers whom in this union of Churches He has made thine.'

It seems to us that this form of supplemental ordination, with a foregoing statement such as that given in the Ameri-

¹ See Church Union, News and Views, March 1944, Vol. XIV, No. 3.

can proposals, really meets the needs of the situation on all sides, and could, we hope, be acceptable and felt to be positively helpful to all.

(3) As to the officiant in this rite, we thought that the Iran proposal was entirely sound—that at the inauguration of the union, the bishops of the United Church should, as their first act within that Church, give the supplemental ordination to all the ordained ministers of all the uniting Churches. The circumstances in South India are, however, very different from those in Iran, and we think that there might be practical and other advantages if the supplemental ordination took place in different centres, such as you have proposed for the commissioning.

(4) Your proposals do not seem as yet to cover the question of missionaries who subsequently come to do regular work in the United Church. We suggest that the rule should be that all such should also receive this supplemental ordination from bishops and presbyters of the United Church, for their life and work in that Church. If this were done, practically all the difficulties of the 'interim period' would be done away with.

(5) While writing, we wish to mention one other point—that it is very advisable that early agreement be come to on the actual forms of service, inaugural and otherwise, for the consecration of a bishop and for the ordination of a presbyter. These are very essential for the satisfaction of all parties. We recognise, of course, that it may not be suitable to take up this question just yet; but the sooner it can be done, the better.

Yours affectionately,

(Sd.) F. J. WESTERN, *Bishop*

Nov. 30th, 1943. (Sd.) EDWIN JAMES PALMER, *Bishop*

This proposal from these bishops, and the appeal from the General Council found in the Statement were attempts to explore further possibilities of removing doubts and suspicions still lingering in the minds of certain sections in all the negotiating Churches. These centre in 'the equality of the ministry', 'the pledge', 'the thirty years' period' and the like, about which public controversies sprang up at frequent intervals.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MOMENTOUS DECISIONS

Both before and immediately after the meeting of the Joint Committee in November 1944 decisions of far-reaching importance were made by two of the negotiating Churches—the South India United Church, and the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. The postponed meeting of the General Assembly of the South India United Church was held in September 1944 at Gooty. As previously decided by the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon a special session of that Council was held at Nagpur in January 1945.

At Gooty the General Assembly made several recommendations¹ to the Joint Committee, and while reporting about certain hopeful features in the Churches with regard to union made also a special request to the Committee. In addition to these the Assembly definitely asked the Council under their jurisdiction to take decisive action in the matter of union. Finally, they reported also of their own action and of that of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, with reference to the proposal for mutual supplemental ordination.

I—Recommendations

5. The General Assembly note the conditions stated by the Jaffna Church Council in their resolution accepting the Scheme, approve the action of the Union Committee thereon, and ask the Joint Committee to give an assurance that a decision on the Diocesan boundaries as they concerned the Jaffna Council area will not be made without the consent of the Council.

¹ Minutes of the 19th General Assembly, S. I. U. C., held at Gooty, September 1944, p. 5.

6. The General Assembly note that the acceptance of the Scheme by the Malabar Church Council is conditional upon a solution of the question of the relationship between that Council and the Synod of the United Basel Mission Church; they forward to the Joint Committee the minute of the Union Committee of December 1942 on the subject and request them to take necessary action thereon; they note with deep interest the discussions now going on in the other two Councils of the Synod, and trust that an early solution to the problems involved will be found; they request the Joint Committee to invite each of these Councils to appoint a representative to attend the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

7. The General Assembly receive with interest the scheme of union submitted by the Telugu Church Council as an alternative to the present Scheme; they note the three resolutions of the Council on the Initial Episcopacy, Equality of the Ministry, and Lay Celebration. With regard to the first of these they note that the Continuation Committee has proposed that the number of presbyters from each of the other two Churches taking part in the consecration of the new bishops shall be equal to the number of bishops, and they trust that this proposal will be worked out in such a way as to ensure the fulfilment of our intention that in the ministry of the United Church the ministries of all the three uniting Churches will be combined in a real unity; they trust that this will meet the desire of the Telugu Church Council. With regard to Lay Celebration, they draw the attention of the Joint Committee to the request of the Telugu Church Council that "in those areas where the practice of the administration of the Lord's Supper by duly authorised laymen is being practised, such practice shall be allowed to continue until the Diocesan Council concerned shall determine otherwise", and request the Joint Committee to consider whether this or a similar provision can be inserted in the Scheme in place of the present note on page 9.

8. With reference to the resolutions of the Travancore Church Council, the General Assembly request the Joint Committee to make it clear that under the provisions of Basis, Section 14, first paragraph, and Constitution, II, Rule 14, any minister of any Church with which any of the uniting Churches is now in communion who has come to the area of the United Church for a specific and temporary period of service will be free, during this period of service, to minister or to celebrate the Holy Communion in any Church of the United Church to which he is invited, and that this provision is not subject to any time limit; they believe that the proposals of the Continuation Committee for commissioning of all ministers will constitute an official affirmation of the equality of the ministry throughout the United Church and will help to secure it more effectively in practice, and they, therefore, earnestly trust that the process of growing together will be more rapid than is anticipated in the Scheme; they, therefore, recommend that the reference to a thirty-year period be dropped from the Scheme, and that the United Church should be free at any time to take up and decide the question of the terms on which it will admit ministers from other Churches to its permanent ministry, provided that two-thirds of the Diocesan Councils desire that it be so taken up, and that at least until it is so taken up such ministers shall continue to be received as ministers of the United Church. They commend to the Joint Committee the request that its minute of 1934 on the Pledge be embodied in the Scheme in so far as this has not already been done.

II—Special Request¹

The General Assembly note that in accordance with the Joint Committee's appeal for decision, every Council has voted on the Scheme as it stands and that only four Councils have been able to give unconditional votes for acceptance;

¹ See Minutes of the 19th General Assembly, S. I. U. C., held at Gooty, September, 1944, p. 7.

they, therefore, regret that they are not able to give that final answer to the Joint Committee which they hoped to be able to give. A review of the difficulties still outstanding, however, shows that nevertheless there is a strong desire in the South India United Church for union, and no desire to give up the present negotiations. The General Assembly would especially draw attention to the following hopeful features :

(a) The difficulty of the Malabar Council concerns solely its relation with the rest of the United Basel Mission Church. As there is a serious move on the part of the South Kanara and Bombay Karnatak Councils of that Church to study the Scheme with a view to a decision about it, it is hoped that if a further period of about two years is given it may perhaps be possible for the whole Church to join the union, thus avoiding a division. Even if this should not take place it is confidently expected that the relationship of the Malabar Church to the other two districts will be adjusted along the lines suggested by the Union Committee if they are approved by the Joint Committee. Attention is drawn to the resolution of the Synod of the United Basel Mission Church in November 1943.

(b) The Telugu Church Council has voted to reject the Scheme of Union. It is, however, moving along an alternative line towards a solution of the problems. The General Assembly consider that Resolution (7) above offers a way in which the Scheme might be made more acceptable to that Council, and that if these points could be favourably considered by the Joint Committee this would do something to meet the difficulties of the Telugu Church Council.

(c) The General Assembly consider that the suggestions (in Recommendation 8 above and the Resolution of the Assembly *re-* Supplemental Ordination) which were made in accordance with the resolutions of the Travancore Church Council, are not inconsistent with the fundamentals of the Scheme. They draw attention to the following minute of the Travancore Church Council : "If the above changes are

made (and anything that may be inconsistent with the above is removed from other parts of the Scheme) the proposed Scheme of Union will be acceptable to the Travancore Church Council."

(d) The recent proposals of the Continuation Committee and the suggestions of the Union Committee for commissioning or authorisation of the ministry seem to the General Assembly to be likely to make the Scheme more generally acceptable to the Church.

In view of the above considerations the General Assembly request the Joint Committee to allow a further period of two years for the South India United Church to give its final vote.

III.—Definite Instructions to the Councils¹

In order to enable the next Assembly to take decisive action the General Assembly request those Councils which have not yet given their approval to the Scheme to devote at least a full day to considering it, taking into consideration also the actions of the Joint Committee of 1944, and to give their decisions; they further request every Council to vote on the following proposition : "The next meeting of the General Assembly shall be empowered to decide by a simple two-thirds vote of those present whether the South India United Church shall accept the Scheme of Union, or whether it shall permit such Councils as desire it to enter the proposed union, and such decision shall be the decision of the South India United Church. It is understood that should the Joint Committee bring in proposals which radically alter the Basis of the Scheme this resolution will be inoperative.

¹ See Minutes of the 19th General Assembly, S. I. U. C., held at Gooty, September, 1944, p. 7ff.

IV—Resolution regarding the proposed Mutual Supplemental Ordination¹

The General Assembly have been deeply moved to learn of the fresh experience of God's call to penitence and to a more earnest effort towards unity which has been given to the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon; they have in some degree been able to share in the renewal of life which this has brought to our Churches; and they desire also to express their penitence for those sins of which they have been guilty, especially pride, self-sufficiency and contentment with a disunited Church; but they regret that they do not feel able to commend to the Church the method of supplemental ordination as proposed by the General Council; they earnestly hope and believe, however, that the Joint Committee will be able to work out a form of inauguration without laying on of hands which will fitly embody that incorporate act of humility and re-dedication to which the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon has called us all. At the same time they draw the attention of the Joint Committee to the suggestions put forward by the Union Committee of the South India United Church in its minute of December, 1943.

V—Report on the Action of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland*

A request having been made for guidance as to the attitude which missionaries of the Church of Scotland ought to adopt towards the proposal for supplemental ordination, the Inter-Church Relations Committee of the Church gave very thorough consideration to the matter and brought forward a memorandum on the subject which was debated, amended and accepted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. This states that two principles must be safeguard-

¹ Ibid, p. 6.

* See minutes of the 19th General Assembly, S. I. U. C., held at Gooty, September, 1944, p. 26.

ed, namely, "(a) that the rite in question in no sense means re-ordination, because already those for whom it is proposed 'have been ordained to be ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the Church of God', and (b) that in essence what is signified is the conveyance of explicit authority to each already ordained presbyter 'for the wider exercise of his ministry under the new conditions', in the faith that God gives to His servants the grace for any ministry to which they are called in His Church"; and that "subject to these provisos, it does not appear that consistency with our own principles requires that such an extension of the sphere of service as the present proposed form of supplementary ordination contemplates should be rejected as unacceptable".

The Joint Committee met at Madras in November, 1944. At the commencement of the meeting it was agreed that representatives of the South Kanara and Bombay Karnatak branches of the United Basel Mission Church should have the right to speak at the meeting, but not to vote. The Bishop of Assam was received as a special delegate of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon.

After the conveners of the three delegations presented their reports the following subjects were discussed, and resolutions passed on them.

I—Inauguration of Union

The convener of the Anglican delegation introduced the proposal of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon concerning supplemental ordination, and the Bishop of Assam made a further statement explaining its origin, background and the intention, and commended it to the Committee. After full discussion of the subject the following resolution¹ was passed:

'The Joint Committee has received the recommendation of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and

¹ See Church Union, News and Views, Vol. XV, No. 2, December, 1944, p. 9.

Ceylon concerning supplemental ordination. As the Committee, after full discussion, has not been able to reach a common mind on this subject, it is not able at this stage of the negotiations to recommend the proposal to the Churches.'

A full discussion took place on the sub-committee's report on the inauguration of union. It was resolved that general approval be given to it and that, after being edited in the light of suggestions made and noted during the discussion, it be printed along with the minutes of the present session as a tentative draft. The sub-committee was asked to continue its task by working out more fully the wording of the prayers, and members having further suggestions to make were asked to write and send them to the Secretary. The proposals in the Appendix were not accepted.

II—The Pledge¹

After the relevant minutes of the Methodist Synod and of the South India United Church had been read and discussed, the Committee resolved that its interpretation of the pledge given in 1934 (further clarified in one particular in 1936) be printed in the next edition of the Scheme as a note at the end of Part I.

III—The Thirty Years' Period

The resolution of the General Assembly of the South India United Church on the subject (referred to above under the heading of 'Recommendations' as No. 8) having been read and discussed the following resolution was passed:

'The Joint Committee has carefully considered the suggestion of the General Assembly of the South India United Church for an alternative arrangement in place of the thirty years' period, but is of opinion that the existing provision is to be preferred to the alternative suggested, and, therefore, does not recommend any change in this section of the Scheme; as requested by the Assembly it agrees to affirm

¹See Church Union, News and Views, Vol. XV, No. 2, December, 1944, p. 9.

that the provisions of the Scheme (as summarised in Note 6 on p. 22) cover the case of a minister of a Church with which any of the uniting Churches is in communion who comes to the area of the United Church for a specific and temporary period of service. The Committee assumes that in terms of Chapter V, paras 7 and 8 of the Constitution, ministers wishing to exercise such a temporary ministry will be required to assent to the doctrinal standards, constitution and rules of discipline of the Church.'

IV—The Faith of the Church

The resolutions of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon on the statements in the Scheme on the Faith of the Church (Section 3 of the Basis of Union) and on the Sacraments in the Church (Section 4 of the Basis of Union) were read. After discussion the following resolutions¹ were passed:

'The Committee has considered the criticisms made of Section 4 of the Basis of Union (The Sacraments in the Church). It regrets that it is unable at this stage to re-write this paragraph; but it is of the opinion that, while individual sentences taken in isolation are open to the criticisms made, the paragraph as a whole sufficiently clearly expresses the basis of agreement between the uniting Churches on this matter.'

The Joint Committee considered the request of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon that the statement on the Faith of the Church be restored to the form set forth in 1936.

1. The Committee agrees that the present statement is open to criticism, but does not feel able, in view of the reasons which led it to make the change, simply to restore the previous statement. It desires to assure the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, however, that the changes made were designed to clear up certain ambiguities of expression, but not to change the substance of the faith expressed in the statement of 1936.

¹See Church Union, News and Views, Vol. XV, No. 2, December, 1944, p. 10.

2. The Committee does not find it possible at this stage to remove Note (i) appended to the statement, since, if this were done after it had been incorporated in the Scheme, it might appear that it was the Joint Committee's intention to exclude reasonable liberty of interpretation of the Creeds.

3. At the same time it draws attention to the minutes of the Consultative Committee of the Lambeth Conference of July, 1943 on the subject, in which reasons are given calculated to allay the anxiety felt on this matter. (See the extract given below).

4. The Committee affirms that nothing in the revised statement can rightly be interpreted as implying doubt about the fundamental facts of the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the judgment of the Joint Committee this is made unmistakably clear by the use of the words "Incarnate" and "Redeemer".

Extract from the minutes of the Consultative Committee of the Lambeth Conference, July, 1943:—

'They also share the anxiety expressed in some quarters with regard to the appended Note (i), but observe that this is not repeated in the Constitution (p. 27), so that it represents rather the understanding on which the uniting Churches will come together than the rule of the United Church, which will settle its own principles and methods of discipline. They also note the language used on p. 54 in V 6, with regard to what is to be required of Ordinands, where the requirement is that "every person about to be ordained in any diocese in the Church of South India is required to affirm his sincere belief in the truths witnessed to by the Nicene Creed". And they also recognize that in the various provinces of the Anglican Communion some liberty of interpretation is familiar.'

V—Voting by Houses

The resolutions of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon on this subject were read. After

full discussion by the Committee and by the delegations meeting separately, the Committee passed the following resolutions:—¹

1. 'The Joint Committee considered the proposal made on behalf of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon that the sentence "If the proposition . . . of the Church" (IX 23, last sentence) be altered to read: "If the proposition so referred be accepted in substantially the same terms by not less than two-thirds of the Diocesan Councils, it shall again be considered by the Synod at its next ordinary meeting, and after such consideration it shall be adopted as an act of the Church, if a majority of the lay members, a majority of the presbyters, and a majority of the bishops separately pass it as such."

During the course of the discussion it was clear that the delegates of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon and of the Methodist Church were prepared to accept the proposal, but the delegates of the South India United Church, in view of previous actions on the subject by the General Assembly, were unable to accept the proposal without reference to the Church. In consequence it was not pressed; but the Joint Committee resolved that this proposal be referred to the negotiating Churches, so that in case they vote in favour of approval of the Scheme of Union, the alteration proposed be considered by these bodies and an opinion given to the Joint Committee whether they think that such an alteration may be made in Chapter IX, Section 23.

2. 'The Joint Committee instructs the Continuation Committee to revise Chapter IX of the Constitution in such a way that the number of laymen in the Synod will be approximately equal to the number of bishops and presbyters.'

VI—Note on Lay Celebration

Recommendation 7 (latter part) of the General Assembly was read and discussed. The Committee resolved as follows:

¹ Church Union, News and Views, Vol. XV, No. 2, December, 1944, p. 10.

'After considering Recommendation 7 (latter part) of the General Assembly of the South India United Church, the Joint Committee expresses its confidence that the note on page 9 of the Scheme, when read in the light of the Scheme as a whole, makes it clear that nothing will be done to override the necessities of the Telugu Church Council, or to deprive congregations of the regular administration of the Sacraments by any hasty attempt to apply the general rule to the circumstances of the Telugu Church Council, and that any action taken by the Synod will be only after the fullest consultation with the Diocesan Council concerned.'

