

**CHRISTIAN
BROTHERHOOD: A
LETTER TO THE
HON. HEMAN LINCOLN**

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Christian Brotherhood: A Letter to the Hon. Heman Lincoln by Baron Stow

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BARON STOW

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LETTER

TO THE

HON. HEMAN LINCOLN.

BY

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CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS,	PAGE 7
---------------------------------	-----------

I.

THE UNION THAT IS DESIRABLE,	21
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II.

CONSIDERATIONS THAT RENDER CHRISTIAN UNION DESIRABLE,	31
I. THE INJURIOUS EFFECT OF DIVISION UPON THE PIETY OF THE CHURCH,	35
II. THE INJURIOUS EFFECT OF DIVISION IN PREVERTING AND WASTING THE RESOURCES OF THE CHURCH,	58
III. THE INJURIOUS EFFECT OF DIVISION IN WEAKENING THE DEMONSTRATION IN FAVOR OF OUR RELIGION,	79

III.

SOME METHODS BY WHICH OUR OWN DENOMINA- TION MAY PROBABLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROMO- TION OF CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD,	110
I. WE MAY ENDEAVOR, CAREFULLY, TO DISPOSSESS OUR- SELVES OF THE SPIRIT OF SECT,	112

	PAGE
II. WE MAY CULTIVATE A HIGHER DEGREE OF PERSONAL HOLINESS,	117
III. WE MAY ILLUSTRATE BY OUR OWN PRACTICE THE GREAT PRINCIPLE, THAT THE WORD OF GOD IS THE SOLE AUTHORIZED STANDARD IN ALL MATTERS OF RELIGION, 124	124
IV. WE MAY CHEERFULLY SURRENDER EVERYTHING ADVERSE TO UNION, WHICH WE ARE NOT BOUND BY OUR ALLEGIANCE TO CHRIST TO RETAIN,	146
V. WE MAY CAREFULLY REFRAIN FROM EVERYTHING THAT MAY UNNECESSARILY TEND TO WIDEN THE BREACH AMONG CHRISTIANS, OR TEND TO PERPETUATE ITS CONTINUANCE,	150
VI. WE MAY COOPERATE WITH ALL CHRISTIANS IN EVERYTHING NOT INTERDICTED BY THE LAWS OF CHRIST,	170
VII. WE MAY ENCOURAGE A PACIFIC MINISTRY,	191
VIII. WE MAY PATRONIZE A PEACE-MAKING PIOUS,	202
IX. WE MAY IMPLORE A LARGER EFFUSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,	204

CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD.

TO THE HONORABLE HEMAN LINCOLN:

MY DEAR CHRISTIAN BROTHER,—

As I have a few thoughts upon an important subject which I wish to convey, in a familiar manner, to those Christian disciples by whose distinctive name we are both known, and to whom we sustain endeared relations, I venture respectfully to avail myself of the influence of your name as a valuable aid to their transmission.

I can think of no fitter medium. For nearly sixty years you have been attached by profession and by practice to the people called Baptists, and during that period you have never wavered from the great principles on which their churches have ever been "grounded and settled." Having been led to the cross for pardon, and introduced into the "household of faith," by that eminent servant of God, whose memory is so fragrant in

our American Zion, the Rev. Dr. Baldwin; and having enjoyed, through many years, not only the benefits of his instructive ministry, but the peculiar advantages of a confidential intimacy which death only could interrupt, you had the best of facilities for acquiring a thorough knowledge of Divine truth, and becoming intelligently established in those doctrines which are the believer's rock of strength. The result has been seen in your history, which, by the grace of God, has been happily protracted. You are understood to be now, at fourscore, what you was previous to your majority—a Baptist. As such, you are widely known, and as widely respected. Though you have out-lived whole generations, and though nearly all who knew you best have gone to their final home, yet the name of no other layman in our ecclesiastical connection is to-day familiar to so many ears, and dear to so many hearts, as the name you bear.

But it is not merely or chiefly the estimation in which you are held that prompts me to associate with your name this particular service. Having, for more than thirty years, been favored with your personal friendship, and also, as I believe, with your fraternal confidence, I have had ample opportunity to become acquainted with your opinions and feelings with respect to every question

that pertains to the Christian Life and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. We have often conversed upon the evil of schisms among the friends of Christ, and the desirableness of some cordial, successful endeavor to bring nearer together the divided portions of that Body of which Christ is the Head; and I understand that your views, and those which may find expression in this Letter, are essentially coincident. I know not the particular in which we have ever disagreed; and the fact that our Christian sympathies have run so long and so concurrently in a common channel, has contributed largely to the pleasure of my ministry. However the advocates of a relaxed carefulness in Christian morals may have regarded you as exact and scrupulous, you have never, I am sure, been charged with anything like narrowness or exclusiveness in your love to the great Christian brotherhood. Immovably as you have rested upon the fundamental truths of Divine Revelation, as you understand them, and firmly as you have adhered to the ecclesiastical polity which you believe to be developed in the New Testament, the discovery of the first indication of sectarian bigotry is reserved for the man who has not yet appeared. The right of private judgment—that primary principle dear to every consistent Baptist—I have never known you to ques-