

ON THE

Union of Presbyterians,

IN CANADA.

BY

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MONTREAL.

PRIZE ESSAY.

MONTREAL:

F. E. GRAFTON.

1871.

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PRIZE ESSAY.

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JUDGES:—VERY REV. J. COOK, D. D., *Principal of Morrin College, Quebec*; REV. W. TAYLOR, D. D., *Erskine Church, Montreal*; REV. PROFESSOR MACVICAR, L. L. D., *Presbyterian College, Montreal*; HON. A. MORRIS, *Minister of Inland Revenue, Ottawa*; JUSTICE TORRANCE, *Montreal*.

AWARD.

The adjudicators named to decide upon the best essay "On the Union of Presbyterians in Canada, with special reference to the advantages and practicability of such a Union, and the best method of bringing it about," for which essay a prize of \$200 has been offered by several gentlemen, members of both branches of the Presbyterian Church, are of opinion, by a majority of three to two, that the essay bearing the motto, "ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων ἐν ἀγάπῃ," "Forbearing one another in Love," is entitled to the prize. It is, therefore, awarded to the author of this essay; and the envelope bearing the motto having been opened, the Rev. Robert Campbell, A.M., of Montreal, the author of the essay, is declared entitled to the prize.

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P R E F A C E .



If the following essay had been written with a view to influence opinion in any particular section of the proposed United Presbyterian Church, the case might easily have been stated in stronger terms. But the writer studied anxiously to avoid sectionalism. His *desire*, at least, was to view the whole question impartially, from the standpoint of a neutral observer, or rather from that of an interested observer, bearing a common affection to all ; such as it may be conceived Knox, or Henderson or Gillespie would be, if it were possible for him to survey the present position of Presbyterians both in Scotland and Canada, and see that cause which he had so much at heart weakened by internal dissensions. The true union "*platform*" is to be found in the Church of Scotland anterior to those divisions which it is now sought to heal. What success has attended the author's effort to look upon the subject of union from a position, above the atmosphere of contention and strife and from which all its bearings could be seen without prejudice, he leaves others to judge ; only he would have the reader bear in mind that he had to address himself to the task of convincing such as needed to be convinced, in *all* the branches of Presbyterianism in Canada, of the importance of their union, and that in so doing he had himself to exemplify, in dealing with the question, the motto which this essay bears as the only reliable cornerstone of such a

union as is proposed. Everything offensive to one or other of the parties, which it is desired to embrace in the Union, had necessarily to be avoided. This takes from the strength of the writing, and some consequently may be disappointed with the essay; but the writer hopes that as no one ought to be able to discover, from anything contained in the following pages, to what branch of Presbyterians the author belongs, so the temperate statement of the case in behalf of union he has endeavoured to make, may be useful in promoting the cause which he, in common with many good men, has greatly at heart.

Montreal, 1st. December, 1870.

ON THE
 Union of Presbyterians
 IN CANADA,*

With special reference to the advantages and practicability of such a Union, and the best method of bringing it about.

“*Ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων ἐν ἀγάπῃ.*”

The Subject of Union between the Canada Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, and that portion of the United Presbyterian Church of North America lying within the Province, namely: the Presbytery of Stamford,† is one which is attracting more and more attention. It has already been discussed to some extent by individuals belonging to the different sections of Presbyterianism, proposed to be embraced in the Union, but scarcely with the earnestness which the importance of the subject demands.

* At the time this subject was propounded, and the following essay was written, Canada embraced only the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and consequently the *figures* employed in these pages cover only two branches of the larger United Church now in contemplation. The *principles* of the essay are of universal application.

† The same principles would be applicable to the American Presbyterian Church, Montreal, if they chose to cast in their lot with the United Church.

Two of the Synods have, indeed, had the subject once and again brought formally under their notice, but the apathy with which it was received showed plainly that the time for Union had not yet come, and that the popular mind had not been sufficiently directed to its desirableness and practicability. The Committee offering a prize for the best essay on the subject have taken the likeliest and most direct way of bringing the matter fully before the minds of the Presbyterians in this colony.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRACTICABILITY OF SUCH A UNION.

1. It may be said generally that THE TENDENCIES OF THE AGE POINT IN THE DIRECTION OF PRESBYTERIAN UNION. Every age has its tendencies. Those of the last generation or two have been towards segregation, seeking perfection, and fancying it to lie in *entire* identity. There was consequently no thought of forbearing with or reclaiming those that were not identical; but to secure the perfect accord aimed at, subdivision after subdivision took place; just as the chemist reduces the elements of his compound, eliminating one after another, until he secures the base. The present age sees that this was a foolish striving after the impossible, for every individual has his idiosyncrasies; and if society has to be subdivided until perfect accord is to be secured, the process will not end till the *individual* is reached. The American and French Revolutions, and the revolution of the Churches of England and Scotland, were all nearly related to each other, wave succeeding wave, and following in each other's track. A reaction has set in and the tendency is now towards aggregation. Community of origin, and identity of general interest and sentiment, are the principles upon which this aggregation is taking place and by which the elements are made to cohere. Hence in Europe, under the special patronage of the "Man of Destiny," *Dynasties* are passing away, and *nations* are uniting more closely. The late struggle in America showed also the same tendency operating,—the people of the south

being entirely distinct from those of the North, both in sentiment and in origin as well as in interest; and although the determination and might of the North were sufficient for the time being to combat the tendency of the age, it is none the less perceptible in the late struggle on that account.