The Continuation Committee was asked to consider the exact status of notes and footnotes in the Scheme, and to issue a statement on this subject if it should seem desirable to make such a statement.

VII—Diocesan Boundaries

Recommendation 5 of the General Assembly was discussed. The Joint Committee resolved to assure the Jaffna Church Council of the South India United Church that no decision on diocesan boundaries would be taken without the fullest consideration of local views.

VIII—Malabar Church Council of the South India United Church and the United Basel Mission Church

The Joint Committee confirmed¹ the reply given by the Committee on Church Union of the South India United Church in December, 1942 to the Malabar Church Council, viz., that it would be possible for the Malabar section of the Basel Mission Church after the union to maintain fraternal relations with the Synod of the United Basel Mission Church, if the latter, having received an assurance that no change in Confession of Faith, Catechism and Liturgy was contemplated, claimed no jurisdiction over it.

¹ See Church Union, News and Views, Vol. XV, No. 2, December, 1944, p. 11.

IX. General Assembly's Request for two years

The Assembly's special request to the Committee to allow a further period of two years in which to take the final decision on the Scheme, and their definite instructions to the Church Councils with a view to empowering the next Assembly to take that decision were discussed. The Joint Committee accepted the request and expressed its hope that the next General Assembly of the South India United Church would be able to give the final vote of that Church.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ANGLICAN REACTION IN INDIA

I—Decision by the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon

Two months after the meeting of the Joint Committee a special session of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon was held at Nagpur in January, 1945, when by a three-fourths majority it voted in favour of union with the Methodist and the South India United Churches. The Metropolitan of India presided, and nearly one hundred delegates were present.

The following is the text of the resolution¹ passed :

"This Council while reaffirming that the Church of this province continues to be bound in matters of faith and order by the constitution, canons and rules of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, finally adopts the Scheme of Church Union in South India, in order to permit the dioceses of Madras, Travancore and Cochin, Tinnevely and Dornakal to carry out their practical and unanimous desire to enter into union with the Methodist and South India United Churches."

¹ See Church Union, News and Views, Vol. XV. No. 3, March, 1945, p. 14.

II—Pronouncement by the House of Bishops

Notwithstanding the decision of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon in January, 1945, permitting the Dioceses of Madras, Travancore and Cochin, Tinnevely and Dornakal to enter into the Union, the Diocesan Bishops of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon met in June of the same year and passed amongst others the following resolutions:

"1. In view of the fact that it has been assumed in some quarters that Decision 9 of the General Council held in January, 1945, commits the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon to the doctrine of the equality of all ministries, the House of Bishops of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon is agreed that no such assumption is justified.

"2. Regarding Decision 8 of the minutes of the Joint Committee on Church Union in South India held in November, 1944, to print the 1934 interpretation of the Pledge in the next edition of the Scheme of Union in South India, the House of Bishops of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon desires to state that when the Scheme, Parts I and II, 7th edition (revised), was considered and adopted by the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon in January, 1945, it did not contain the note setting forth that interpretation. The House of Bishops itself seems bound to adhere to the interpretation of the Pledge contained on page 127 of the Report of the Lambeth Conference of 1930.

The House of Bishops is not concerned to assert that a minister of the United Church of South India is debarred from being placed in charge of an ex-Anglican congregation during the interim period by the sole fact that he has not received episcopal ordination. It is concerned to assert that, except in cases of extreme pastoral urgency, an ex-Anglican congregation is, under the Pledge, prevented by long esta-

blished tradition from being placed in the charge of a non-episcopally ordained minister.

"3. The House of Bishops desires to state that no resolution of the Joint Committee on Church Union in South India, or of other committees discussing or negotiating union, on which the Church of this Province is represented, has any binding authority on the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon until it has been accepted by that Church in accordance with the procedure laid down in its Constitution.

"4. The House of Bishops instructs the delegates of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon on the Joint Committee to see that the criticisms of Bishop Palmer regarding a number of important points in the Scheme communicated by him to the late Bishop of Dornakal be most carefully considered by the Joint Committee, which it understands has not hitherto been possible, and to endeavour to ensure that these criticisms be dealt with by the Joint Committee as may seem best, with a view to removing all reasonable ground for doubt as to the soundness of the Scheme on the fundamentals of the Christian Faith, and also to removing any statements shown to be directly contrary to Anglican doctrine. In particular it requests that the attention of the Joint Committee be drawn to the criticisms of Bishop Palmer and others, including Dioceses of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, regarding Section 3 of the Basis of Union on the Faith, Section 4 on the Sacraments, Note 1 on p. 5 and the Note on p. 11, to the desire for votes on matters of Faith and Order to be by Houses, and to the unsatisfactoriness from the Anglican point of view and the practical inconvenience of the proposed procedure for the presentation of a Presbyter for Consecration.

The House of Bishops further draws the attention of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon delegates and the Joint Committee to the great desirability of the Inaugural Ceremony containing expressions to be made by Bishops and Presbyters of hearty agreement with the Basis of Union

¹See Church Union, News and Views, Vol. XVI, No. 1, September, 1945, p. 2.

and the Constitution, and, therefore, to the equally high desirability of the criticisms of the present form of Parts I and II referred to above being adequately dealt with before the inauguration of the Union."

III—Manifesto by the Anglican Laity

It is understood that the pronouncement of the House of Bishops was not an official action of theirs. Nevertheless it caused considerable perturbation in the minds of members of the other two negotiating Churches. Very soon it was also observed that this action of the House of Bishops created some unrest within the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon itself. It was "a surprise to many members of the General Council" that five months after their meeting the House of Bishops met separately and passed those resolutions. A manifesto signed by twelve leading laymen of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon who, with a few exceptions, are or have been members of the House of Laity of the General Council, contained the following passages:¹

"We, the undersigned laymen, deeply regret that the House of Bishops should have met separately and passed resolutions on a very important subject without reference to or consultation with the other two Houses.

* * * *

"We fully recognise that any statement made by the Bishops being the opinion of the highest officers of the Church is of great importance, but that is all the more reason why in our view the House of Bishops should not have acted alone in a matter of such great consequence. Such action may, perhaps, deepen the suspicions of those who are already suspicious of Episcopacy; it also gives a wrong impression of the position of the House of Bishops in the Constitution of our Church.

* * * *

¹ The Church Union in South India—A Statement on the resolutions passed by the House of Bishops of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon.

"Finally, we venture to appeal to our fellow Christians of all the negotiating Churches not to falter in reaching as quickly as possible the final stages of the Union Scheme which was first mooted more than a quarter of a century ago. We testify that at the last meeting of the General Council it was abundantly clear that the members of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon—Bishops, Clergy and Laity—by a large majority were sincerely and keenly anxious for Union. Nowhere is the desire stronger or more widely felt than among the Indian members of this Church, supported as they are by many of their European brothers and sisters, clerical or lay. We fervently pray that the four Dioceses in South India, that voted almost unanimously for the Scheme will go forward with hope, courage and brotherly love in their great venture. Now is the opportunity. If lost, it may not come again. In unity there is strength, in division, weakness."

IV—Statement agreed to by five Bishops of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon

In September, 1946 an event took place which rendered the Anglican position very clear. The Bishops of Madras, Dornakal, Tinnevely, Travancore and Cochin and the Assistant Bishop of Dornakal issued a statement which, though not an official pronouncement made with the authority of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon contained the considered opinion of the bishops immediately concerned in the proposed union in regard to the line of action they were to pursue in the very near future. The statement¹ runs as follows:

With regard to the ministry of the United Church, we now Bishops of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, who hope with our dioceses soon to enter into Union with the South India United Church and the South India Provincial Synod of the Methodist Church, desire to make clear what we understand to be the principles upon which we shall act as Bishops in the Church of South India.

¹ Minutes of the 19th Session of the Joint Committee on Church Union in South India (Diocesan Press, Madras), 21-12-46.

1. We agree that all who have the status of Presbyters in the United Church are capable of performing all the functions assigned to Presbyters in the United Church by the Constitution of that Church in every congregation of the United Church.

2. We agree that no Presbyter of the United Church will exercise his ministry in a congregation where members conscientiously object to his ministrations.

3. In all cases where no such conscientious objection arises within the congregation concerned we shall act in accordance with the resolution of the Continuation Committee (1945), viz.,—"It is understood that during the period of unification congregations will ordinarily continue to be served by the ministries to which they are accustomed, except where pastoral needs obviously demand other arrangements. The duly constituted authority within the United Church shall be the sole judge of the urgency of such pastoral needs."

4. No member of the United Church can "conscientiously object" (in the sense in which these words are used in the Constitution of the United Church) to the ministrations of any Presbyter ordained within the United Church. The suitability of a presbyter for a particular congregation is another question and will have to be considered in all cases by the appointing authority.

To avoid misunderstanding we would add that until the inauguration of Union we shall continue to carry out our responsibilities as Bishops of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon in accordance with the rules and practice of that Church. After the inauguration of Union we, as Bishops of the Church of South India, shall be ready ourselves to receive communion at the hands of any Bishop or Presbyter of the United Church.

CHAPTER XXVIII. TOWARDS CONCORD

The Joint Committee on Church Union met at Christ Church Hall, Madras, on December 2, 1946. Reports from the Methodist Church, the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon and the South India United Church were read and after discussion on these reports the Joint Committee took action with reference to various matters in connection with the union of the negotiating Churches.

I—Reports from the Negotiating Churches

(A) The Methodist Church

'Resolutions of the General Synod of the Methodist Church in India, Burma and Ceylon, February, 1946.

Developments in view of Union

¹The General Synod gives thanks to God for progress made in negotiations with other Churches with a view to organic union both in India and in Ceylon. We beseech God's guidance and blessing on all these deliberations and pray that they may be speedily brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The Synod appreciates the action of the Methodist Conference in giving general approval to the Scheme of Union in South India.

We recognise that if Church Union is consummated in India and Ceylon it will result in the establishment of an autonomous Church which, we trust, will ever remain in close fellowship with the Methodist Church.

1. The General Synod desires that the procedure, leading up to ordination of missionaries from overseas to the

¹ Minutes of the 19th Session of the Joint Committee on Church Union in South India (Diocesan Press, Madras), 21-12-46.

Presbyterate, should conform as nearly as possible to the procedure now followed in the Methodist Church in India and Ceylon regarding the reception, probationary study and examination of missionaries, before they are finally ordained. It should be understood that the Synod of the United Church, and not Diocesan Councils, should draw up rules regulating the acceptance, training and ordination of all candidates for the ministry.

2. The Synod, therefore, desires :

(a) That the names of Methodist ministers, sent out from England, who enter the Union as part of the initial ministry of the United Church, should be retained in the minutes of the Conference as 'permitted to serve in the United Church'.

(b) That in the case of probationers sent out by the Methodist Church their subsequent training, discipline, years of service and ordination in the United Church, should be accepted by the Conference which sends them.

(c) That Methodist lay missionaries who join the United Church should have the same relation to the Methodist Missionary Society after Union as before.

3. The Synod believes that the present system of the Methodist Church in India and Ceylon, whereby all the activities supported by the Methodist Missionary Society overseas are under direct control and administration of the Synods of the Church in this country, has been signally blessed of God. The Synod, therefore, is agreed that this system should be continued in the United Church by placing the appointment of all missionary personnel, and the administration of all work supported by Missionary Society grants, under the control of the appropriate Courts of the United Church. The Synod is of opinion that the interests of the Methodist Church will be adequately safeguarded in the direct consultations which will be regularly carried on between the Methodist Church and the authorities of the United Church. At the beginning provision may be made on the Committees of the United Church for adequate representation of those respon-

sible for carrying on work supported largely by funds from Methodist sources. The Synod requests the Committees negotiating for union in India and Ceylon to take their views on these important matters. The Synod is also of opinion that arrangements for dealing with personnel and funds provided by the Methodist Church could best be carried out by the appointment in each diocese of the United Church of a Correspondent with the Missionary Society and by the appointment of a Treasurer of the Missionary Society Funds for India and Ceylon.

4. The Synod is agreed that all property, both movable and immovable, of the Methodist Church in India and Ceylon should be handed over to the United Church and vested in recognized Trust Associations of the United Church. The negotiating Committees are requested to advise, after consulting legal opinion, whether such property should continue to be held by the present Methodist Trust Associations (with the necessary legal provision made to enable them to act on behalf of the United Church) or whether it should be transferred to a newly established Trust Association of the United Church.

(B) The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon

No official action has been taken by the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon since the Continuation Committee met in December 1945.

(C) The South India United Church

The Travancore Church Council has voted in favour of the Union, bringing the total up to seven out of the eight Councils. The North Tamil Church Council alone has so far not voted in favour.

The General Assembly of the South India United Church met in September 1946 at Tambaram near Madras and passed the following six resolutions :—

1. The South India United Church agrees to enter into organic union with the South India Province of the Metho-

dist Church and the Dioceses of Madras, Dornakal, Tinnevely and Travancore and Cochin in the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon on the basis of the proposed Scheme of Church Union contained in the latest edition of the Scheme, 1942, including the Pledge as accepted by the Joint Committee as part of the Basis of Union, and including the Joint Committee's 1934-35 interpretation thereof.

2. The Assembly authorises the Joint Committee as soon as the 1934-35 interpretation of the Pledge is accepted by the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, to take all necessary steps to inaugurate the Union at as early a date as possible.

3. As there is insufficient agreement among the Church Councils, the Assembly is unable to approve the alteration to Chapter IX, Section 23 of the Scheme so as to allow voting by Houses in the Synod as suggested in Minute 11 of the Joint Committee of November, 1944.

4. The Assembly requests the Joint Committee to consider Points 1 and 2 in the Travancore Church Council Executive Committee's statement of August, 1945 regarding Appendixes to the Scheme.

5. The Assembly authorises its Executive Committee, after consulting the Church Councils, to submit to the Central body a list of names of persons proposed to be Bishops, in accordance with A (b) in Appendix A to the minutes of the Joint Committee of November, 1944. Church Councils are asked to submit their views to the Executive Committee within four months, special meetings of the Church Councils being called for this purpose, if necessary.

6. The Assembly authorises its Executive Committee to nominate four persons as the Assembly's representatives on the Central body which is to make the final selection of new Bishops and decide the appointment of Bishops to particular Dioceses, in accordance with A (c) of the same Appendix. No one whose name is on the list of proposed Bishops shall be included amongst these four persons.

Resolutions 1 and 2 were voted on together and were passed by 103 votes to 10 votes, 7 being neutral.

The two points from the Travancore Council referred to in the Assembly's Resolution 4 are as follows:—

1. 'The Council requests the Joint Committee to make clear in an Appendix to the Scheme what is understood by the term "Visitor" in Note 6 on page 22.

2. 'The Council asks the Joint Committee to examine the records of its proceedings during the whole period of the negotiations and include similarly in an Appendix to the Scheme any other resolutions of permanent value which have not been superseded by changes in the text of the Scheme.'

The following resolution of the Malabar Church Council passed in 1945 is communicated to the Joint Committee by the South India United Church Union Committee at the request of the President of the Malabar Council:—

'That there shall exist in Malabar even after the union a District Representative Body consisting of clergymen and laymen in a particular proportion, and it shall *inter alia* hold itself responsible to maintain the spiritual heritage of this Church within the limits allowed under the Scheme.'

II—Action of the Joint Committee on the Reports of its Sub-Committees

(A) On the Report of the Continuation Committee

The Report of the Continuation Committee which met on 16th December, 1945 was presented. The Joint Committee resolved:—

1. to adopt 2 (a) of this Report as a Resolution of the Joint Committee, viz., 'The Joint Committee is of opinion that the interpretation of the Pledge which it gave in 1934-35, rightly understood, provides adequate safeguards against coercion.'

2. to record approval of the statement in 2 (b) of the Report, viz., 'It is understood that during the period of

unification congregations will ordinarily continue to be served by the ministries to which they are accustomed, except where pastoral needs obviously demand other arrangements. The duly constituted authority within the United Church shall be the sole judge of the urgency of such pastoral needs.'

3. but that the Joint Committee does not consider that the statement suggested in 2 (b) should be added to the interpretation of the Pledge, as two of the Churches have already voted upon the Scheme as containing the interpretation without this addition :

4. that 2 (c) of the Report be endorsed, viz., 'A question having been raised as to the meaning of the italicised words in the following sentence of the 1934-35 interpretation :—

"The Committee does not understand the Pledge to imply that the fact that a minister of the United Church has previously been a minister of either an episcopal or a non-episcopal Church will itself debar him from appointment to or working in any congregation of the United Church *where the congregation desires it*," the Joint Committee understands this to mean :

(i) such appointments would not be made if a congregation objects on conscientious grounds, and

(ii) as stated in II. 9 of the Governing Principles of the Church, that "every pastorate shall have an opportunity of expressing its judgment as to the appointment of its pastor", while the responsibility for making the appointment remains with the duly constituted authority of the United Church.'

5. that 2 (d) of the Report be endorsed, viz., 'Since the Bishops have pointed out that the 1934-35 interpretation of the Pledge was not printed in the 7th edition of the Scheme, on which votes were taken in the General Council, and since that official interpretation of the Joint Committee is regarded as authoritative by the Methodist Church and the South India United Church, the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, representatives on the Continuation Committee

are requested to obtain and to present to the Joint Committee a clear statement as to whether the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon accepts the 1934-35 interpretation.'

6. that the preparation of a statement of theological issues in the Scheme proposed in Section 4 of the Report be postponed until the United Church itself can undertake it and that the Committee appointed for this purpose be dissolved.

7. that the proposals for the alteration of wording suggested in Section 5 of the Report be not now undertaken but that all such suggestions as to the need for clarification be commended to the United Church for its consideration.

(B) On the Report of the Committee on the Inauguration Service

The Interim Report of the Committee was presented and received. It was resolved :

1. to approve the suggestion that in the draft 'Form of Consecrating Bishops' in the printed Report of the Committee appointed in November, 1943, the following addition be made in the questions to be asked (p. 11), by inserting after the first sentence in Question 2 : 'Do you believe in Jesus Christ, God Incarnate and the Redeemer of the World? And in accordance with the revelation of God which He made, do you worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?'

2. that the Committee be continued and its terms of reference enlarged to include the preparation of an order of service for the Ordination of Deacons and Presbyters for presentation to the next meeting of the Joint Committee, together with complete recommendations for the Inauguration Service and for the Consecration of Bishops.

(C) On the Report of the Committee on the Dioceses in the United Church

The Report of the Committee was presented, and after discussion adopted in the following form :

It was decided that at the inauguration of union, there should be formed the following dioceses. It must be understood that minor adjustment of boundaries may have to be made later. Such further local readjustments between dioceses as are agreed on by the dioceses concerned after actual experience of the working of the Scheme should be made without involving elaborate constitutional machinery.

1. South Travancore from Cape Comorin northwards to Kuzhithara; Also the Radhapuram and Idyangudi Circles of the present Tinnevely Diocese. Tamil. S.I.U.C.; C.I.B.C. 80,000.
2. From Kuzhithara to the river Kallada, just north of Quilon. Malayalam. S.I.U.C. 70,000.

Note.—The Joint Committee is of the opinion that South Travancore would best be organised in two dioceses and strongly urges this view on the South India United Church. Should that Church, however, decide that the arguments in favour of making this area one diocese are stronger, the Joint Committee would urge the Bishop and Diocesan Council to consider as early as possible the appointment of an Assistant Bishop.

3. Central Travancore, excluding Alwaye and Munnar. Malayalam. C.I.B.C. 78,000.
4. Alwaye and Munnar Districts of Travancore. Cochin State; British Cochin; British Malabar. Malayalam. C.I.B.C.; S.I.U.C. 21,000.
5. Tinnevely District (less three circles). See Nos. 1 and 6). Tamil. C.I.B.C. 1,00,000.
6. Madura and Ramnad Districts and the Koilpatti Circle of the present Tinnevely Diocese. Tamil. S.I.U.C.; C.I.B.C. 45,000.
7. Jaffna. S.I.U.C. 3,500.
8. Trichinopoly; Tanjore; Methodist area in the South of Coimbatore District. Tamil. Methodist: C.I.B.C. 60,000.
9. Coimbatore, less the portion in No. 8; Nilgiris and Salem. Tamil. S.I.U.C.; Methodist: C.I.B.C. 31,000.
10. Madras; Chingelpet; North and South Arcot; South

- of Chittoor; Nellore. Tamil. S.I.U.C.: Methodist: C.I.B.C. 80,000.
11. Mysore State; Bellary District; Coorg. Canarese and Tamil. Methodist: S.I.U.C.: C.I.B.C.: 27,000.
 12. Hyderabad State; Methodist work round Medak; C.I.B.C. Churches in Secunderabad and Hyderabad. Telugu. 100,000.
 13. Hyderabad State; C.I.B.C. work round Dornakal with Karimnagar area and the area south of Kazipet of the Methodist Church. Telugu. 70,000.
 14. Anantapur and Kurnool Districts. Telugu. S.I.U.C. C.I.B.C. 45,000.
 15. Guntur; East and West Godavari; Kistna; Vizagapatam; Telugu. C.I.B.C.: S.I.U.C.: 115,000.
 16. Cuddappah; North Chittoor. Telugu. S.I.U.C. C.I.B.C. 51,000.

N.B.—The numbers given of the Christian community are only approximately correct.

Financial arrangements

* * * *

We recommend that a central fund should be set up to which each diocese should contribute an assessed sum from which contributions could be made towards the support of the bishop in a diocese which could not raise sufficient money itself.

As the first bishops will have to be appointed before the dioceses have actually come into existence there will probably be a period which may last for some years during which it may be difficult in some dioceses to support a bishop, and we feel that it will be legitimate for the Church to ask for help from missionary societies for a strictly limited period to meet this situation.

It will be essential to make suitable arrangements, financial and otherwise, so that the presbyters and bishops of the United Church may be transferable from one diocese to another.

III—The Archbishop's Committee of Theologians

A Committee of Theologians appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, presided over by the Rt. Rev. A. E. J. Rawlinson, D.D. Bishop of Derby, issued its report in 1946. The report shows that certain amendments were proposed to the Constitution of the Church of South India by the Committee.

A clear majority of the Committee is disposed, with varying degrees of emphasis, to regard as being likely to be essential, if in the end there is to be full intercommunion with the Anglican Churches, the amendment of the Constitution in some or all of the following ways:—

1. The statement of the Faith of the Church should be so re-drafted as to place the adherence of the Church of South India to the historic faith of the Church Catholic beyond question.
2. The statement on the Sacraments in the Church (Constitution II, 6) should be freed from misleading ambiguities.
3. The use of the rite of Confirmation should as soon as may be practicable be made the general rule of the Church.
4. There should be a modification of the rules for synodical procedure, clarifying and properly safeguarding the position of the bishops.
5. There should be a re-consideration of the ultimate relation of the Church of South India to other Churches not episcopally ordered.
6. There should be a satisfactory clarification of the circumstances, if any, in which non-episcopally ordained ministers may continue to exercise ministry in the Church of South India at the conclusion of the interim period.

There will further be needed, as has already been noted, satisfactory provisions in respect of the forms to be used at

consecrations and ordinations and of the marriage law of the Church.¹

(Signed on behalf of the Committee)

JOHN DERBY

The majority of the Committee holds that the Scheme in its present form can still claim the approval given by the Lambeth Conference of 1930. The report ends with these words:

“With this hope in view a majority of the Committee thinks that the Scheme should go forward. The Committee as a whole, if the Scheme comes into operation, would desire to wish God's speed to the Church of South India, and to follow its fortunes with warm sympathy as well as with prayer.”

IV—Decision of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon on the interpretation of the Pledge.

The General Council met in January, 1947 and passed the following resolution:—

“The Council having taken note of the Resolution IV, 1, 2 and 4 of the Joint Committee, 1946 now accepts the interpretation issued by the Joint Committee in 1943 and amended in 1945, regarding it as wholly in accordance with the Basis of Union which was accepted by the General Council in 1945.”

¹ Report of the Committee of Theologians on the South India Scheme (1946); Published by direction of the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Press and Publications Board of the Church Assembly, Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, S. W. 1.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

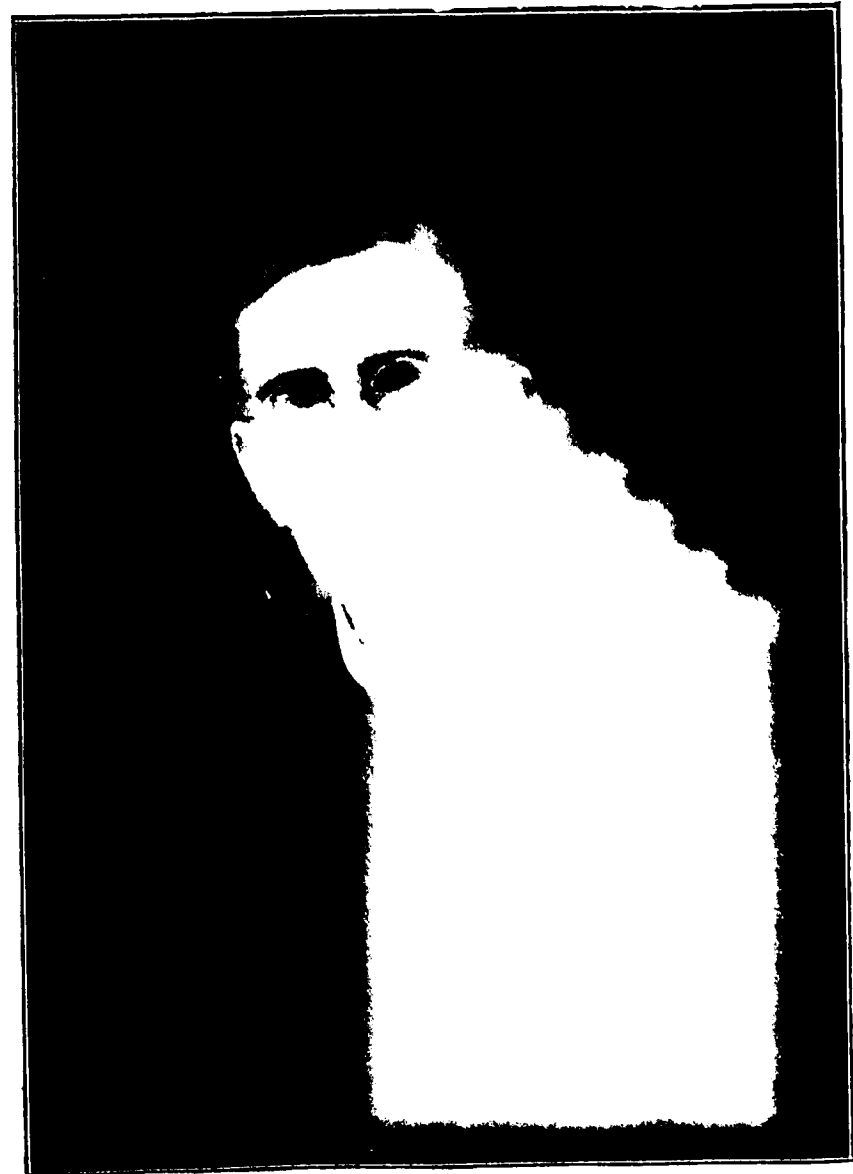
PREPARATION FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE UNION

The Joint Committee at its meeting in December, 1946 had passed a few resolutions containing certain arrangements for the inauguration of Union in September, 1947. But as those arrangements were made prior to the meeting of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, they were conditional upon a satisfactory statement by that Council as to whether the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon accepts the 1934-35 interpretation of the Pledge. The uncertainty that clouded the situation was removed by the action of the Anglican General Council in regard to the interpretation of the Pledge, inasmuch as that action of the General Council proved to be satisfactory to the other two negotiating Churches. Thus the last obstacle in the way of Union was removed. In the light of this new development those resolutions of the Joint Committee, passed in December, 1946 became operative, and the negotiating Churches became free to follow the programme contained therein. The resolutions of the Joint Committee were as follows :—

1. It was resolved to ask the Continuation Committee to make arrangements for a prolonged period of prayer and preparation in the Churches before the Inauguration Service.
2. It was resolved that the Rev. J. S. M. Hooper, as Secretary of the Joint Committee, be ex-officio member and Convener of the Committee to select the bishops of the United Church.
3. It was resolved that the following programme be adopted :—

Nominations to the Committee to select Bishops and of those suitable for selection as bishops to reach the Convener of the Joint Committee by March 1, 1947.

The names of those selected to be Bishops to be announced by the Selection Committee by April 15, 1947.



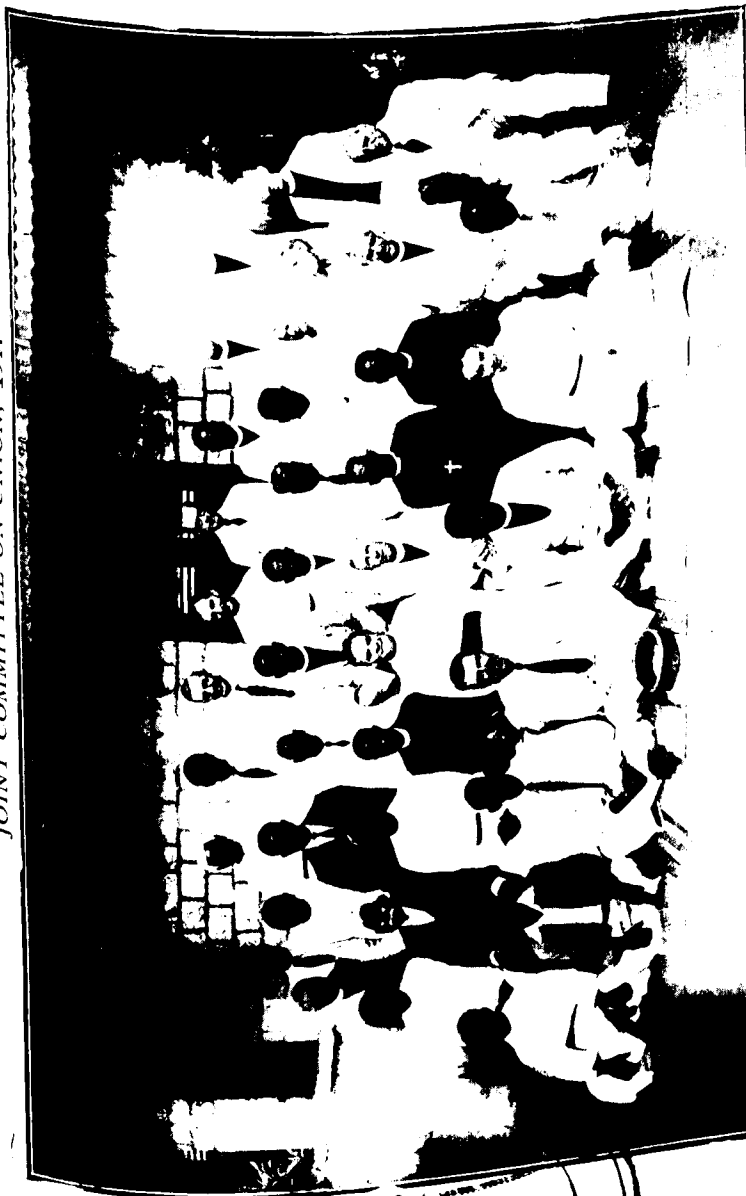
Rev. J. S. M. Hooper, M.A.

Church of recognised standing the Syrians appealed to various Churches in the Near East to help them at this moment of crisis. ('The Anglican Church in Travancore and Cochin'—Hunt). The Jacobite Church in Antioch responded to this appeal, and one of their bishops, Mar Gregorius, risked the perils of the sea, and the dangers from a hostile government, and came to Travancore and consecrated the Syrian Archdeacon as Bishop Mar Thoma I.

From Mar Thoma I (1665) to Mar Mathew Athanasius (1876) there were thirteen Metropolitans who guided the destinies of a united non-Roman Syrian Church. Among them seven accepted their orders from foreign Jacobite prelates, and six from their own Indian predecessors. The last of them, Mar Mathew Athanasius, received his consecration at the hands of the Jacobite Patriarch, and on this ground he ousted the then ruling Metropolitan who had had his consecration from a local bishop, and against whom petitions of complaints had gone to the Patriarch. Mar Mathew Athanasius while a young man had come under the influence of the C.M.S. missionaries in Travancore, and was for some time a student in their school in Madras. After he became the Metropolitan he introduced some reforms which were strongly resented by the more orthodox section of the Church. On representations from this party the Patriarch consecrated a rival to Mar Athanasius in the person of Mar Dionysius V, and later himself came to Travancore. He was so strongly influenced by Mar Dionysius that he excommunicated Mar Athanasius and set up Mar Dionysius in his place. After this the Patriarch assembled his section of the Church (the orthodox party) at a place called Mulamthuruthi in 1876, and gave a constitution to the Church, which is still the only written constitution in the Jacobite Syrian Church in Travancore, though it is seldom adhered to as a whole. The important items in the Constitution are :—

1. 'An Association of the whole race should be formed, and called the Syrian Christian Association of which our

JOINT COMMITTEE ON UNION, 1947



Back Row (left to right) :— Rev. D. Monahan, Archdeacon Appasamy, Rev. G. G. James, Mr. G. H. Marsden, Rev. L. Brown, Rev. A. S. Johnson, Rev. M. Mehta, Rev. T. R. Foulger, Rev. H. K. Moulton.
Second Row (left to right) :— Rev. A. J. Arangaden, Rev. G. P. James, Rev. T. David, Mr. C. J. Lucas, Rev. J. A. Jacob, Rev. B. C. D. Mather, Rev. B. John, Mr. P. K. Mon Singh, Deaconess C. Graham, Miss E. P. Koper, Rev. F. W. Spencer.
Third Row (left to right) :— Rev. B. Samuel, Mr. Gnanapragasam, Bishop Mutyalu, Rev. P. Gurushanta, Bishop G. T. Selwyn, Rev. J. S. M. Hooper, Bishop C. K. Jacob, Rev. H. Sumitra, Rev. F. Whitaker, Mr. E. H. M. Bower.
Front Row (left to right) :— Canon T. T. Siither, Rev. G. S. William, Dr. G. V. James, Rev. J. D. Muyskens, Canon S. S. Clarke, Archdeacon J. White, Mr. G. V. Job.