The confederation of the British Provinces in North America also indicates the prevalence of the tendency contended for. There was a time when petty jealousies between the provinces would have rendered such a confederation impossible.

The Union of all Presbyterians in Australia, and the Union of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches in the British American Provinces, and the proposed Union of the same Churches in Scotland, as well as the contemplated Union of the Old and New School Presbyterians the United States,* are all proofs that the belief in the efficacy of separation to secure perfection is fast passing away. May it not be said that the slightly agitated proposal for the Union of the English, Greek and Roman Churches, has its origin in the same idea? So long as the tendency was towards separation all efforts at producing Presbyterian Union were unavailing, as witness Sir George Sinclair's attempts a quarter of a century ago. Now, however, there is a prospect of his wish being realized.

2. But that which specially renders the Union we are discussing practicable, is the fact that **THE PRINCIPLES OF TOLERATION ARE NOW BETTER UNDERSTOOD AND ACTED UPON THAN IN THE DAYS OF OUR FATHERS.** It

* Consummated 10th Nov. 1869.

was too long the fashion for every man to judge others by himself in everything, forgetting that whilst all men have certain great points of resemblance—these being necessary to their humanity, and serving as a foundation for constructing the philosophy of the race upon—they have also many points of difference; that whilst truth itself is fixed and absolute, the peculiarities of men's minds cause them to receive diverse perceptions of it; that every man who is rational is an accountable being and is bound to judge for himself; and that receiving and acting upon the judgment of another merely, does not fulfil the responsibility of manhood. The admission of the foregoing principles creates *Toleration*, a patient conceding to others the right of holding their own solemn and honestly conceived convictions: not indifference, or want of faith in our own views of truth; not the withholding of earnest efforts to convince or enlighten; but, after all is done that can be done to make *our* views of the true prevail, allowing others the right which we claim for ourselves, to judge for themselves what is true, without our losing temper with them, or seeking to squeeze them by force into the same shape of mind as ourselves. This principle, nearly allied to the somewhat difficult grace of charity, is happily gaining the ascendancy, and its prevalence will help forward the good work of Union amongst Presbyterians and all others whose general principles and organization can be made to coalesce. But descending to particulars, the practicability of the proposed union will be shown in the discussion of the next division of this essay.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME IN
THE WAY OF SUCH A UNION ARE
NOT INSURMOUNTABLE.

1. It is objected that CONFUSION IN CHURCH PROPERTY WOULD BE PRODUCED BY SUCH A UNION. The answer is that if the different sections of Presbyterians went to the legislature of the country with an undivided request to have their churches, manses and colleges deeded to one new organization, embracing the whole, they should without doubt immediately obtain what they asked for.

2. There could be little difficulty in assimilating THE BY-LAWS, RULES, AND OTHER LEGISLATIVE MEASURES of the different churches, as it is presumed the same principles run through them all, derived from the Books of Discipline, and the precedents of the early General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland.

3. THE GREATEST APPARENT DIFFICULTY OF ALL WILL BE FOUND IN ADJUSTING THE FINANCIAL BASIS OF ANY SUCH UNION. But it is to be hoped that through a fair and generous examination of the subject, by the parties to the proposed union, even *it can* be overcome. The Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland has something like an endowment fund, based partly on the surrender made by the Ministers of that church in 1856 of moneys accruing to them from Government, in a way the fairness of which, in the cir-

cumstances, few men will call in question, and partly on the spontaneous liberality of the adherents of that church. The Canada Presbyterian Church has no such fund ; neither has the Presbytery of Stamford. What is to be done to place them upon an equality ?

If nothing better can be done, let there be a union for all ecclesiastical purposes besides, leaving the financial question entirely out of sight. By this arrangement the present ministers in the Church of Scotland branch, during their lifetime, and their congregations after their decease, would continue to enjoy the benefit of the Fund of which they are possessed, whilst the other branches of the united Church would remain on their present footing. Something like this state of things existed amongst the Presbyterian Ministers and Churches in Canada prior to 1840. Some of them were in the receipt of fixed sums from the Imperial Exchequer, and from other sources, whilst others were entirely dependent upon the contributions of their congregations ; yet they managed to cohere in one Synod. Indeed this state of things existed in the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland within a few years back.

Another way to overcome the difficulty would be to have it arranged, that the present incumbents in the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland, should continue to receive, during their lifetime, the allowance they are now receiving from their fund ; but that, after their decease, their rights should lapse into the Church at large, and their allowance be employed for such purposes as the United Church of the future would

determine. At first sight, this might seem unjust to the Church of Scotland section of the proposed United Church; but when it is remembered that the vested interests of the present generation would be secured, and, that so far as posterity is concerned, all members of the Presbyterian family are equally related to us; and, when it is remembered, further, that the children of those living in the privileged congregations of the present generation, may in the future change places with those who are less favourably circumstanced, as it has been often seen in the past, that the children of Church of Scotland parents, have become United Presbyterians, and *vice versa*, the change of locality leading to the change of Church relations, it will be seen that this proposal is not unreasonable.