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The report of the Committee on the Inauguration Service to reach the Convener of the Joint Committee by May 1, 1947.

The Joint Committee to meet by the middle of June, 1947, probably in Bangalore.

The Inauguration Service to be held in the last week of September, 1947.

The Continuation Committee met on December 3, 1946, and among other things resolved, in compliance with a request made by the South India United Church (*Vide* Resolution 4 (b) of the General Assembly), to make arrangements for the preparation of a compendium containing decisions of the Joint Committee which are of permanent value, but not embodied in the Scheme.

CONCLUSION

“Half past three on the afternoon of Tuesday, December 3, 1946, in the Parish Hall of Christ Church, Mount Road (Madras), may well prove to have been one of the historic moments in this life of the Christian Church. There the Joint Committee on Church Union in South India decided to recommend that the inauguration of Union should take place at the end of September, 1947”. So wrote the Bishop of Madras in his letter published in the Madras Diocesan Magazine in January, 1947.

We have seen that the vision of a United Church in South India first came to a few men who met in Conference at Tranquebar on the 1st of May, 1919. Referring to what happened on that day many said, “Verily, these men have seen a vision.” But there were others who spoke of it contemptuously, and called them ecclesiastical faddists and dreamers.

“ ‘Dreamers of dreams!’ We take the taunt with gladness
Knowing that time beyond the years we see,
Will weave those dreams that count to some for madness
Into the substance of the life to be.”

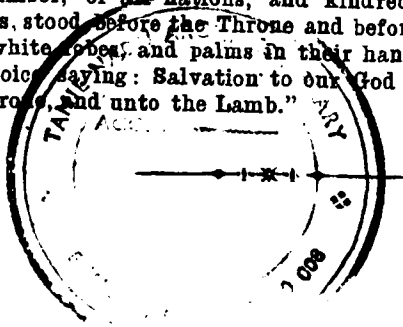
A generation has passed by. Many of those who took part in the Conference at Tranquebar have joined the Church Triumphant. But the vision of those great men who "died in faith" has been marvellously realised. By the providence of God the three Churches in South India now unite into one body; and they bring together their spiritual possessions unimpaired. There is no elimination of any type or school; no repudiation of any valued element of Christian experience; no surrender of truth; no sacrifice of any cherished tradition. Each brings its own distinctive contribution into the spiritual treasury of the United Church. There is much to be said for Episcopacy and Congregationalism; much for Methodism and Presbyterianism. And now these elements are so harmoniously blended together that an atmosphere of concord is created which preserves and promotes a fellowship so peculiar to the people of God.

"After twenty-eight years of praying and labouring and waiting, God's people in South India now find the vision at Tranquebar transformed into a reality. The newly constituted United Church begins to realise that her spiritual horizon is so enlarged, and the eyes of her understanding so enlightened that she can now see the glorious UNA SANCTA more vividly than ever before. Thus, from time to eternity, the United Church presses on

"Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest".

That "vision glorious" has been described by St. John in these words:—

"After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the Throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God Which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb."



APPENDIX A

THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE SYRIAN CHURCH IN TRAVANCORE¹

Without entering into a detailed history of the Syrian Church it is proposed in this article to deal only with those portions of it which will serve to throw light on the present day problems of the Church.

The tradition, popular among the Syrians, attributes the origin of the Church to St. Thomas, the Apostle ('India and the Apostle Thomas'—Medlycott). There are other traditions which ascribe the first beginnings to S. Bartholomew (Eusebius), to Thomas of Cana 'Eastern Church'—(Stanley), to Thomas, a Manichaeon (Dr. Burnell), to Anti-Nestorian Missionaries ('Lesser Eastern Churches'—Fortescue), and to Nestorian Missionaries ('Protestant Dictionary'—Margoliouth). We see from these that the history of the Church is rather uncertain until the arrival of the Portuguese in India. Whatever that history may be, I think we may take either Dr. Buchanan or the Rev. Howard as true for the period immediately before the Portuguese occupation of the country. Dr. Buchanan who visited Travancore early in the 19th century suggests that the Jacobites had established connections with the Syrian Church long before the arrival of the Portuguese; while the Rev. Howard would substitute 'Nestorians' for 'Jacobites'.

Soon after the establishment of the Portuguese power in India the Roman Church began to show great interest in the Syrian Church with the result that in 1599 it came under the Roman hierarchical system. But in 1653 a considerable section of the Syrians threw off the Roman yoke and organised themselves into an independent Church. In their anxiety to secure the validity of their orders from an Oriental

¹ Church Union, News and Views, Vol. II, No. 6, pp. 208-214 (1932).

present Holy Father and his successors should be the patrons and the ruling Metran (bishop), the President.

2. Whereas it would be difficult for all of them jointly to carry on the affairs, a chief committee composed of eight priests and sixteen laymen of the first class with the ruling Metran for President should be formed.

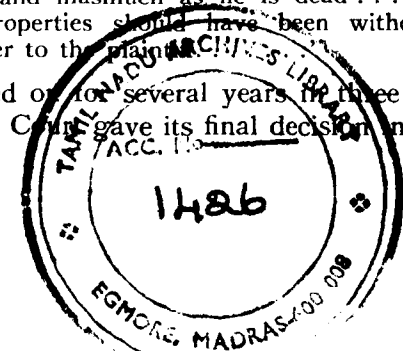
3. As it would be difficult for all of them (the chief committee) jointly to conduct and carry on all litigations generally arising as to religious and social matters the President shall be the person who should have the power to carry on all such.

The document in its preamble states, 'we have been called together here in this synod by His Holiness Maran Mar Ignatius Peter III, Patriarch, the chief authority in the Apostolic Throne of Antioch, and the Holy Father of us, the Jacobite Syrians of Malankara and we have heard the reasons explained to us.'

A year after this assembly Mar Mathew Athanasius died (1877). But while he lived he disregarded the excommunication of the Patriarch, and consecrated his cousin as Mar Thomas Athanasius to carry on his work. As the direct successor of Mar Mathew, Mar Thomas Athanasius had possession of the Church property. But Mar Dionysius V claimed the property, and filed a suit in the District Court in 1879. The property was claimed on the following grounds :—

'Whereas the Seminary at Kottayam has been under the control, and in the possession of the Metropolitan from time to time existing under the authority of the Holy Patriarch of Antioch, the Chief Preceptor of the said Syrian Christians and whereas Mar Athanasius had departed this life, and whereas after that the first defendant (Mar Thomas Athanasius) is illegally retaining possession of all the property belonging to the said Seminary and whereas since owing to the annulling of the dignity of the said Athanasius, and inasmuch as he is dead the said Seminary properties should have been without any demur handed over to the plaintiff'

The suit was carried on for several years in three courts, and in 1889 the High Court gave its final decision in favour



of Mar Dionysius, and Mar Thomas Athanasius had to hand over the property.

Mar Athanasius then organised his section of the Church afresh, having neither property nor income. He achieved this with success, and this Church which he built up under the guidance of God, and true to the traditions which his father, Abraham Malpan, and his cousin, Mar Mathew Athanasius had left him, is the Church now known as the Mar Thoma Syrian Church. It claims to be 'the original body restored to its early apostolic purity', though to the Jacobites 'she is a schism from the Jacobite Church'. The Mar Thoma Church is an autonomous body, her head being the Metropolitan elected by the people.

To continue the history of the successful party, Mar Dionysius secured the property, but there were points in the judgment which made peace in the Church impossible. The judgment made the authority of the Patriarch permanent over the Church, and it further declared that the Metropolitan of the Jacobite Church should be an Indian who should be elected by the people and consecrated by the Patriarch himself or with his sanction only. This meant that when the Patriarch and the people disagreed about a candidate the Church would virtually be without a head who could administer her affairs legally. Mar Dionysius V died in 1909, and in the same year Mar Geevarughese Dionysius VI was installed as Metropolitan by the Patriarch Mar Abdulla, with the full approval of the Church.

But matters were not to rest here. Soon differences arose between the Patriarch and the Metropolitan which brought the former on a visit to Travancore in 1910, and as on the previous occasion trouble arose. This time it was not on doctrines or faith, but on the nature of the authority of the Patriarch over the Church.

After protracted negotiations the Patriarch excommunicated the Metropolitan in 1911 and set up Mar Kurilos in his place. Both parties sought the aid of the law courts to

decide their claims on the Church property. In 1923—the litigation dragged on for twelve years—the High Court decided in favour of the Patriarch, endorsing the excommunication of the Metropolitan; but curiously enough, the same Court in 1928 revised their decision, and set aside the excommunication as invalid on the ground that the Patriarch had not taken all the facts into consideration before arriving at a decision, and that his procedure was wrong. This second judgment restored the possession of the property to Mar Dionysius, as the legal Metropolitan of the Jacobite Church, though the Patriarch no longer recognised him as such.

If this was expected to bring peace, the Church was rudely disappointed. One litigation followed another, and the life of the Church was continuously disturbed by the two parties coming into open conflict. The Patriarch's party still considered Mar Dionysius as an excommunicated bishop.

In the meanwhile the party of Mar Dionysius created a new dignitary in their section of the Church. There was a deposed Patriarch in Turkey who had been a rival to Mar Abdulla (the Patriarch who excommunicated Mar Dionysius VI), and the Dionysian Party invited this deposed Patriarch from Syria, and he came and consecrated one of the suffragan Bishops of Mar Dionysius as the *Catholicos of the East*, in 1913, thereby reviving, they say, the ancient office of the Catholicate of the East, which used to have its headquarters at Ctesiphon, and which was in communion with the Jacobite Church in Antioch and Syria. Needless to say, the Patriarch Mar Abdulla, and later, his successor, Mar Elias, not only refused to recognise the Catholicos, but also doubted the validity of his consecration. In 1930, the greatest supporter of Mar Dionysius, and one of the foremost leaders of the party, Mar Ivanios, suddenly went over to the Roman Church, which act stunned the Church for a time.

In 1923, Mar Dionysius in his old age, undertook the long journey to Syria to put before the Patriarch personally the *impasse* in the Syrian Church in Malabar, and to implore

him to help in solving the difficulties of the situation. He spent a fairly long time with the Patriarch, who received him kindly. It is not known what transpired between the Patriarch and the Metropolitan, but on the return of Mar Dionysius to India, the Patriarch sent with him a Syrian Bishop, Mar Julius, who, it was said, was entrusted with certain papers said to be the order for the withdrawal of the excommunication of Mar Dionysius on his fulfilment of certain conditions in India. No accurate information on these matters has been made available to the Church. But after their arrival here there was disagreement between Mar Dionysius and Mar Julius, and whatever be the reasons for disagreeing, the papers entrusted to Mar Julius were not made public. And so this step also in the cause of a settlement was a failure.

Torn by internal divisions, and beset from without, the Church was in a deplorable condition. It was about this time that Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy, visited Travancore. With his keen interest in the Christian Church, and his characteristic generosity of mind, he offered to render what help he could to heal the divisions of the Jacobite Church. Accordingly, he invited the Patriarch, Mar Elias, the successor of Mar Abdulla, to visit Travancore. Accepting the invitation, the Patriarch arrived in Delhi early in 1931, and held consultation with the Viceroy before coming to Travancore. Lord Irwin also secured the help of two eminent Anglican divines, the late Bishop Gore, and Bishop Foss Westcott, the Anglican Metropolitan in India. It is to be deeply regretted that these negotiations ended in nothing, and the Patriarch moved on to Alwaye, Travancore.

Soon after his arrival in Travancore, feelings more friendly than had hitherto seemed to exist between the Patriarch and Mar Dionysius showed themselves, and he recalled the excommunication of Mar Dionysius. This raised great hopes in the minds of the people as to a speedy and amicable settlement of the split, but what it really did was to create a fresh

difficulty. Although Mar Dionysius was restored to his original standing as Metropolitan, the Catholicos and the bishops who supported him were outside this recognition, at least as far as the Patriarch and his party were concerned. [This was a complication of the situation. Mar Dionysius was now the proper Metropolitan, but the Catholicos whom he had helped to install, and whom he was bound to support was left out. Many interviews and consultations were held to ease the tension of the situation, but every effort ended in disappointment and failure.

In spite of everything it was the steadfast hope of many, both within and without the Jacobite Church, that a peaceful and honourable settlement would be arrived at before the Patriarch left the shores of India, and perhaps it would have been so, but in the midst of all hopes and fears, the Patriarch died suddenly of heart failure on the 13th of February, 1932.

This unexpected calamity has brought all negotiations between the two parties in the Jacobite Church to a standstill. What the future holds it is not easy to predict. It is to be expected that a new Patriarch will soon be consecrated in Syria. What his attitude to the situation here will be no one can tell. Mar Dionysius and his section want a Church that is practically autonomous, although in spiritual communion with Antioch; but the Patriarch's section will not part with the authority that they have secured by the decision of the High Court. At the same time they appear to be willing to allow a certain degree of freedom in the internal administration of the Church. This can be gathered from a document that was submitted to the Dionysian party by a deputation from the Patriarch's party, as a basis for further negotiations. But the proposals were rejected by Mar Dionysius. The differences in outlook are so serious, and the spirit of bitterness and opposition have increased with time rather than decreased, that a peaceful settlement seems almost impossible under the present circumstances.

If one may judge from the past, the natural course would

be to turn to the law courts again. One of the main things that stand in the way of a free and open discussion is the question of the possession of the property. If either party would decide to leave this subject alone, the basis of further negotiations can be lifted to a higher plane. This will not be easy, but may not help be got on this point in considering the events that took place 50 years ago when one section of the Church passed through almost a similar experience, and had to forgo all their property, and thus became free under God's over-ruling to turn more fully to the spiritual development of their Church? One believes that it was this loss of their material resources that proved to be the real making of the Mar Thoma Church.

Under the new situation that has arisen with the death of Mar Ignatius Elias, Prince Patriarch, the possibility of co-operation between Dionysian section of the Jacobite Church and the Mar Thoma Church is being openly, though yet informally, discussed. It has to be stated that after their separation, fifty years ago, these two Churches developed along different lines, the Jacobite Church along sacramentarian lines, and the Mar Thoma Church coming under low Church evangelical influence. In both developments the Anglican Church has been the predominating influence. The early C.M.S. missionaries who belonged to the evangelical section of the Anglican Church contributed largely towards determining the doctrinal position of the Mar Thoma Church, while the members of the Oxford Mission brotherhood in Bengal, who belong to the Anglo-Catholic section of the Anglican Communion, are helping the Dionysian section in the spiritual side of their work. If the Anglo-Catholics and the Evangelicals can belong to the same Anglican Communion, use the same liturgy, own the same head, and can sit together at the same synods and conferences, it is difficult to see why better understanding and union cannot be brought about between the Jacobite and the Mar Thoma Churches. There is a third, though a small, section, known

as the Church of Thozhiyoor, in British Malabar. It was founded in 1772 by one Metran Cyril, who had been consecrated by a foreign Jacobite Bishop, Mar Gregorius. In its teachings this Church has a leaning towards the Jacobites, while it is really in communion with the Mar Thoma Church. This Church is also to be considered in any scheme for union.

The chief points to be emphasised are :—

1. Mutual recognition of Orders
2. Acceptance of the Nicene Creed
3. The Apostolic Succession
4. Recognition of the Seven Sacraments

One cannot see difficulties with regard to the first two points, and the third also might with qualifications be found acceptable. There are bound to be differences of opinion with regard to the recognition of the Seven Sacraments; but in view of the great need for better understanding, and the call for co-operation throughout the Christian Churches, an agreement may be arrived at even here, if the whole subject of union be approached by both Churches in the spirit of reconciliation and with an overwhelming sense of the need for such union.

In view of the present strained relations between the Patriarch's section and the Dionysian party, the question may be asked whether the former are to be left out of union proposals. One gathers that the two parties still hope for a settlement with each other.

If mention has not been made of the C.M.S. Church in Travancore in the matter of union it is only because they are already in negotiation with the South India United Church for union, and the Syrian Churches await with interest to know the outcome of these negotiations.

K. K. KURUVILLA

Kottayam.

APPENDIX B

CONGREGATIONALISM, PRESBYTERIANISM AND EPISCOPACY IN THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST CENTURY¹

The first class importance of Canon Streeter's new work on the Primitive Church and the diversity of ecclesiastical forms which characterised it in the first century will be obvious to all who are interested in the grave questions to be considered by the Lambeth Conference this year, with reference to the proposals for reunion in South India. The book is fortunate in its author, whose great work, *The Four Gospels—A Study of Origins*, received well-merited tributes of praise from widely different quarters, and whose qualifications for a historical investigation of the conditions which prevailed in the early Christian Church cannot be disputed. It is fortunate in its general theme, and peculiarly fortunate at this critical time in the history of religion in the proposition which it sets out to demonstrate that "the history of Catholic Christianity during the first five centuries is the history of the standardisation of a diversity having its origin in the Apostolic Age". The history of religion demonstrates that with any great outburst of spiritual activity there is an invariable tendency to diversity. Life means variety; uniformity too often means death. It was after the Renaissance and the Reformation that the greatest variety of organisations since the days of the early Christian Church manifested itself in Europe. Canon Streeter points out that on many questions in the first century there was great divergence, as for instance, with regard to the acute controversy between the Churches of Rome and Asia on the question of the

Quarto-deciman observance of Easter. Moreover, great doctrinal disputes tended to follow lines of local cleavage in the early Church, corresponding roughly to the spheres of influence of Alexandria and Antioch. He also points out that all students of liturgiology need no reminder that each of the great centres of Christianity evolved its own type of liturgy, and that standardisation, in his opinion, resulted from the fact that the early Christian community was beset with foes within and without, and that the development of an organisation of proved efficiency might almost be regarded as a condition of survival.

CONGREGATIONALISM. It is difficult, with the material which we possess, to trace in the early Christian Church anything corresponding completely to the idea of Congregational Churches as organisations independent of one another. At the same time, Canon Streeter finds in the history of the Church at Antioch, the city where the name "Christian" had its origin, and which was the headquarters of the first and second missionary journeys of Paul and Barnabas, evidence that the Church at Antioch was definitely not modelled on the Church at Jerusalem, and he contends that "whatever other officers the Church at Antioch may have had, Prophet and Teacher (Didaskalos) are the titles borne by those of chief importance." The burden of proof that the Church at Antioch possessed *Episcopos* on the occasion of Paul's first missionary journey is upon those who in that case must show why Paul failed to make use of their services on this historical occasion. In a learned and exhaustive Appendix it is shown that the Didache was circulated mainly in Syria, and that it had its place of origin in that province. This document informs us plainly that at the end of the first century there were Churches where Prophets and Teachers existed, but in which there were no *Episcopos* or Deacons. His contention is that in the 14th Chapter of Acts, Paul and Barnabas appointed Presbyters (Elders) in every Church, and they chose men who, although "in the Epistles,

¹ *The Primitive Church—Studied with reference to the Origins of the Christian Ministry*, by **BURNETT HILLMAN STREETER**, Canon of Hereford.

they bore the title of *Episcopos* and Deacons, were, at any rate to begin with, regarded as persons of quite minor importance." Canon Streeter thinks this seems strange, as it does; but he goes on to say, "This is most easily explicable on the view that Prophets and Teachers were the recognised leaders of the Church of Antioch (from which Paul and Barnabas had themselves been sent out), and that, as far as Gentile Churches were concerned, the appointment of Presbyters was an innovation."

The justification for so important a conclusion does not seem to be strong, although Canon Streeter argues that, whilst the Apostles obviously belong to a special class, "it is evident, even in Corinth, a Church of Paul's own foundation, that the terms Prophet and Teacher represent the two most important offices in what may be called the normal ministry in a local Church."

It is interesting to note that, according to Canon Streeter's arguments, Independency, if this be Independency, proved a failure, and the practical disorders at Corinth forced Paul to face more clearly than heretofore the need for a new emphasis on the respect due to those who stood for discipline and coherence in the Church. Here Canon Streeter clearly means the *Episcopos* or the Presbyters. Indeed, he points out that in Philippians the *Episcopos* and Deacons are specially singled out in the salutation in a way which would be unnatural unless Paul wished them to be recognised as persons of great importance in that Church.

PRESBYTERIANISM. There is a very interesting speculation which Canon Streeter indulges in, when he is speaking of the effect upon the history of Christianity of the conquest of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This followed immediately the death of the three leaders, James, Peter, and Paul, on whose prestige and moderation so much depended. The Church was scattered and the whole character of its government may have been changed thereby. At any rate, Canon Streeter is of opinion that this historic fact of the destruction

of Jerusalem may have saved Christendom from a Caliphate in the family of the Apostle James, the cousin or brother of our Lord. In any case, for the next hundred years after the destruction of Jerusalem, the student of history must keep his eye fixed mainly on the Churches of Antioch, Ephesus and Rome. Alexandria was to come into the picture a century later.

We are reminded that it was pointed out long ago by Jerome and by several of the Greek fathers, that there is no passage in the New Testament which compels the assumption that the terms "Episcopos" and "Presbyter" are the names of two different offices. We remember that the leaders of the Church at Ephesus summoned to Miletus (Acts xx. 17-28) are styled "Presbyters", but are addressed by Paul as "Episcopos"; while in the Pauline Church at Philippi the officers saluted are *Episcopos* and Deacons. And so far as the actual use of the word *Episcopos* is concerned there is nothing in the Pastorals to show that this usage has changed. Titus is instructed "to appoint elders in every city . . . if any man is blameless . . . for the bishop must be blameless. . . ."

In view of the passion for episcopacy which was manifested by St. Ignatius, martyred in A.D. 115, we should have expected that he would have been regarded as wholeheartedly giving evidence on the side of those who maintain that the episcopal order had come to be the one dominant order in the early Christian Church. Canon Streeter, however, maintains that Ignatius in his famous seven letters, is not fighting for the supremacy of the bishop as against the presbyters; he was fighting for the supremacy of the regular Church officers as a body.

The writings of Hermas, contained in *The Shepherd*, a document of nearly the same date as the Epistle of Clement, are called by Canon Streeter into the witness box in support of Presbyterianism. This may seem remarkable in view of the fact that Hermas has been generally believed to be the foster-brother of Pope Pius, who lived in the middle of

the second century. This, however, is questioned by Canon Streeter, and he maintains that in any case *The Shepherd of Hermas* was written before Pius became Pope, and shows clearly that the Church of Rome, in the lifetime of Clement (A.D. 88—97), continued to be governed by a Board of persons who are spoken of alternately as "the Elders", or "the Elders that preside over the Church," or "the Rulers," or "you that are Rulers of the Church and occupy the chief seats." "Presbyter", he considers, would seem to be a term connoting not so much office as status. Among those who enjoyed the status of presbyter are included, he thinks, a class of *episcopos*, and possibly also the deacons.

The letters which Polycarp wrote to the Church at Philippi in A.D. 115, sending copies of the letters of Ignatius, were written when there was as yet no single bishop at Philippi.

The most striking statement on this question, however, is found in Canon Streeter's view, that whatever personal prestige may have belonged to Clement, who in the list of Hegesippus is given as the third Bishop of Rome, or fourth including Paul, there is not a word to hint that Clement ever contemplated at Rome or elsewhere any other system than rule by a college of persons alternatively spoken of as *Episcopos* and presbyters.

It is interesting to find Canon Streeter affirming the principle of Apostolic Succession as the basis and rationale of the ministry at that time. Only, however, he tells us, it appears to be what we should call a collegiate or "presbyterian" as opposed to an individual or "episcopal" succession.

It is remarkable that one who writes from so liberal a standpoint as Canon Streeter, and who is prepared to give up, or indeed does definitely renounce, the idea of a hierarchical succession only, should not have contemplated the possibility of a succession resting not in any order, but in the Church as a whole.

* * * *

Canon Streeter maintains that as Clement wrote a little more than thirty years after the death of Paul, and at the date of writing was one of the senior members of the Church, his statement may probably be relied upon that the existing college of Presbyters was descended from that of Apostolic times by a method of co-optation, so far as the Churches of Rome and Corinth were concerned. He also holds that it is clear from Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians, that in A.D. 115, in the Pauline Church of Philippi, only two orders survived, namely, Presbyters and Deacons.

MONARCHICAL EPISCOPACY. It is now necessary to turn from the statements of Clement and Hermas, which indicate that the government of the Church of Rome in their time might not inappropriately be called Presbyterian, to consider the origin of the Monarchical Episcopate in the Roman Church. As early as A.D. 166, Hegesippus came to Rome and drew up what he believed to be an authentic list of the bishops of Rome from the beginning to his own time. The germ of episcopal rule is found by Canon Streeter in the organisation of the primitive Christian community on that of a Jewish synagogue. The synagogue, he tells us, was governed by a college of Elders, one of whom was styled, *Archisynagogos*, or 'Ruler of the Synagogue, who seems only to have been superior to his colleagues in the actual conduct of worship. He thinks that the special sanctity attached by Christians to the Eucharist would emphasise the importance of the President. Inevitably, he holds, the chairman of the college would insensibly develop into a kind of Managing Director of the Board, especially as the whole tendency of the age was in the direction of autocratic rule. Nevertheless, he affirms that there is evidence that at Rome some generations later the Bishop still professed to be nothing more than *primus inter pares* amongst his colleagues. Irenaeus, in his letter to Pope Victor, protesting against the threatened excommunication of the Churches of Asia on the Quarto-deciman controversy,

expresses definite reasons for this view. Irenaeus uses the title "Presbyter" three times, and not once, which might be accidental, of Victor's precursors in the papal chair, and by implication of Victor himself. If Irenaeus was seeking to conciliate Pope Victor he would scarcely address him as Presbyter unless that were an official title.

Ignatius, who went to martyrdom in A.D. 115, gives us the strongest evidence for the fact that at Rome there was some one person who was "at least the head of the Church, in the sense of being the official representative in dealing with external Churches." The bridge by which Canon Streeter crosses the gulf between what he holds to have been the original, more or less, "presbyterian" organisation of the Pauline Churches in Asia and the monarchical episcopate which was undoubtedly established there by the time of Ignatius and Polycarp, is, in his opinion, to be found in the personality of John the Elder, at Ephesus, and the influence of Aristion in Smyrna. These two outstanding individuals were, he holds, of such marked personality that they established the episcopal position. This theory, however, depends upon the somewhat slender hypothesis that Smyrna was the Church over which Aristion exercised his government of which there is little proof.

He finds in the undoubtedly genuine epistle of Clement one of the chief weapons wielded by the dominating personality of Ignatius in a lifelong battle for ecclesiastical discipline, which exercised a creative influence in the development of the powers of the hierarchy in Syria. He thinks this document remains the Magna Charta of episcopal authority in Syria for the next two generations.

* * * *

The general effect of Canon Streeter's volume upon the open-minded reader will probably be to establish a conviction that in the Christian Church of the first century the monarchical bishop was a very early development, that

government by presbyters was widely prevalent, but that episcopacy quickly proved itself to be an effective form of Church government. It is difficult for anyone to read this volume and accept, to any considerable degree, the testimony of the various authors brought under review, and to maintain that episcopacy is not only for the *bene esse*, but also is the *esse* of the Church. But in view of the rapid development and continuance of episcopacy and its efficiency, there is much to justify the acceptance of this form of government as the basis of the reunited Church of the future, provided adequate checks be created to restrain the tendency to prelatical domination which has too often cursed the Church in its long history. The dogma of Apostolical Succession will continue to be discussed, but no one will question the persistent succession in the whole history of Churches of those who have inherited the spirit and purpose of Diotrephes "who loved to have the pre-eminence." This temper must be checked in any form of Church government.

SIR HENRY LUNN

APPENDIX C
LETTER FROM PROF. V. BARTLET

Mansfield College, Oxford,

August 14, 1921.

To

The Rev. J. J. Banninga, M.A., D.D.,
Secretary of the S.I.U.C.

Dear Dr. Banninga,

I have read with the greatest interest and a large measure of sympathy the findings of the various reports included in the printed "Report of the Joint Committee on Union" which you have been so good as to forward to me, along with the covering letter in which my opinion is asked on the points of difficulty still remaining at issue.

* * * *

The specific problem you put to us outside India, and to yourselves is, "In how far should we insist here, in trying to bring about this union" in South India, "that the door between us and the Free Churches should be kept open?" And you rightly answer it in principle, by saying up to the point where it ceases to be "but a first step . . . in bringing the whole of divided Christendom closer together" and in keeping with the vision of the Lambeth Appeal. But an unmodified "Anglican" type of ordination for bishops cannot be accepted by non-episcopal branches of the Church throughout the world as the *conditio sine qua non* of inter-communion and some form of organic unity. This is made clear, I think, by the report of the Committee of the English non-episcopal communions on the Lambeth Appeal, and is fairly evident also as regards the probable attitude of American Christianity generally, in the same circles. Yet the type of *ordination for bishops* suggested in the First Preliminary Report, and assumed in all that follows, seems

to be *on purely Anglican lines*, viz., by the agency of bishops only, so that quite naturally persons so ordained will be at once recognisable as virtually Anglican Bishops.

But, equally naturally, such an *unmodified* Anglican Episcopate, as regards form of ordination, would tend to perpetuate in the eyes of Christendom at large, both episcopal and non-episcopal, the present state of things, in which episcopacy is the chief barrier in principle to wider unity among Reformed Christians, instead of an important means to its effective realization. What is needful, then, is that the principle of "equality" (here in validity or recognition of forms as used and owned of God in the ministry of characteristic Christian grace to men) should be applied to the form of episcopal ordination, as well as to the subsequent forms of episcopal oversight (where it is applied). Only so can it be "historic and constitutional" in the full sense necessary to satisfy the experience alike of the sub-apostolic Church and of modern times, as interpreted in the minds and consciences of non-episcopalians. For from the standpoint, whether of episcopalians or non-episcopalians, the ordination used by the other branch of Christ's Church is defective in form, in that it fails to express adequately one or other aspect of what the act signifies. In the one case, the defect relates to the larger unity and solidarity of the Church, diocesan and ecumenical; in the other, to the action of the local unit of the Church over which the Bishop is to exercise his ministerial functions, and the part of which in his commission (corresponding to their choice of him as bishop) should receive expression in the form of his consecration or extended jurisdiction, as the case may be. Now the way to remedy these defects in the eyes of the two groups of organized Christians proposing to unite on a basis of mutual recognition and mutual enrichment of corporate life, is not to ignore the defect of the traditional Anglican form of episcopal consecration, as it appears to non-episcopal consciences, by simply perpetuating that form, but to combine

in a single rite the forms hitherto distinctive of the ordination of chief pastors in the respective types of Church life. *This is the only way of securing equality of mutual consideration and charity throughout, from the top to the bottom of the organized order of the United Church.*

In so writing I am only drawing out what seems logically implicit in another element in the concordat sketched in I (5) A & B of First Prelim. Report, viz., that while "continuity with the historic episcopate be effectively maintained", "no particular interpretation of the fact of the historic episcopate be demanded". For ministerial equality between the uniting Churches,—an equality in kind, without raising any vain questions as to relative degrees of validity or efficacy—demands that *the chief representatives of both Churches* and of their ministry should *co-operate* in the ordination of those who are to be the chief ministers of the United Church which expresses and continues the characteristic life of each, but henceforth in unity rather than separation. That is, the presbyters of the S.I.U.C. chosen for the purpose of representing that Church and its ministry, should co-operate in the ordination or ministerial commission bestowed on the bishops of the United Church. Such ordination would, in the case of those already Anglican bishops, be by the hands of such S.I.U.C. presbyters only seeing that they already possessed Anglican orders and jurisdiction corresponding thereto. But in the case of S.I.U.C. presbyters raised to the episcopate, and of all future candidates for the episcopate in the already United Church, the ordination would be by bishops and selected presbyters acting jointly, in keeping with the principles of the two constituent Churches, if not of the primitive form of the episcopate to which both claim to trace back their spiritual lineage of principle.

This is what real equality (as laid down in the resolutions of the 1919 Assembly) between the uniting Churches demands. In this way, too, the difficulty of "further ordination" would be resolved, equality being applied all round or re-

ciprocally as between those Churches. There is little doubt, too, that those desirous of entering the United Church's ministry from outside would also gladly accept the joint or twofold form of conferring ordination or ministerial commission of the new or union type—one more fully catholic and constitutional than any already existing—as that proper to the new union type of Church organization which it is the aim of the uniting Churches to inaugurate for India and ultimately for modern Christendom.

Thus the difficulty which has been felt to arise touching the external relations of the future South Indian Church—episcopal, presbyterian, and congregational in its balanced union of principles hitherto existing more or less apart—receives its most equitable and catholic or *inclusive* solution through a fresh application of the fundamental principle of equality to the matter of ordination within the United Church itself, or in the very act of union between the component elements. If bishops and presbyters (in the first instance those of the S.I.U.C.) both co-operate in ordinations alike to the episcopate and presbyterate of the United Church, then there will be such equality of treatment that there will be no room left for "conscientious scruples" arising in any congregation of *either line of tradition*, within that Church, as regards the exercise of his ministry by any of the ministers, for none will be likely not to "avail himself of the liberty" to receive "a full commission" inclusive of the sort which hitherto he had not received.