But the best way out of the difficulty, undoubtedly, is for the Canada Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery of Stamford, to set to work with a will to found either an endowment or a sustentation fund. This would sweep away at once the greatest obstacle to Union that exists. Although a Union on the financial basis, spoken of in the two foregoing paragraphs, would surely be better than no Union at all, yet it would scarcely be satisfactory, and would hardly secure a hearty support; equality of privileges and rights being a distinguishing feature of Presbyterianism.

The raising of a fund by those Presbyterians, who at present have none, is a result not to be despaired of. There is nothing in either the principles or the past history of any section of them to hinder their effecting this. The

Presbyterian Church of Canada of the past, an influential element in the Canada Presbyterian Church of to-day, entertained the idea of a Sustentation Fund, after the model of that of the Free Church of Scotland, from 1844 till 1849, and at last abandoned it with the greatest reluctance. The United Presbyterian Church of Canada was itself, in large measure, sustained previous to the Union in 1861, by the Mission Fund of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland; so that in practice it approved of the principle of receiving aid from without, although the name of the fund from which they received support, and the mode of its distribution, were different from those which had found most favour with the Free Church. It was, therefore, not to be wondered at, that the Synod of the United Church — the Canada Presbyterian Church, did very favourably receive, on the 6th June last, * an overture on the subject of a Sustentation Fund, appointing a large and influential committee to report upon it. This betokens a desire to pave the way for a Union.

The United Presbyterian Church of North America, of which the Presbytery of Stamford is at present a part, has a fund for subsidizing weak congregations, so that it would be scarcely likely to object to the raising of a fund, provided an acceptable name and mode of administration for it could be devised. If an endowment fund, as large in proportion to the number of Ministers and Congregations as that of the Temporalities' Fund of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, could and would be raised by the other Churches,

* 1866.

this would be the mode of disposing of the financial difficulty most likely to be acceptable to the Ministers of the Church of Scotland section, and to many also in the Canada Presbyterian Church. And that it would be possible to accomplish this, provided the Churches took it up earnestly and prosecuted it vigorously, scarcely admits of doubt. The number of communicants reported to belong to the Canada Presbyterian Church in June last, * was 36,469, and estimating the number in the Presbytery of Stamford at the same average for each Minister, 930, it would take only \$28.83 † per member to make a fund as large in proportion to the number of Ministers as the \$501,400 ‡ of the Temporalities' Fund of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland; and surely such a small sum per member could be raised easily if the Churches earnestly addressed themselves to it.

But while the above is set forth as one of the ways in which the difficulty could be got rid of, it is little likely to be adopted. Whilst nothing would be thought of realizing such a project in Scotland, the experience of all the churches in Canada, shows that the genius of our country does not favour such an undertaking. The supply of the *present* want is all that is thought proper or practicable to aim at; and this could be done on either

* 1866. The number reported in June, 1869, was 45,896.

† According to latest estimate, it would be only \$23.98 per member.

‡ Since reduced by the suspension of the Commercial Bank to \$467,910.

the principle of the Sustentation Fund of the Free Church of Scotland, or that of the Home Mission Fund of the U. P. Church of Scotland. All things taken into account the former is to be preferred. The great objection of course to a Sustentation Fund, contributed by the people, is not that it is not voluntary, but that there is an *equal* division betwixt all Ministers, whereas the necessary expenses and responsibilities of some Ministers are much greater than those of others. According to the financial system of the U. P. Church of Scotland poorer congregations do what they can to support their Ministers, and the richer congregations, after paying their own Ministers what is deemed competent, throw their surplus revenues into a fund for assisting their poorer brethren. It will be seen that both plans come to one and the same thing. At least they do practically. No one supposes that the Free Church Ministers in Scotland have all *equal* stipends to live upon. The members and adherents of wealthy churches always reserve from their public contributions to the Sustentation Fund so much of their beneficence as is needful to secure sufficient support, according to a private contract, to their own Minister. In case a Sustentation Fund were put in operation here, something similar would no doubt be done. And, therefore, it would come to the very same thing in the end practically, with this difference in favour of a Sustentation Fund, that all difficulty in discriminating who should and who should not receive aid from the fund—a felt difficulty in the U. P. Church of Scotland—would be removed, and Ministers would not have to appear before the administrators of the Fund *in forma pauperis*, but

only claiming an acknowledged right. Besides, a plan such as this, whilst it would secure the development of the hearty voluntary offerings of the people, would be more likely to recommend itself to the Church of Scotland party, than the uncertain U. P. system—it would be a compromise between the principle of endowment and that of voluntaryism pure and simple—the United Presbyterian Church going half-way to meet the Kirk on the platform of the Free Church; and in preparing the way for Union that which is most likely to succeed is the plan that should be adopted.

But could the Church of Scotland section be got to throw its annual income into any such fund? What would be their *quid pro quo*? On the face of it, it would seem that by any such plan as that proposed the Canada Presbyterian Church would be the gainers, and the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, the losers. But if all the facts were known, it is more than probable, that even in a financial point of view the Church of Scotland section would gain by throwing their income into a common Sustentation Fund. It is to be regretted that that Church has *never* compiled complete statistics of her condition, and that for several years back no attempts have been made to obtain them.* Accordingly, what is now to be advanced cannot be put down with confidence; nevertheless so far as the writer's enquiries

* This statement is still in some measure true although through the indefatigable exertions of Mr. James Croil, Agent of that Church, statistics approximating to completeness have been compiled.

went, comparing a limited number of cases, the conviction arrived at has been that the average stipend of Ministers of the Canada Presbyterian Church, without a fund, is as high as the average stipend of the Ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, taking in their income from all sources. The average stipend paid in the former Church last year * was \$523, and it may well be doubted whether in the latter Church it was larger. The greater liberality of the people of the former Church secures the interest annually of what would be a larger fund in proportion than that possessed by the latter Church, and this liberality would fully compensate for the want of a fund ; for, so long as the *interest* is paid, the absence of a *principal* surely makes no great difference. In all these cases it is taken for granted that those who at present enjoy rights in the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, should continue to enjoy them during their lives unless they chose voluntarily to surrender them ; and so the arguments advanced would only apply to those who should be licensed subsequently to the proposed union.