Such an inclusive method of ordination, I repeat, and it alone, satisfies the preliminary condition that episcopacy, and no particular interpretation of the historic episcopate, be demanded from any one on either side. It and it only, *can be accepted* without scruple by those who hold the most different views embraced within the existing Churches as to the grace of episcopal ordination, in addition to the view held in common as to its practical value in respect of unity, both local and world-wide, and of historic continuity to that

end. For each would be able to feel his own conviction as to the theology of the matter *to be safeguarded by one or other*, if not both, of the Church's organs of ordination, viz., bishops and presbyters. It would only be the more negative aspect of the positive conviction, held conscientiously on either side, that would be discountenanced or ignored by the conjoint method of ordination to the episcopate in the United Church in South India, which only adds something of fulness to the representative character of the rite, as compared with existing usage elsewhere. For no member or congregation of the United Church is entitled, even under the constitution as so far agreed on, to an exclusive view as to the nature of Anglican ordination to the episcopate, as though through it alone grace could be counted on in connection with the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. Such a view is implicitly discountenanced in the following sections of the Joint Findings:—

(a) First Preliminary Report, Sec. II¹

(b) Second " " " " IV. 1, 3 (the ministry of the Church would not all have episcopal orders, yet would all be "equally eligible as members of all Councils" which implies like spiritual grace). Compare First Preliminary Report III. 1. c, the S.I.U.C. condition *re-* recognition as ministers which the above seems to meet.

¹ Sec. II reads

"We place on record

That both in the Anglican Church and in the South India United Church, ordination is held to convey a commission to minister in the Universal Church of God and not simply in a local area or a particular community;

That in ordination God speaks through the Church and gives special grace for the ministry."

*"III.

1. EQUALITY OF MINISTRY

The S.I.U.C. requires in ordination:—

a.	x	x	x	x	x
b.	x	x	x	x	x

(c) Resolution of the Third Meeting, "III. Confirmation"¹ where the grace implied in admission to Holy Communion throughout the Church is recognised as safeguarded by the S.I.U.C. "service of admission to full membership" and not only by "confirmation" in the Anglican form. (This appears to be a very significant recognition in its bearing on the argument).

(d) Third meeting, "VI. Intercommunion".²

All these passages, as well as the general aspects of the reports when taken together, seem clearly to imply that the grounds for reservation on the Anglican side touching the problem left open for further consideration³ (Third Meeting, VII) as to the "Ministry of the Church", can in consistency be only those of Church order rather than ministerial grace, whether for Word or Sacrament. Were it otherwise the conditions laid down at the end of the section on "Equality of Ministry" in the First Preliminary Report, III. (1),— where the ministry of ministers (presbyters) is defined to include that of the sacrament, c (3)⁴— and apparently agreed to in the Second Preliminary Report, IV. (compare "Intercommunion", paragraph 2, on occasional communion in certain non-episcopal Churches outside the United Church, with the sacramental implication) would in fact not be conceded but evaded at a point most vital for the wider possibilities of unity, for the sake of which the concessions on the S.I.U.C. side are largely being made.

c. The prayer for the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands of the ministers (presbyters).

The commission given in ordination is a commission—

- (1) to pastoral work and oversight of the Church;
- (2) teaching;
- (3) to administer sacraments."

¹ See Chapter IV, Sec. III.

² See Chapter IV, Sec. V.

³ See Chapter IV, Sec. VI (ii) and the sub-paragraph next following.

⁴ See Footnote in this Appendix (C) on "Equality of Ministry".

To sum up, then, my considered opinion is that the fulfilment of the condition laid down by the S.I.U.C. from the first, and on the basis of which all later findings have apparently proceeded, ought to be insisted on in spirit and in total effect, as well as in letter (as seems agreed to in para IV of the Second Report), that this bears directly on the reserved cases in para VII of the Third Report: and that the best and most consistent way, in keeping with the general principle of "absolute equality of the ministry . . . of the uniting Churches", viz., an episcopal and non-episcopal (or presbyterial) one, would be to reconsider and amend, by an added safeguard on the score of equality, the resolution that "after union all ordinations shall be by bishops", i.e., bishops *only*, in the case of the "consecration of bishops". As argued above, the conjunction of presbyters in this case also, as in ordination of presbyters, would not detract from the significance of the service, considered as an act of Church order, but would rather add to its authority, and this is the only light in which the service can be made binding in a Church uniting the traditions of the Churches in question, as of "other branches of the Catholic Church" with which they "are now in communion" and desire so to remain.

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Yours sincerely,

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APPENDIX D

LAY CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER¹ A CONGREGATIONALIST POINT OF VIEW

The chief objections to lay celebration revealed in the correspondence referred to and elsewhere may be summarised roughly as follows:—

- (i) It is only a principle of order and not of faith, so need not be pressed if some are opposed to it.
- (ii) It empties regular ordination of most, if not all of its significance. The need could be met by an 'auxiliary ministry'.
- (iii) It tends to obscure the important conception of the Church Universal.

1. In a valuable Memorandum on this subject, my revered teacher, Dr. Garvie, writes:

6 (a) In the report submitted to the 6th Assembly (of the Congregational Union of England and Wales) last May, the authors of a Re-union Scheme for the Church of England and the Evangelical Free Churches, presented for the consideration of the Churches by the Joint Conference of Anglicans and Free Church men, meeting at Lambeth Palace, the following statement appears: 'Our ministers are ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. It is, therefore, the privilege and the duty of ministers to administer the sacraments, but in the same way as baptism may be administered by the laity, so we should emphatically hold that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper may be administered by a responsible layman commissioned by the Church itself.' (N.B. In Congregationalism the Church is the local congregation).

(b) In dealing with the ministry of the laity this same report on defining the functions states: "In accordance with

¹ H. C. Lefever—Published by the Christian Literature Society for India—see Chapter V, 'The Oecumenical Church of the future'.

the practice of many of our Churches we should desire to add the words 'and to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper where commissioned by the local Church.' "

(c) In the report on the same subject of the Baptist Church Council it is stated: Baptists do not believe that such ordination confers a priesthood other than that already possessed by all believers, and they regard as fully valid the ministry of any Christian man or woman whom the Christian community may invite to preach, to administer the Sacraments and to discharge any other ministerial duty.

(d) In the report on these replies from the Free Churches received by the Federal Council these two statements are thus summarised: 'Both the Baptist Union Council and the Congregational Union Assembly take exception to the restriction of the administration of the Sacraments to the ordained ministry. While recognising that such restriction should be the normal practice, they insist that, as a recognition of the priesthood of all believers, a responsible lay person may, when there is good reason, be authorised by the Church (i.e., the local congregation) to administer the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.'

'As general principles (continues Dr. Garvie), I agree with the contentions of the Congregational Union Assembly and the Baptist Union Council because:—

(a) Such a question in my judgment belongs to *Church Order* in which uniformity is not necessary to unity, but there should be adaptation to local conditions or special circumstances, and not to the common Christian *faith*, about which even there must be some liberty of interpretation.

(b) In any scheme of reunion, each of the uniting Churches should have liberty to preserve, as far as it is at all possible, its continuity in any practice to which it has been led by its experience to attach value, and the abandonment of which would be felt as a loss.

Might I suggest that the principle adopted as regards the equal status of all ministers of the uniting Churches ordained

as ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the South India Scheme should be extended to cover any recognised lay ministry, and that it be left to the United Church after the prescribed period to reconsider this matter also? By that time it might be hoped the practical need (and therefore the good reason, see Sect. 3. d) of this provision might have passed and I certainly would not imperil union to assert an abstract principle which as I have indicated in (a) above, belongs not to *faith* but to *order*. It is a Congregational practice which is involved, not a principle which has found universal acceptance: and even if Anglicans are not prepared to make the concession referred to above, I should, if my judgment carry any value, advise Congregationalists not to imperil the Union, for which there is so clamant a need, by insistence on this demand.'

Dr. Garvie's views, then, are that while it would be a pity to lose a practice to which Baptists and Congregationalists have been accustomed and to which they have been led by their experience to attach value, the matter is really only one of Church Order and so not of the first importance; therefore, we should not imperil Church Union by insistence on this demand.

Views expressed by several other Congregationalists, however, indicate that in their opinion lay celebration is a good deal more than an 'abstract principle of order'. It may be readily admitted that the principle is an abstract one in the sense that it is not often explicitly in the minds of the average Congregationalist, but that, I think, is because the battle over the priesthood of all believers has been won in their Church and where there is no opposition, convictions tend to stagnate into platitudes. As soon as the principle is challenged, however, the spirit of their fathers which is within them 'begins to mutiny against this (threat of) servitude' I think that this may be seen in the 'crescendo' which seems to mark the three expressions of the demand for lay celebration in the reports quoted by Dr. Garvie. The Congrega-

tional Union Assembly adopts the view (albeit 'emphatically') that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper '*may be administered* by a responsible layman commissioned by the Church itself'. Therefore, in accordance with the 'practice of many of our Churches' the Assembly states we should *desire to add* the words 'and to administer the Sacrament, etc.'. The Baptists say they regard as 'fully valid' the ministry of a duly commissioned layman. In the report based on these replies we read 'They (The C.U. and B.U.) *insist* that, *as a recognition of the Priesthood of all Believers*, a responsible layman may be authorised, etc.' What is taken normally (for granted) as an abstract principle of order, is seen, especially in contact with other views, to be a vital principle of *faith*—faith, that is, in the operation of the Holy Spirit in every congregation of believers. One of the best known Congregational Pastors, the Rev. R. W. Thompson of Bristol, writes: 'We feel it is dangerously *wrong* to limit the operation of the Holy Spirit.' It is not a mere matter of order like the question of vestments or seating arrangements in church or whether prayers should be read or extempore, nor even, to give less frivolous examples, like questions of organisation and Church discipline. To my mind, it is the *restriction* to duly ordained men of the right to celebrate that is an abstract principle of order. Such restriction is defended by even Catholics and High Anglicans today chiefly on the ground that it has been shown to be a 'good *general* rule'. It is the insistence on the possibility of lay celebration that is *concrete*, for it has due regard for the particularity of the concrete situation. It does not become 'abstract' simply because 'we preserve the right in theory rather than use it very much in practice' (Dr. Peel). The fact that it has never or only rarely been required proves only that the appropriate concrete situation does not frequently occur. The abstract nature of this restriction is seen by Principal Lofthouse when he writes: 'It has at best the justification of assisting the ends of good order. But if it is secure order, plainly it must

serve the ends of order and cannot limit or condition them. And where it is clear that order demands something else, the rule must be modified.'

It is because he sees that not only a rule of order but also one of faith is involved that President Whale writes: 'This legitimate possibility is one to which Congregationalists do not often resort, but it is clearly something they cannot give up, in principle at any rate, without abandoning their very *raison d'être*.' What is this *raison d'être*? It is well expressed by President Schwartz of the Pacific School of Religion, California: 'All Congregational Churches unite in the belief that their contribution to the Church Universal is that the living stream in the body of believers constitutes a true and adequate human part of that succession which represents the outgoing of the grace of God through Christ. We do not care to relinquish this great truth or the practices which appropriately express it.' Therefore, we believe, as Dr. Walter Horton of Oberlin writes: 'The real ordaining authority is the Spirit which indwells the whole body of Christ, both clerical and lay. There is no absolute distinction but only a relative distinction between laity and clergy and thus there is no function of the clergy which a layman may not, in principle, perform,—even the rite of Christian marriage, were he to obtain due secular authorisation and special consent of the congregation.' Among the numerous expressions of Congregational and other Free Church opinions before me on this subject, I find only one dissentient voice. This is by the Rev. H. P. Douglass, Secretary of the Commission for the study of Christian Unity set up by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Mr. Douglass writes: 'I think the priesthood of all believers is a principle of Congregationalism, but the celebration of the Lord's Supper by laymen is not. Other denominations, just as strong as we are on the priesthood of all believers, do not find it necessary to create exceptions and, consequently, do not erect the principle into an obstacle of union'. I think Mr. Douglass'

point here would be a telling one if we were considering only union with other non-episcopal bodies. With them there would be no danger of the formal principle of the priesthood of all believers being overlooked. Unfortunately, we cannot feel the same where union with episcopal brethren is concerned. Bishop Palmer well indicates the danger when he writes: 'When this rule (or restriction to priests of the right to celebrate) had been continuously observed in the "Great Church" and amongst "heretics" for many centuries, people came to suppose that a bishop or presbyter ordained by a bishop was necessary to the Sacrament, was one of the conditions which must be fulfilled or the Eucharist would not take place. I myself think that this was just an instance of the habit of supposing that what has always been *must* be. But *millions of Christians today*, like millions of their predecessors, *think otherwise* and believe that such a minister is one of the necessary conditions, or as they say, is requisite to the validity of the Sacrament. Unless some wonderful change happens, I do not expect that they will get this out of their heads for a long time. Meanwhile we who think that the experience of the non-episcopal Churches proves them to be wrong and shows that this rule about the celebrant is a rule of order and not a condition of the existence of the Sacrament, have got to consider the merits of this ancient rule as a rule of order.' It is because we of the non-episcopal Churches are conscious that God has given us this vocation of correcting a false but widespread conception of Episcopacy that we cannot give up our separate existence unless we can continue to exercise our vocation in the United Church. We believe that the inclusion of provision for Lay Celebration, with all due safeguards, will be one of the greatest contributions we can make to the Oecumenical Church. Our aim is not, as has sometimes been asserted, 'to secularise the ministry' but to emphasize the 'sanctity of the laity'. We want, as Principal Robinson of Overdale College writes: 'not less but more

priesthood, but we cannot have it unless we emphasize the principle of the priesthood of all believers. We ought to be able to say with Tertullian "Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus?" (Are not we laymen also priests?). If we are to say this we must admit the possibility, in cases of necessity, and under proper regulations, of the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by laymen.'

But if it is true that 'we shall lose something which historically the early Church possessed unless we permit occasional lay celebration, it is equally important that such lay celebration should be clearly exceptional and relatively rare' (Prof. G. E. Phillips).

II. This brings us to the question which we noted in dealing with Luther's teaching on the priesthood of all believers, namely, 'Is not such a formal commissioning for lay celebration practically the same as ordination? If it is not, what is there left in ordination?' Does it, as the Bishop of Gloucester asserts, 'make ordination a futility'? President Whale admits the force of this objection. 'If such formality is observed, it looks very much like ordination to a particular function for the time being; and, incidentally, a book like Hort's makes it quite clear that this is what happened in the early Church. Thus our question of Lay Celebration is largely a question of terms.' President Whale suggests, however, that the objection might be met on lines like this: 'In the interest of Congregational principles we must insist that the strength of our polity is not in the ordained layman, as it is with the Presbyterians, but in the believing congregation; we really do take the Priesthood of all believers seriously.' The point here is the same as that which we noticed previously when we indicated that Luther was not concerned with the personal aspect of ordination (as something belonging to the individual ordained), but rather with ordination as an 'act of the Church commissioning a man to act for the Church.' Principal Lefthouse agrees with President Whale that the matter is to a certain extent one

of words. He writes: 'Might not this permission be so formally given, with some ceremony, that it might be called ordination? If the Synod gave permission, why should not the Bishop (there will be bishops available in the new Church) perform the rite of ordination, but with the express proviso and understanding that the men so ordained should not exercise the full functions of a separated ministry, with all the "temporalities" that go therewith? At the bottom of the Catholic view, I take it, is the conviction that no one ought to lead in a service so important and sacred without the invocation of some special grace on him. I do not think we can find fault with this; then why not arrange for such invocation for every man who is set apart for that office; for he is set apart, though not to the full functions of the ministry.'

I think we have in that last phrase the clue to the solution of this problem. What is the thought in our minds if we say that Lay Celebration makes ordination a futility? We do not say that appointing a man as a 'lay preacher' makes ordination a futility. Why should we say that a commission to a layman to administer the Sacrament on a particular occasion does so? Now make ordination a futility if anyone could take upon himself the right to speak as the mouthpiece of the Church. That right can be given only by God through the Church. But we are not talking of any haphazard celebration or right of celebration by 'any Tom, Dick or Harry'. Let us not confuse the issue. We are considering only the possibility of called and chosen men being permitted by the Bishop or Diocesan Council to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on a particular occasion and under most extraordinary circumstances. This does not discredit regular ordination. The very fact that such extreme safeguards are demanded shows that the Church, in making this provision, realises it is dealing with a sacred gift. 'Give not that which is holy to the dogs'. I cannot rid myself of the feeling that at the back of the objection we are at present

considering is the idea that the administration of the sacraments is a *privilege* given to ordained men (in return, perhaps, for their special vows of devotion and self-dedication). Now this conception of authority to administer the sacraments as a personal privilege is fundamentally wrong. Some of the earliest liturgies reveal attempts to check this wrong conception in the first few centuries. Thus, the 'Liturgy of James' begins with a prayer by the priest confessing his unworthiness to celebrate the Eucharist. Once we get rid of this idea of a right which belongs to ordained men as a privilege they have received which belongs to them alone and which loses its value if shared with others, I believe we shall only rejoice when we see the blessings of the Holy Communion being made available to those who would be denied them were it not for special provision having been made. Our Lord's words 'Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us' (Luke IX. 50) find an application here.

The objection does carry weight, however, if the permission to laymen be given under any but extraordinary circumstances. Bishop Palmer rightly says that it was felt desirable in the early Church that the celebrant should resemble Christ as fully as possible. He should be, as was Christ, a shepherd, a teacher and an example of self-sacrifice. For this reason and because it tends to separate the Ministry of the Word from that of the Sacraments (cf. Luther), Congregationalists are on the whole opposed to the idea of an 'auxiliary ministry'. The only exception I have found is that of the Chicago Congregational Association which gives a licence for one year. This licensure, which is referred to as 'junior ordination', is granted by the Association, not by a local Church, and 'permits lay ministerial students or other persons deemed worthy of the privilege (sic) to exercise full ministerial functions including the administration of the sacraments'. As a matter of fact this 'junior ordination' is not the same as the auxiliary ministry proposed by some Methodists, as it does include the exercise of 'full ministerial functions'.