4. THE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS' FUND OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, IS IN A MORE FLOURISHING STATE THAN THAT OF THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. The amount of the Fund in the

* 1866. In 1869 the average increased to \$673. In 1866, the average stipend *promised* in the P. Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland amounted to \$759 : what the average *paid* was does not appear. The average promised by *Congregations* was only \$484.

former is \$44,922 * in the latter only \$51,558.42, † — a very much smaller sum proportionately. Would not difficulty be found in amalgamating these two funds? In estimating the difference in the prosperity of these funds in the respective churches, it must, however, be borne in mind, that the commencement of raising a fund in the Presbyterian Church of Canada was made only in 1851, that it was not universally supported by the ministers of that Church before the Union in 1861, and that, no fund of the kind existing in the United Presbyterian Church, the U. P. Ministers have not all since the union given it their support. But from these considerations it is also manifest that the number of claimants upon the fund would be small proportionately, as the widows and orphans of those ministers who have contributed nothing to the fund are not entitled to receive any benefit from it. And in amalgamating the two funds, provided a union took place, it would be easy to conserve the rights of those who have been contributors, by adopting regulations such as Assurance Companies protect their policy-holders by. In case of a Sustentation Fund being formed, by the proposed United Church, it would be easy to make payment to this fund compulsory, a condition indispensable to its highest prosperity, and to secure the regular payment of the Ministers' annual premium, in just the same way as the Temporalities' Board of the Church of Scotland section does— withholding so much from the annual allowance of Ministers from the Sustentation Fund and handing it over to

* In 1866 ; at last report, \$55,146.

† In 1866 ; at last report, \$61,331.

the Widows' Fund; and thus the difficulty complained of by the convener of the committee on the formation of this fund, in the Presbyterian Church of Canada in 1850, would be got over, when he declared that the *Committee despaired of being able to form a fund in any effectual way so long as there was no general fund for the sustentation of the Ministry*. And if the Free Church in Canada and the U. P. Church, between which there was a much wider chasm in regard to this fund than that which separates them, now united, from the Church of Scotland in Canada, were able to make a satisfactory adjustment of the matter, there surely ought to be no difficulty in finding an harmonious and just way of removing this supposed difficulty. And if the Ministers of the Presbytery of Stamford, coming into the Union, should seek to participate in this fund, an equitable mode of settling the conditions could without much difficulty be found.

5. THE MATTER OF HYMNOLOGY MIGHT OCCASION A LITTLE DIFFICULTY, especially if the Presbytery of Stamford were to be a party to the Union, as it is one of their most tangible differences from other Presbyterians that they sing only the Psalms of David. The Church of Scotland has used for generations, in all its branches, and the Free Church since its origin, also metrical paraphrases of Scripture; while the U. P. Church has gone in advance and used a large selection of Hymns, not professedly founded on passages of Scripture. And the principle which was applied in uniting the Free and U. P. Churches in this country, is the only one that should govern in matters of this kind—"that the ordinances of worship shall be ad-

ministered in this Church, as they have heretofore been by the respective Bodies of which it is composed, in a general accordance with the directions contained in the Westminster Directory of Worship." The Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland has had a Committee engaged for years in the work of forming a small selection of Hymns, and very considerable success has attended their labours.* The Synod of the Canada Presbyterian Church initiated a movement last year † for the formation of a selection. And although as yet the body to which the Presbytery of Stamford belongs, has not given its sanction to the use of Hymns, it is significant that a very large minority in the General Assembly of 1865, advocated the taking of the onward step; so that there could be very little difficulty in agreeing upon a selection, if all were united. Of course, any legislation by way of authorizing the use of Hymns, should be rather in the form of a permission to introduce them, than an enjoining of them; and it might be made the condition of their introduction, that Congregations unanimately, or almost unanimately desired to use them. In this way, those who might have conscientious scruples on the subject could avoid the use of them, but not have it in their power to call others to account for using them. What is said of Hymns, holds equally of the question of instrumental music. The most advanced point on every

* At the meeting in June 1870, the Synod agreed to sanction the use of the SCOTTISH HYMNAL, prepared by the Committee of the Church of Scotland, which received the *imprimatur* of the General Assembly of that Church in May 1870.

† In 1866.

question must necessarily be taken in the United Church.

6. THE TRADITIONS OF THE DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE CHURCH, proposed to be united, RUNNING IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS, HOW CAN A UNION BE EXPECTED? Of course, if they choose to hug these distinctive traditions to their hearts, and if they find better nutriment for a divine life in these than in holding and practising a present charity and forbearance, then there can be no Union. But if they can all go back to the time when there were no distinctive traditions, when the Presbyterians of Scotland were all embraced in one Church—the time of Knox, and Melville, and Henderson, and Rutherford, names which all sections of Presbyterians alike hold in grateful remembrance—and make the Church of that time the common object of traditional love; or, better still, if they can go back to the spirit of apostolic times, as it manifested itself in the acts of the Apostles, whilst they may still hold their individual opinions on intermediate events in the Church, then shall they be willing to keep their traditional *Shibboleths* in the back ground, provided a sufficiently good reason for so doing be presented. One circumstance favours such an expectation: in this land traditions are made comparatively light of.

7. Very nearly related to the last discussed obstacle to Union, is that which we next notice—DIFFERENCE OF FEELING AND SENTIMENT ON SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MATTERS. This is after all probably the *greatest* obstacle that will have to be encountered, although others may be *ostensibly* set forth as the greatest. Through the social status conferred by the position of Ministers of the Church

of Scotland, and their early associations in the parent country, they are more conservative in their ideas, and have as a rule more sympathy with worldly accomplishments than the Ministers of the other sections of Presbyterianism; although, not a few of the Ministers in the Free Church element of the Canada Presbyterian Church, are at one with them in these sentiments and feelings. They cling more to the past, give to experience a co-ordinate position of influence with logic and speculation, laying great store by refinement of taste and manners. Whereas the tone of the Canada Presbyterian Church, as a whole, and especially of the U. P. element, is commonly held to be decidedly radical, not disposed to do deference to anything because it is *old*, and finding the way to their views and sentiments by the cold penetrating steel of a severe logic; and the argument is that there never could be much congenial intercourse between individuals whose instincts, tastes and habits of thought differ so materially; and, therefore, a Union is impossible. Thus do some very wise and thoughtful persons look upon the subject. But upon the circumstances, now stated, can be founded one of the best arguments in favour of Union.

Granted that the extreme opinion, supposed to be held by some of the ministers and people of the Canada Presbyterian Church, when they set down the Ministers and people of the Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, as behind the age through their obsolete toryism, and as wanting in piety and zeal through their sympathy with the world's social distinctions and refinement and literature, were true; and granted that the opinion supposed to be held on the other hand, by some of the Ministers and

people of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, when they look upon the ministers and people of the other church as hot-headed revolutionary enthusiasts, with a good deal of assumption and bigotry, were also true—even granted that a few extreme men hold these extravagant views on either hand, while the great majority lie near each other in the middle ; and granted that there were a greater measure of truth in them than there is, it may be asked whether the evils complained of on the one hand and the other, would be lessened by contrast and separation ? Will the drawing of sharp, clearly defined lines between them help to better things ? Will it not rather exaggerate those extreme views, views which often arise from the suspicions an ignorant uncharity throws around an object to which it is opposed ? If the one party fancies that the other has too much of the fossil about it, and is wanting in the more decided characteristics of religion, one would suppose the way for those, who think they themselves are better, to help to remedy the defects of their neighbours and to break the shell off them, and get their hearts and hands to move with more energy, is not to keep at the greatest possible distance from them ; but it is to draw near, and, by friction break off the crust, and by contact galvanize the torpid into life and activity. And on the other hand, if the conservative Presbyterians look upon the others as endangering the stability of law and order by their revolutionary tenets and so imperilling constitutional liberty in the land, surely it is their duty to seek to modify these principles, of which they profess to be afraid, by a free mingling with, and attempting to improve

those they hold to be wrong. Imbibing oxygen, or nitrogen, or carbonic acid gas, alone, would soon destroy life; but by the union of these elements, atmospheric air, the chief food of our bodies, is formed; and just so those tendencies to which reference has been made, and which it must be in all fairness allowed do exist, although not in the degree extreme men believe, are the natural complements of each other—the Canada Presbyterian Church needing the cautious conservatism and regard for precedent and experience, which characterize the Church of Scotland in all her branches, and the latter needing an infusion of the life and zeal which characterize the former. Sand and lime and water, taken separately, have no tenacity, but by uniting the three a substance is formed of rocklike compactness and adhesiveness. Every wise man deprecates the pitting of class against class in the state, and, instead of wishing to draw sharp lines of distinction, would rather see class linked to class, merging into each other with imperceptible glide; and all writers on the Constitution of the English State have observed that it is the great diversity of classes, working in harmony, that gives such stability to British institutions. On the other hand, the mischief accruing from keeping antagonistic elements apart is clearly seen in the case of Roman Catholic communities in Canada. In parts of the country where there is a free mingling amongst Protestants and Romanists for educational and social purposes, Roman Catholicism has none of the repulsiveness which it presents in communities where it is not modified by contact with Protestantism. So that the fact of diversity of view and sentiment, instead of being pre-

judicial to a union, would rather tend to produce that modified condition of things which would be most favourable to justice and toleration and success. When all in a community are of the same opinions, the likelihood is that the tendency of that community will be offensively exaggerated; just as a taint in the blood, physicians tell us, is multiplied by close marriages. Would that some Menenius Agrippa arose who could persuade the opposing elements, we are discussing, that they are needful to each other, and that their common safety consists in forbearing and combining with each other.

Besides, there are already, it may be presumed, many in each of the churches, almost as far apart in their instincts, tastes, and manners, as the most discordant elements in the United Church would likely be.