The differences will be evident when we compare the Chicago statement with the following from the Rev. W. Machin, Secretary of the North Indian '3rd Round Table Conference on Reunion Continuation Committee': 'My own opinion is that, though the present practice of the Methodist Church is to grant such licences under due safeguards, yet the best solution is to ordain men to administer the sacrament of Holy Communion, without insisting that they shall be wholly set aside to the work of the ministry. They would not take the responsibilities of the regular pastorate, and might in many cases earn their living as laymen. It seems to me more desirable that this should be done than that laymen, often already catechists or evangelists entirely occupied in Church work, should be licensed to celebrate Holy Communion.'

I am glad to note that this suggestion of Mr. Machin's is not regarded as very satisfactory by Principal Flew of Wesley House, who writes: 'I cannot think it would be a satisfactory solution if a new order of Presbyters should be appointed (without much pastoral charge, without the education and training necessary for the full work of the Ministry), whose main duty would be the celebration of the Eucharist. Ultimately this would involve a lowering of our ideal concerning the ministerial office'. I feel sure that Congregationalists would agree with this last remark. Their objection to such a ministry would be Luther's, already referred to. 'It is the Word' said Luther, 'which makes the Sacrament and transforms the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ—*accedat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum* (Augustine)'.

III. The first objection noted concerned lay celebration in its relation to the ordinary believer; the second its relation to the 'fully ordained' minister. The third objection is concerned with the possible effects of such a practice on our conception of the Church Universal. It is admirably expressed in a letter from the Archbishop of York: 'I think the danger is really great that (if lay celebration is permitted)

we may lose sight of the conception of the Lord's Supper as something that has its place only within and with reference to the life of the Universal Church, and that so far as it is thought of only as the worship of those gathered upon any particular occasion something of fundamental importance is lost which has consequences in the doctrine of the Eucharist in every direction. More particularly the whole connection between the Eucharistic Body and the Mystical Body which is the Church (without which the doctrine of the Real Presence tends to become magical and superstitious) is so obscured as to be totally lost.'

Now I do not think it can be denied that no branch of Christian theology has been so neglected as the doctrine of the 'Church, Ministry and Sacraments'. The reason for this neglect is no doubt historical, in the revolt from the double tyranny of a priestly hierarchy itself under the control of the State. While the historical circumstances that gave rise to the birth of Congregationalism as a separate denomination have passed away, there remains among many Congregationalists this prejudice against all things ecclesiastical. The complaint made by men like Dr. Stanley Jones that the Tambaram Conference emphasised the 'Church' instead of the 'Kingdom of God' is evidence of this prejudice. I am, however, convinced from my reading of Congregational history that the prejudice, which is one of the greatest hindrances to Church Union today, is based on a complete misunderstanding of Congregational Church polity. It is so often (as Dr. Garvie indicates in his Memorandum already quoted) that 'in Congregationalism the Church is the local Congregation', but this is a perfect example of a dangerous half-truth. Dr. Garvie's own view, which I am sure would be endorsed by all responsible Congregationalists today, is that 'the local Congregation can call itself *a Church*, possessing the privileges and discharging the functions of the Church only because it is the Church in local manifestation and activity. Its rights and duties are not derived from its sepa-

rateness but from its unity with all Christian congregations in the one Church'. If the statement 'the Church is the local Congregation' be taken in the sense that each congregation is 'autonomous and authoritative, possessed of the freedom necessary to the fulfilment of its mission and of the realisation of its ideals, endowed with all the legislative and administrative powers needed for the maintenance of order and the attainment of progress', we must accept the statement as true. But it is quite erroneous to assert that because the local congregation maintains with Paul (I Cor. IX. 19) and with Luther the 'Freedom of the Christian Man', it is devoid of any realisation of its fellowship with all other companies of men and women redeemed and sanctified by their relation to Jesus Christ. They are, as President Whale says, 'a truly High Church, as distinct from High Clerical party'. The founders of Congregationalism believed that their idea of a local congregation enjoying both the freedom of the Spirit from earthly rulers, whether of State or Church, and also the fellowship of the Spirit with all 'gathered Churches of believers' was in accordance with New Testament principles. Few scholars today would care to say which form of Church order is most truly 'in accordance with New Testament teaching', but the case for Congregational theory at its purest receives striking support from the great Anglican scholar Hort who says: 'It is important to notice that not a word in the Epistle (to the Ephesians) exhibits the one Ecclesia as made up of many Ecclesiae. To each local Ecclesia St. Paul has ascribed a corresponding unity of its own; each is a body of Christ and a sanctuary of God: but there is no grouping of them into partial wholes or into one great whole. The members which make up the one Ecclesia are not communities but individual men. The one Ecclesia includes all members of all partial Ecclesiae; but its relations to them all are direct, not mediate. It is true that, as we have seen, St. Paul anxiously promoted friendly intercourse and sympathy between the scattered Ecclesiae; but

the unity of the Universal Ecclesia as he contemplated it does not belong to this region: *it is a truth of theology and of religion, not a fact of what we call Ecclesiastical politics*. If, therefore, Congregationalists act in accordance with their own ideals, they will be fully conscious of their membership in that 'Church Universal which is a truth of theology and religion and not a fact of what we call ecclesiastical politics'. There will be, in that case, no danger of their losing sight of the conception of the Eucharist as 'something which has its place only within and with reference to the life of the Universal Church'. This will be the case whether the person asked to officiate has been formally ordained by the congregation and recognised by that fellowship of like-minded congregations which finds expression in the Denomination, or whether he has been specially commissioned either by the Denomination or by the particular gathering of believers concerned, to perform the rite on that particular occasion.

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The examination of historical and current opinion on this subject has convinced me that, in making provision for Lay Celebration in extraordinary circumstances and with all due safeguards, Congregationalists preserve a principle not only of order but of faith. Should this be pressed in the face of the fears and genuine difficulties of our Anglican brethren—so clearly expressed in the correspondence I have had before me? The most helpful answer to this question which I have encountered is that given by an Anglican, Principal Gibson of Ridley Hall, in his article in the *Congregational Quarterly* on the Ministry and Sacraments, and with his words I conclude:

'There is a demand from the Congregationlists that their old custom of allowing very carefully selected non-ordained men, if authorised by the local Church so to do, to administer the sacraments (when no regular minister is available), should be permitted in the United Church. For the moment this problem, with others, is holding up the negotiations.

But in any case, it is a fact that, starting from the Reformation, the Free Churches have proved for themselves and to others, by the test of experience, that a ministry of the word and sacrament non-episcopally ordained can be perpetuated through the centuries and form the basis for spiritual, missionary and world-wide Churches, numerous and not less effective than those of an episcopal order.

We cannot minimize the importance of this great discovery, which means no less than the emancipating of the Church at large from the bondage of a fixed idea with regard to the nature of the Church, and liberating it into the greater truth that episcopacy is only the first approximation to the final will of God for His Church. It implies that the principle of grace, while indeed working through episcopacy, is yet not fettered to it, but is both able to, and by God's action does in fact, work through non-episcopal channels. This great discovery, I say, one slowly made through centuries and substantiated by the presence of God's grace, must not be jettisoned even for the sake of the urgency of unity. Granted that the historic episcopate is to be maintained, so also must the equally vital truth that in the last resort sacraments are independent of a special ministry. Those who read the Archbishop of York's charge in November, 1928, when Bishop of Manchester, will know that he realises this and only objects to acting according to it on the ground or order:

'There is nothing, so to speak, in the nature of things which makes it impossible for any but priests to celebrate and administer a real sacrament.'

This statement of principle, be it noted, covers even the usage for which the South Indian Congregationalists are pleading, as allowable, in the exceptional cases where no regularly ordained ministry at all is available and the local Church longs for Holy Communion.

'And here I cannot but see, in connection with the "constitutionalising" of the United Church of South India,

the opportunity of consolidating two great historic experiences. Grace operates through an episcopal ministry, it also operates apart from it. By having a general system of "constitutional episcopal ordination", and yet at the same time recognizing the possibility of and providing for the occasional exercise of a non-ordained but locally sanctioned sacramental ministry, the Church can be loyal to earlier experience and yet pass definitely from the exclusiveness of fixed ideas into the freedom of free ideas. She will thus honour God's continued revelation to His Church. If, on the other hand, this is not done, I have little doubt but that in a few years the meaning of the temporary recognition of non-episcopal orders, during a transition period, will be misconstrued into "a lapse from wisdom" which happily need trouble the Church no more ("Let bygones be bygones!!"); and one of God's greatest lessons to His Church will have been unlearned, the tyranny of the fixed ideas will once again reassert itself, and the way will have to be prepared again for a new and necessary reformation, through which God will attempt afresh to lead His Church into the breadth and depth, the joy and the appreciation, the effectiveness and creativity, of the ideas that are free'.

APPENDIX E

LAY ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER¹

A METHODIST POINT OF VIEW

Recent discussions in Church Councils and the request of the Assembly of the S.I.U. Church have made it clear that a section of Congregationalists in India is not prepared to treat the question of Lay Administration merely as a matter of order or expediency. Here, a deep concern for certain doctrinal implications is held to be involved. The admirable monograph prepared by Dr. Lefever has shown that for many within his communion, the real importance of the practice lies not so much in its value for meeting immediate needs but rather in maintaining the doctrine of the Priesthood of all believers and hence in countering any tendency to a sacerdotal interpretation of the ministerial office.

It may not be out of place for a Methodist, in virtue of the mediating position occupied by his Church, to call for a re-examination both of evidence and conclusion.

I propose to attempt this task along the following lines :

(a) The consideration of further evidence from the Congregationalist tradition.

(b) An evaluation of the significance of the doctrine of the Priesthood of all believers.

(c) An attempt to allay the fear that the Anglican repudiation of Lay Administration necessarily implies a sacerdotal view of the ministry.

(a)

With the scrupulous fairness that marks his book, Dr. Lefever recognises that many modern Congregationalists regard Lay Administration much as do the Methodists, as

obtaining in the realm of order only, but, as we have noted, believes that the main trend is to see in it an important principle of faith. My own experience of Congregationalism both in India and Britain, leads me to suggest that this view is not so strong as Dr. Lefever's conclusion would maintain. To support this I bring here two pieces of evidence.

Firstly, in the meeting of the committee appointed to consider the whole question of Lay Administration, it emerged that there has never been any strong desire for this practice in any of the councils of the S.I.U. Church and that such requests for local authorisation as have been made, have in almost every case been due to the same circumstances as have led to the licensing of the Methodist pastors. The actual facts do not suggest that Indian Congregationalism has been conscious that a vital principle of faith is at stake. The question of principle seems to have arisen not positively, within Congregationalism herself but negatively as Congregationalism faces union with a Church suspected of sacerdotal tendencies.

Secondly, I have been given a full account of a meeting held recently in Cambridge when Dr. Newton Flew and the Rev. Frank Whittaker of the Methodist Church discussed the whole question of Lay Administration as it affects the scheme of Union in South India, with three eminent Congregationalist leaders, Professor C. H. Dodd, Principal J. S. Whale and Mr. Bernard Manning. The survey of the theological principles involved concluded in the most impressive unanimity and in the course of discussion the following important points emerged.

(i) The insistence on the right of laymen to celebrate the Sacraments is quite a modern development in Congregationalism. According to the classical document of Congregationalism, the Savoy Declaration, Lay Administration is a *schismatic act*. 'Where no properly appointed Church officer is present, the seals may not be administered.' This

¹ A. Marcus Ward (Christian Literature Society for India): See Part II.

means quite clearly that the Sacraments may not be *regularly* administered by any but the properly ordained ministry. At the same time the Declaration goes on to add that if the seals should be otherwise administered, it does not imply that the Sacrament is *invalid*. This, as we shall see later, approximates to the position held by other Churches. It was pointed out that early Congregationalists in prison, who had been ordained to the pastoral charge of congregations, would not baptise children because they did not consider themselves properly authorised to exercise their ministry in prison.

(ii) The Evangelical Revival resulted in a large number of small congregations with no properly constituted ministers to administer the Sacraments. Thus arose the practice of Lay Administration. Even though it became a practical necessity for laymen to preside at the Sacraments, if they were to be administered at all, and the local Church was required to ask for and get permission for them to do so, this practice was a source of trouble to the 'Dissenting Deputies'.

(iii) It is not true to say that the practice of Lay Administration is a matter of principle in Congregationalism. What was an 18th century necessity should not be regarded as a 16th century principle. There are many Congregationalists who wish to get rid of this unfortunate necessity. There is a wider heresy of modern Congregationalism which holds that the principle of the 'Gathered Church' exhausts the doctrine of the Church. There is need to return to the classical teaching of the Church as represented by the Savoy Declaration.

(iv) Although the Priesthood of all believers has always been regarded as a vital Reformation principle, in practice each Church has had its ordained ministry. This does not imply that the layman is not of his own nature competent to administer. He is not *ipso facto* disqualified. Every Christian by baptism is a sharer in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. No member is without them. But for the due ordering and building up of the Church, God has given a ministry

with specialised gifts. This does not exhaust the gifts of the Spirit. Every member may be regarded as a potential minister and in *case of need* any member is able to exercise the functions of the ministry.

At the conclusion of the discursion Dr. Flew referred to Canon Lacey's judgment that we 'cannot state dogmatically that where there is no priest there is no sacrament' and adduced other evidence from leading High Churchmen that the validity of the Sacrament does not posit the indispensability of the priesthood. He suggested that if some theological statement were included in the Scheme of Union making clear this Anglican position which repudiates any exclusive doctrine of the indispensability of the priesthood and thus allaying the Congregational fear of the sacerdotal interpretation of the present rule which restricts administration to the ordained ministry, Congregationalists might agree to withdraw their request and accept the scheme for the sake of union. This suggestion met with the cordial approval of the three Congregational leaders present at the discussion.

(b)

The doctrine of the Priesthood of all believers is of such vital moment to the whole Church that every consideration must be given to those communions which believe that they have a peculiar trust in maintaining both the doctrine and the practice, and also to measures taken to this end within the various traditions. It is clear from Dr. Lefever's book that some Congregationalists regard Lay Administration as an important, even necessary element in the wider doctrine. As has been said, there are other communions with whom Congregationalists are in the fullest sympathy which, while holding tenaciously to the doctrine of the Universal Priesthood, find Lay Administration neither necessary nor even helpful. Hence we must consider very carefully what is and what is not involved in the doctrine; whether the Universal Priesthood derives its essential meaning from the Sacra-

ments; whether *Lay* administration is any more necessary to the due order of administration than '*Priestly*' administration.

I have recently received a letter from Dr. Newton Flew in which he tells me that he has been giving particular attention to 'the so-called theological issue involved in the connection of Lay Celebration of the Holy Communion with the doctrine of the Priesthood of all believers'. He points out that of course the doctrine is strongly expressed in the earlier and decisive writings of Luther and then discloses the extraordinary fact that as to the other great reformers, he can find hardly any reference in Zwingli and only one in Calvin. We have the authority of the great Professor Wernle for saying that it is most astonishing that Calvin laid so little stress on the doctrine of the Priesthood of all believers. It seems likely that the reason for the comparative silence of the later Reformers lies in the excesses of the Ana-Baptists. The writer on the Ana-Baptists in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (Vol. i, p. 407a) points out that the fine Ana-Baptists of Zurich broke with Zwingli over the doctrine of the Church. They considered that the visible Church should consist only of Saints, whereas Zwingli held the view, both Catholic and Lutheran, that the Church should also include the imperfect Christian in its membership. The actual break with Zwingli came when the Ana-Baptist laymen administered the Sacraments. Thus it appears that historically the claim that laymen should administer the Holy Communion implies a particular doctrine of the Church as the Communion of 'Saints' which few modern advocates of Lay Administration are prepared to maintain.

The classic doctrine of the Priesthood of all believers means something quite different from the right of every layman to administer the Sacraments. To use it in this way is to confuse the issues and imperil the true doctrine. When Luther first formulated the doctrine he meant something quite different from the common modern parody. The true

doctrine stresses firstly, the priesthood of the whole Church in its corporate meaning, and secondly, the potential qualification of any member of the Church to be chosen and authorised to act on behalf of the universal priesthood of all members. The present application of the doctrine, by some circles in South Indian Congregationalism, to the administration of the Sacraments, is, as we shall see, in danger of implying the very magical and sacerdotal views which the protagonists are at pains to combat.