8. Some of the concluding remarks in the last paragraph anticipate the answer to be given to the objection that IT WOULD SCARCELY BE SAFE FOR A MINORITY TO ENTER INTO A COMPACT THROUGH WHICH THE MAJORITY MIGHT TYRANNIZE OVER THEM. The largest element in the United Church, doubtless, would be the Free Church element—as yet there can scarcely have resulted a complete coalescence between them and the U. P. element* and so we speak of them as distinct,—the next largest would be the Church of Scotland element—the U. P. element the next,—and the Presbytery of Stamford would be in a small minority. The great diversity of

* This was written early in 1867, of course, every year helps to obliterate the old distinctions, and they must be less marked now than they were then.

elements would render any attempt in one party to overwhelm another, so long as the elements would remain distinct, utterly futile. And then it cannot be forgotten that every section of Presbyterians has in it men who would command influence and power under any circumstances; and this fact would be a guarantee for security against any attempts at tyranny or oppression. Of course, in time, there would be neither a disposition nor a temptation to oppression, as it is to be hoped that after a few years, forbearance and cooperation the old lines would be blotted out, and then individuals would view things according to their merits, and would rank themselves on one side or the other according to the tone of their individual minds. That this would be the case is abundantly manifest from the result of the Union of the Burgher, Anti-Burgher and Relief Churches in Scotland. For a time there could be seen a perceptible preservation of the individuality of the several elements, just as the waters of the Ottawa are easily discernible from those of the St. Lawrence, for miles below their junction; but no one, looking in upon that united Church now, could tell that this man was once a Burgher, that man an Anti-Burgher, or a third a Reliever.

9. THE LAST OBSTACLE TO UNION, to be noticed, is THE ATTITUDE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND IN REGARD TO THE QUESTION. Once, in 1860, that church, through the index of its highest court, seems to have favoured the idea of union, but twice, in 1861, and again in 1866, by the same index it has vetoed any attempt to

deal with the subject practically. Does not this latter fact show that it is useless to talk of Union?

It must be acknowledged that the later deliverances of that Synod *seem* to point to the conclusion here indicated; yet a narrow enquiry into all the facts connected with the introduction of the subject into that Synod, would probably throw such light on the matter as should neutralize impressions drawn from the voting on those occasions. It is well known that certain ministers of that church had committed themselves against union. As it happened, the two last occasions on which the subject was touched upon, the attendance at the Synod was small, owing in the one case to the remoteness of the place of meeting, and, in the other, to the disturbed state of the country at the time; and the *opponents* of union in both instances mustered in larger numbers than its friends. And we believe it is within truth and justice to say, that in neither case was the deliverance a fair declaration of the opinion and wish of that Church. On the whole, perhaps, the instinct of that Church and its general desire for union may be better learned from the reception the subject had when it was first introduced, not only in consideration that the attendance at that meeting was large, but also, in that the subject was introduced without any previous warning, and without allowing any one to draw himself up into a resisting attitude—as a man's manifestations of character given, when he is off his guard, are held to be the best index to his native disposition. Besides, it is well known that the cause of union received, both in 1861 and especially in 1866, great damage not more from the astuteness of those who

led the opposition to it, than from the want of a proper understanding and management on the part of those who sought to promote it. The subject, to receive fair play, ought to be taken up by men of *prestige*, and not on the eve of the assembling of the Synod. The manner in which it was last introduced* caused many whose convictions are strongly in favour of it to give it but a luke-warm support ; whilst many, not unfavourably disposed towards it, for the same cause, either voted against it, or did not vote at all. It must be remembered, too, that the discussion at the last Synod † was not touching the merits of the question although it helped indirectly to show the leaning of those who were present. And we think the opinion is well founded, that if the subject of union were remitted to Kirk Sessions and congregations, in all the churches proposed to be united, it would be found that the great majority of the people in all of them, the church of Scotland included, would declare for it. True, it might be expected that some of the old warriors, both in the ministry and out of it, would fight rather shy of a Union with those with whom in former days they measured arms. But with the exception of a few of the leaders amongst the people, who were strong party men in the days of conflict, and have had their partizan feelings kept alive by an attendance at Church Courts, the bulk of the congregations would probably be found clamorous for union. If any of the ministers doubt this, all that we have to say is "*try*—let the people vote spontaneously, without any speeches for or against.

* In 1866.

† In 1866.

CHAPTER III.

III. THE ADVANTAGES OF SUCH A UNION.

We can fancy it was often on the lips of the reader, as he was making his way through the preceding figures and speculations, designed to prove the *practicability* of union, *cui bono?* Aye, that is the question—what *good* would result from such a union? What compensation would there be for the self-abnegation and the sacrifice of firmly held traditions, which have been laid down as the conditions of union? What sufficiently great inducements can be held out to make men ready to give a new direction to their lives, and to undergo the self-circumspection, and the labour and anxiety, requisite for removing the obstacles we have seen standing in the way? This is the most important question to be considered; and we feel assured there is enough of enthusiasm, determination, self-control and endurance, embodied in the character of Presbyterians, to carry them surely and safely through even these somewhat numerous looming difficulties, provided they are convinced that Union would be a *right* thing, that it is a *practicable* thing, and, above all, that it would be a *profitable* thing.

1. IT WOULD ENABLE THE PRESBYTERIANS IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS TO MAINTAIN ORDINANCES EFFICIENTLY WITH COMPARATIVE EASE. How very pitiable is the sight, often witnessed in remote settlements and small villages, of two or three Presbyterian Churches, standing within a stone-cast of each other, not more than a third-filled, whose ministers, if not sustained by a sense of duty to their party, have little else to sustain them, and could

tell touching tales of want and suffering in their desire to extend the banner of their sect ; whilst for long distances around these *trebly* favoured spots, not a single Presbyterian place of meeting is to be found, making it necessary for those who live equidistant from these centres to travel eight, ten, or twelve miles in order to worship after the manner of their fathers, or, as an alternative, too often resorted to, to fall into the hands of the Methodists or of the Church of England, ecclesiastical organizations that know better where to plant churches to their own advantage. Whereas if these traditional divisions, not native to the soil, but imported from a country where they had a meaning, could be laid aside ; in a short time, at least in a generation or two, churches could be planted at convenient distances asunder, which would afford adequate accommodation for the Presbyterians living within a reasonable walk or drive. And then the wretched anxiety and poverty which the present state of things necessarily imposes upon both ministers and people, the latter often burdening themselves to sustain their Church, would be in a great measure swept away.

Of course, during the present generation of Ministers and people, things would have to remain very much as they are, as existing Congregations would be naturally jealous of their rights and privileges, and the question would be who should concede in any attempt at amalgamation. One or two cases, resulting out of the Union already effected, show the need there would be for caution in this regard on the part of Church Courts ; but in the course of time these jealousies would naturally die out, and

in places where two Ministers could not be efficiently maintained, the two Congregations would merge into one, and the second Minister be free to go and plant an outpost in some field not already occupied; and thus the Church would be extended as well as efficiently maintained.

Mr. Kemp, of Windsor, has recently attempted to show that the advantage we have been setting forth, has not resulted from the Union already accomplished. But apart from the fact that his conclusions, as well as facts, have been called in question, surely a man of his shrewdness ought to have known that at the end of only five years, he could scarcely have begun to look for fruit of this description. The figures of these five years back are derived more from the influences at work the *previous* five years than those which have prevailed during the five years just ended.

2. In cities, towns and popular portions of the country, the advantage of Union just referred to, would not be apparent, although in some cases it would be realized even in the great centres. But THE ADVANTAGE OF UNION IN TOWNS AND CITIES, in addition to those general advantages to be hereafter mentioned, WOULD BE THAT IT WOULD GIVE PEOPLE A CHANCE OF GRATIFYING THEIR INDIVIDUAL TASTES IN CHOOSING WHAT MINISTERS THEY SHOULD SIT UNDER. Already, they enjoy this privilege to a greater extent than people in country districts do, but if they overstep the boundaries of their own sect, they feel some resistance in their own moral nature, and so they receive damage. But if all the Presbyterians in our large towns

and cities were one, both Ministers and people would find more easily their proper level ; and some of the Churches now thinly attended, would probably receive a proportion of those worshippers who are overcrowding others. It is no uncommon thing in Edinburgh and Glasgow, to find people going from one extremity of the city to another, past one Church after the other of their own sect, to obtain the ministrations of a man who pleases their taste and fancy ; and the same thing would result in our large towns and cities. Whilst, all things considered, time and space will more than counterbalance taste, and as a rule, people will choose to worship in the Church nearest their own doors ; yet it would probably be found that those worshipping in a certain Church now, because it represents the sect to which they are committed, would find their way to other Churches where things accord better with their individual tastes, provided this could be done without the sense of demoralization that attends an indiscriminate over-leaping of boundaries, and disregarding of creeds and professions.

3. IT WOULD GIVE A NEW IMPULSE TO ALL THOSE PRINCIPLES THAT PRESBYTERIANS HOLD SACRED. It may be claimed without arrogance that their distinctive principles have an important bearing on men's highest interests. History, fairly interpreted, shows with sufficient distinctness, that Presbytery as a system is promotive of intelligence, thoughtfulness, independence and vigour, qualities which, are as essential to a manly piety, as they are to good citizenship. Human liberty, as well as the progress of religion, is greatly beholden to the principles of Presbytery.

It has been objected, as has been, indeed, objected by Roman Catholics to Protestantism at large, that as a system it fosters spiritual pride as well as mental conceit, as is evidenced by the multiplication of sects amongst Presbyterians ; but if this Union should take place, the mouths of such objectors would be stopped, and one obstacle to the progress of true religion would be removed. Besides, the American soil is a congenial one for these distinctive principles, the principles of liberty and equality. Not that Presbyterianism is inconsistent with the monarchical institutions of Europe. No class of subjects have ever been more loyal than Presbyterians ; and more than once they have turned the scale against democracy and in favour of monarchy. Notwithstanding, it is reasonable to suppose that the principles of Presbytery would flourish most vigorously alongside of popular institutions ; and whoever has faith in these principles and wishes well for the future of this Dominion, will desire to extend them by aiding the Union cause.