Unfortunately the doctrine of the Priesthood of all believers is not very securely based on actual texts of Scripture. We have to turn to the general sense of Biblical, especially New Testament, teaching to reach the true meaning. The best account of the Scriptural teaching known to me is that of William Burt Pope, still the greatest systematic theologian produced by Methodism. He takes up the main passages into the following definition:

'The ancient Temple, with its typical offerings, having been done away in Christ, an entire change takes place in the ministry of the Congregation. There is one High Priest who hath passed into the Heavens; the whole earth is a spiritual temple; and all its living members are a sacrificing priesthood. Whatever the New Testament says concerning sacrifice in the new worship either has reference to the priestly character of all true believers, or is figuratively applied to the functions of the ministry. The universal priesthood of Christianity is, however, only the New Testament fulfilment of the typical priesthood of the entire congregation of Israel. Its fundamental principle is most important as teaching the true dignity and essential equality of individual Christians, and the corporate sanctity of the Church whose inalienable prerogatives are represented by its ministry. But it has been perverted to the undermining of a distinct ministerial order and, therefore, requires qualifications and guards'.

Dr. Pope then goes on to justify this by Scripture. The

word spoken to the ancient people 'Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation' (Ex. xix. 6) is the foundation of the doctrine of the Universal Priesthood. Israel after the flesh was separated from the nations as much as the Levites were separated from the rest of Israel. So the spiritual Israel, in union with Christ, are unitedly and singly taken out of the world and in them the 'type' is fulfilled. All the Apostles rejoice in this truth. Its influence pervades their language. John feels it when he says, 'Ye have an unction from the Holy One, (I John ii. 20) and James when he calls religion a *Threskeia*—alluding to a ceremonial service (James i. 26-7). Paul and Peter both call upon believers to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable (Romans xii. 1) and to regard their whole life as spent in a spiritual house where they offer up spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ; their devotions, good works and alms-givings being their priestly oblations (I Peter ii. 5ff).

The doctrine as thus established certainly guards against any sacerdotal abuses. It must itself be guarded against another abuse almost equally perilous to the well-being of the Church—that there is no place in the Church for a separated ministry. It is true that there is in the new service no separated *priestly* order, as is held by some Christians. One is our High Priest, even Jesus Christ, and we all are priests through fellowship with Him, presenting our spiritual sacrifice through Him as our Representative. The sacerdotal theory of the Christian ministry, condemned by the whole message of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is dishonouring to our Ascended Lord. We have an altar, indeed, but that altar is the Cross which He has consecrated that it may sanctify all our gifts (Hebrews xiii. 10). We all have it. We all surround it. We all may habitually minister before it. Yet, on the other hand, there is in the New Testament a separated *ministry*, representing the universal priesthood. The 'We' of the liturgies recognises that many of the offices of worship are more or less common to all believers; yet

provision is rightly made for the responsible presentation of the Church's religious acts of service and for the discharge of her teaching function. It is worthy of note that after Peter and Paul have bidden all believers to present their living sacrifice, they both go on immediately and in the same context, to speak of the various separated ministries (Romans xii. 1 ff; I Peter ii. 5 ff). Moreover, the epistle to the Philippians illustrates the sense in which the Apostles made use of sacerdotal terms (Philippians i. 1; ii. 17; iv. 18). At the beginning of the Epistle, the Bishops and Deacons are called representatives of the people. In the middle, Paul speaks of the apostolic devotion of his own life as a priestly libation on the sacrifice of their faith. At the close their money offerings are described as a priestly offering, acceptable and well-pleasing to God.

Thus Dr. Pope is able to conclude. 'The ancient Levitical service supplied figures for the new ministry; but the new ministry was an ordained function equally defined with that of the old priesthood which it superseded.'

The essential scriptural position here outlined has been admirably re-stated in the section affirming loyalty to the principles of the Reformation, of the recent Methodist declaration on the nature of the Church. This is particularly worth quoting since the statement as a whole, while representing the Methodist view, received during its drafting the cordial approval of the late Professor J. M. Creed and Professor C. H. Dodd, representing the Anglican and Congregationalist viewpoints respectively. It is also of value as indicating that in the mind of Luther the Universal Priesthood did not depend on the freedom of any layman to administer the Sacrament but on the free access to God of all believers.

'The Protestant Reformation was primarily an appeal to the revealed will of God against the corruptions which had infected the practice of the Church in the course of many centuries. It was a rediscovery of the heart of the Gospel.

This appeal to the Word of God against practical abuses determined the emphasis of the Reformation message, and led to a further appeal against unevangelical accretions in the realm of doctrine (It) laid a new stress on the New Testament teaching as to the priesthood of all believers. The God who had manifested Himself in Christ was accessible to every believing man. Again by this rediscovery were dispelled the popular beliefs as to the power of Pope and priesthood to bar the way to God. "At the Eucharist", says Luther, "we all kneel beside our priest or minister and around him, men and women, young and old, master and servant, mistress and maid, all holy priests together, sanctified by the blood of Christ, we are there in our priestly dignity. We do not let the priest proclaim for himself the ordinances of Christ, but he is the mouthpiece of us all, and we all say it with him in our hearts with true faith in the Lamb of God who feeds us with His Body and Blood." The restatement of the central gospel at the time of the Reformation included the revivification of the New Testament doctrine of the Church. The appeal to the revealed will of God as contained in the Scriptures proved that the principle governing any definition of the limits of the Church must be the Gospel, the Word of God which it proclaims and which ever creates it anew. The Word of God is primarily Jesus Himself, the Incarnate Lord. This evangel is proclaimed and heard in the congregation. It is also set forth in the Sacraments, where it is the visible Word. The Sacraments are the sacraments of the Gospel. The essential thing in them is not what we say and do in them but what God in Christ says and does in them. Accordingly, the Church on earth, as the Augsburg Confession defined it, is "the congregation of saints in which the Gospel is purely taught and the Sacraments rightly administered". By "the congregation of saints" the Reformers means the whole company of believers. The presence of hypocrites or unbelievers in the Church does not destroy its true character as the community of those who have faith.

Luther saw as early as 1513 that this was what St. Paul meant by "saint" and regarded it as the living fellowship indwelt by the spirit of God "where one labours for another as one member in the body for another".

The conception of the Church as the people of God is one that is precious to us all. It is a conception fully maintained in the present Scheme of Union. We must not forget that this royal priesthood, this holy people set apart for the worship of God, is also a witnessing people. From Isaiah onwards the priestly character of Israel has become mediatorial. The elect people has the responsibility of witnessing to God's redeeming power. They are to be a shining light attracting the Gentiles to seek a share in their privileges.

In I Peter and Revelation the Old Testament idea is linked with the sacrifice of Christ and the figure of a living people, thus gaining a fuller and deeper meaning in the new context. The people of God offer sacrifice but the sacrifice is Christ's. They are also the temple in which the sacrifice is offered. Christ offers His sacrifice in the Church—this is the internal character of the Church. Externally, in relation to the world which, though outside the Church, is potentially of the Church in virtue of Christ's Headship of humanity, the Church shows forth Christ to the world. It is, like Christ Himself, the Light of the world; the Body of Christ lifted up and drawing all men unto Him.

In this double sense, the essential work of the Church is to share in the priestly work of Christ. The priestly function of the Church is the earthly counterpart of Christ's heavenly High Priesthood. Thus the sacrifice of the Holy Communion is the earthly counterpart of the heavenly and eternal offering of the ascended Christ. His is the offering of a will in perfect filial obedience to the Father. Ours is the offering of the imperfect life of the whole people of God, in union with Christ's own sacrifice.

This sacrifice is focussed in the Holy Communion which thus becomes the central act of the worship of the Church.

By calling it central we do not mean that it is isolated. Ideally every activity of the Church and her members is an act of worship and sacrifice—a moment in the whole Christian life which is a life of worship. Just in so far as the ordinary activities of human life are caught up into that life, the redemptive work of Christ in and through His Church is being fulfilled.

The Holy Communion is the act of the whole Church, and has so been regarded at least from the second century. Our liturgies going back to the third century embody the same complex of ideas thus summed up by Fr. Gregory Dix: 'In the Eucharist the Church is both priest and victim like her master, offering herself as a sacrifice for God for a savour of sweetness. . . . In virtue of His unity with the Church, Christ offers the Church which is His mystical body in union with His pleading of His own sacrifice at the heavenly altar. . . . The Eucharist is emphatically a sacrifice offered by the Church in its corporate unity, and not a sacrifice offered by a celebrant on behalf of the Church.

Herein surely lies the clue to the problem we are seeking to solve. The Laity is not the aggregate of laymen—it is the LAOS, the *whole* people of God. The collective term is primary. The layman is one who is a member of the holy and elect laity which term strictly includes the ministry also. The 'Priesthood of the Laity' is the priesthood of the whole body derived from the sole High Priesthood of Christ. The individual officiates as minister, firstly of Christ, and secondly of His Body the Church, never in his own right or in a right conferred by Christ independently of the whole body.

* * * *

The truth seems to be that the doctrine of the Priesthood of all Believers as it is found in the Bible, interpreted by the Reformers and generally accepted today, in no way precludes the existence of certain persons who are solemnly set aside by the whole Church to be their ministers in sacred

things and to represent the whole Church in some of her functions that may in a proper and Christian sense be called priestly. If any wish to demonstrate the contrary view, the burden of proof must be laid on them. Such a view would have to rest on certain historical New Testament judgments such as that the original unit is the local Church which can act independently of the other Churches.

In this connection Dr. Flew has informed me of an enquiry instituted by the Secretary of Faith and Order, soon after the Edinburgh Conference of 1937. Professor Hodgson asked a large number of theologians, representing all the great communions the world over, whether they would be prepared to nominate a single theologian who would be prepared to maintain that the original unit in the New Testament times was the local congregation. The only man whom any thought likely to champion this view was Dr. Albert Peel. However, the fact that he does not do so is demonstrated on p. 72 of his *Inevitable Congregationalism* where he endorses Dr. Forsyth's views (a) that the Church in a particular place is an outcrop in that place of the whole Church; (b) that, as an ambassador, the local Church is the representative of the whole Church.

The phrase 'ambassador' brings me to what I believe to be the crux of this particular problem. I have just been referring to a recent volume of 'popular' theology written for the laity of the Church of Scotland and which has received wide recognition as fairly representing the general Free Church emphasis. Here I can find only one reference to the doctrine of the Priesthood of all Believers and the context is very significant. Professor Riddel is writing of the urgent task of the Church to proclaim the Gospel, showing that the Church's Mission is vital to her life and this a matter not of arrogance but of obedience to her Lord. He quotes Emil Brunner:

'The Church exists by mission, just as a fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission there is no Church; and

where there is neither Church nor mission there is no faith. It is a secondary question whether by that we mean Foreign Missions, or simply the preaching of the gospel in the Home Church. Mission gospel preaching is the spreading out of the fire which Christ had thrown on earth. He who does not propagate this fire shows that he is not burning.'

Riddell then goes on to show that evangelism, in every aspect and by every member, ordained or lay, is vital to the Church; and concludes with this very important sentence:

'It is part of the Church's task and in it every Christian has a share, since each belongs, according to our Protestant belief, to the Priesthood of all believers.'

(c)

I have already quoted Canon Lacey as saying that we 'cannot state dogmatically that where there is no priest there is no sacrament'. Prominent Anglo-Catholics like the late Professor Goudge and the present Bishop of Oxford (Dr. Kirk) have expressed the same view, denying the indispensability of the priesthood for the validity of the Sacrament. I have recently had confirmation of this in a personal letter from another leader of English Catholicism, Principal A. A. Cock of York. He tells me that he has always held that when a Christian layman finds himself cut off from the ministries of the Church he may celebrate for his family and his group. This might not be regular but it certainly would not be invalid. Principal Cock adds that he has often discussed this with other Catholics, Anglican and Roman, and has never had his position denied.

Perhaps the most natural name to use in this connection is that of Dr. E. J. Palmer, once Bishop of Bombay, whose statements in *The Challenge of an Indian Experience* (see especially p. 26) have made him so eminently a bridge-builder for the consulting Churches. On the 29th June, 1933, in connection with the Centenary Celebrations of the beginning of the Tractarian Movement, Bishop Palmer

preached a sermon in Westminster Abbey in which he said, referring to the Eucharist:

'I will withstand anybody to the face who wishes to say that for this Sacrament, or for the forgiveness of sins, a priest is essentially and indispensably necessary. There is no evidence for that in the Bible, and there is much against it. At the same time, I will not cease to say that the Church was quite right in making the rule by which the celebration of the Eucharist is confined to the priest, a very good rule of order—probably the best that could be made—but not an essential condition of the celebration of the Sacrament.'

Commenting on this, in the paper I wrote preparatory to the meeting of the Committee in September, 1940, I asked, pointing to what seemed to me the crux of the whole matter:

'Are the Anglicans, both in India and at Lambeth, able to endorse what Bishop Palmer says here? If such a categorical statement could be made, a good deal of the prejudice of non-Anglican communions would be dispelled and, I believe, our particular issue would be settled as far as the negative aspect goes. And are we others, so soon as we are assured that no false doctrine of the indispensability of the ordained priesthood is thereby implied, prepared to accept administration by a duly ordained minister as not only the normal, but the constant, rule for the celebration of the Eucharist?'

I received my answer both in the discussions and the conclusions of that Committee. The statement not only answers the questions, but sets forth its answer in a positive reference to the sole High Priesthood of Christ, far more adequate to the needs of a living Church than any mere casual and temporary denial.

Dr. Palmer provides further satisfaction in his contribution to the 'Faith and Order' volume on 'The Ministry and Sacraments' when, as a representative Anglican, he dealt

with the question 'Who is the proper minister of the Eucharist?'. His contribution may be summarised thus:

We must begin with the New Testament evidence. Our Lord clearly charged the Apostles with the continuance of the Lord's Supper when He said: 'Do this in remembrance of me'. Those to whom those words were spoken were henceforth responsible for the regularity of the Sacrament. But having said so much we have no further direct evidence as to what regulations, if any, they made, defining who was to celebrate.

There is, however, certain indirect evidence. Thus Luke speaks of the breaking of the bread as the act of the whole congregation or of one member, Acts 20: 7, 11. Again, in Acts 2: 44ff. he attributes the bread breaking to all them that believed and in the Gospel he has already told of Jesus breaking it. In I Cor. 10: 16 the 'We bless/break' may refer to the Church as a Body, or to Paul and Sosthenes, or to Paul alone. I Cor. has no reference to Bishops and Elders. The whole evidence, argues Dr. Palmer, goes to show that in the Apostolic Age the Sacrament was regarded as the act of the whole congregation in which the celebrant provided the necessary hands and voice—a truth which has been maintained in all subsequent liturgies in which the minister says 'We'. This may diminish the importance of the celebrant, but it goes no further to tell who he is. The most remarkable feature of the New Testament evidence is the silence of the Pastoral Epistles on the subject. Could any Catholic Christian of a later day have written these letters without reminding Timothy and Titus how holy a man must be who has the awe-ful office of consecrating the elements 'at the Eucharist'? Thus even though we can prove that the Presbyters did celebrate we have no justification for saying that they *alone* did it.

Dr. Palmer concludes, therefore, that the probability is that it was not the laying on of hands *per se* that made a man the proper minister of the Eucharist, but that his

authorization in this way as a teacher of the Church made him the suitable person, at the Supper, to take the place of The Teacher. In any case, whatever regulation may have been given to or by the Apostles, or was later adopted by the Church, was a *rule of order*. Our Lord did not connect the Sacrament essentially with any minister. Rules were certainly adopted later but there is nothing essential about a rule of order.

Dr. Palmer concludes with the following clear and valuable definition of a 'Rule of order':

'It deals with something that must be ruled somehow, and rules it in a particular way, and this ruling excludes other ways, not because they are necessarily wrong, but because they are not the way prescribed. All agree that the restriction to ordained men is reasonable, expedient, and opportune, when made, and is likely to be the best for the reunited Church—but it remains a rule of order and is not an essential condition of the Sacrament. This is a matter of history and reason.'

Dr. Flew informs me that at a meeting of the group which prepared the main draft of the 'Outline of a Reunion Scheme', the late Professor Goudge read a paper in which he argued that it is very difficult to discover in the Catholic tradition the doctrine that a priest is always and everywhere indispensable for the Eucharist. From the point of view of an Anglo-Catholic, he claimed that the question should be settled by usage and custom extending back over many centuries.

This raises the whole question of how far fairly constant usage may be determinative for every part of the Church for all time. We all know what great store the Anglican Church sets on this, and having recognised and respected the principle in the matter of Episcopacy, we are asking comparatively little in joining to recognise Ordained Administration as the rule of order of the United Church.

We all recognise that the validity of the Sacraments is

not bound up with a particular theory of orders, or even with our special mode of authorisation. This is not questioned as far as two of the negotiating Churches are concerned, and what has been said above, and is implied in the Scheme, guarantees it for the Anglican Church.

When we recognise Ordained Administration as the rule of Order, we are committing ourselves to no new thing. This is already the *normal* rule in all the Churches. What we do hereby declare is that the regularity of the Sacraments depends on whether the celebrant has been authorised in accordance with the rules laid down and recognised by the living Church. We are fully safeguarded against the evils consequent on the sacerdotal position which stresses one particular manner in which this authority has been given. It seems to me incontrovertible that any fear of a sacerdotal interpretation of the rule of order in the Scheme is wholly ruled out by the additions suggested by the Lay Administration Committee.