4. THE UNITED CHURCH WOULD BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN EFFICIENTLY ONE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTION where there are now two. Complaints reach us from without that Knox College is not doing the work which the Canada Presbyterian Church desires ; and a complaint comes, on the other hand, from *within*, in the shape of an Appeal from Principal Snodgrass* that Queen's College, for want

* This was in 1866. Since then Queen's College, as is well known, has passed through a crisis owing to the suspension of the Commercial Bank and the withdrawal of government aid. But through the noble response made by the Presbyterians of Ontario and Quebec to the appeal for endowing it, it is now placed on a better footing than ever.

of funds, is not able to employ a large enough staff of professors to do the work it aspires to accomplish. Adding the Professorships in the one institution to those in the other would just make up a decent theological staff. All minor questions as to which of them should yield could be easily arranged if the churches made up their minds that amalgamated they *must* be. Were it possible that the seat of Queen's College could be removed to Toronto, it being the Capital of Ontario, and the most central point for Western Canada, it would be necessary only to merge Knox College into it, it being a chartered and tolerably well endowed institution with University powers.* But if that could not be, then, perhaps, the Arts Faculty might remain in Kingston, whilst the Theological Faculty held its session in Toronto. And, as a last arrangement, if nothing better could be done it would surely be for the

* Besides that the United Church would have access to and control of an institution competent to confer the degree of B. D. upon deserving and scholarly students in Divinity, and the honorary degree of D. D. upon those ministers who win the right of distinction by their attainments and career in life; it was one of the fundamental principles of the early reformers, a principle from which no section of Presbyterians have fallen away, that education and religion are the handmaids of each other, and should if practicable not be divorced. In these circumstances, while, if it remained for the United Church to create and endow a Faculty of Arts, it might be regarded as of doubtful wisdom to attempt it (considering the other facilities that exist for education) one would think it ought to be a matter of rejoicing on the part of the United Church to find a University under their control fully endowed and equipped. In view of the proposed Union of the churches in the maritime provinces with those in Ontario and Quebec the best solution probably of the college question would be to suffer the University with the Arts' Faculty to remain at Kingston, while three Divinity Halls might exist in connection with it, forming together the Theological Faculty, and sending up students for degrees in theology, one at Toronto, one at Montreal, and one at Halifax.

interest of all that a thoroughly efficient Theological School should exist in the Province, even though Kingston should remain the seat of it.

And then Morrin College in Quebec, and the proposed Theological School to be opened in Montreal under the auspices of the Canada Presbyterian Church,* might be merged into one, and so afford a good training to candidates for the ministry not only in the Province of Quebec, but also in the Maritime Provinces, as well as offer an alternative to such students from Ontario as might desire to have a change of schools for a session or two. The same difficulty would probably be experienced as in the case of Queen's College, otherwise we would suggest that Montreal should be the seat of the institution. It is of material consequence to Students of Divinity to have access to the best society and to the best and most varied preaching, advantages likely to be more fully secured in Toronto and Montreal than in Kingston and Quebec. But the foundation of Morrin College is, we believe, imperative, that it shall be situated in Quebec.†

5. A UNION WOULD GIVE AN IMPULSE TO THE MIS-

* This theological school was commenced under favourable auspices in the autumn of 1867, and has gone on increasing in prosperity and efficiency under Professors McVicar and Gibson.

† As Morrin College is sustained from an endowment created by private beneficence, and does not appeal to the Church for support, all that it has asked is that it shall receive recognition at the hands of the Church, so long as it has a fully equipped staff of Professors. Its continued existence, therefore, in Quebec, would occasion no embarrassment, but ought to be matter of thankfulness to all that can estimate the local influence for good which such an institution must exercise in a Roman Catholic community.

SIONARY EFFORTS OF THE CHURCHES. In some sense the churches in the colonies are themselves only missionary churches, and so cannot be expected to do much for others ; but inasmuch as the terms of the Lord's commission imply that Christianity is an expanding thing, not nursing selfishness, not promising happiness merely to the possessor, but, like the sun, diffusing light and blessedness around, no church can be healthy in its own religion, that is not a missionary church. But the difficulty, at present felt in the churches in regard to Foreign Mission operations, is that men and means cannot be found in a limited church ; whilst the larger the church the greater is its capacity for successful missionary enterprise.

6. UNION WOULD GIVE TO THE PRESBYTERIANS IN THIS COUNTRY THEIR RIGHTFUL SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE. We do not mean by this that they should go shoulder to shoulder to the polls, or take up party cries. Such a course cannot be too loudly deprecated. The church is transgressing its proper bounds of influence when it begins actively to dabble in the details of politics ; and the variety of sentiment, which the supposed United Church would represent, would make such a thing impossible. But what we mean is that Presbyterians would be in a position, in dealing with great questions which affect them, to assert and maintain their principles and rights against the encroachments of other churches. And now that confederation is an accomplished fact, the new combinations and discussions that may arise, involving educational and religious questions, may make it necessary that Presbyterianism shall assert its power. And to this

end they should have an organ in the press, as other churches have. This would be possible if all were one: any paper which the intelligent Presbyterians of Canada would read and sustain, would be sure of success and power. According to the latest statistics of the provinces jointly* the Presbyterians rank in numbers next to the Roman Catholics; and when their well known energy and thoughtfulness are taken into account, it is manifest that united they would be a mighty power in the Dominion.

7. UNION WOULD MAKE A CHURCH OF SUCH MAGNITUDE AND IMPORTANCE THAT SCOTSMEN WOULD BE PROUD OF IT. We fear it is the case that many of them become ashamed of belonging to a small fragmentary church when they reach a position of wealth and social influence, and in their well known ambition and desire to be on the winning side, are too prone to betake themselves to a larger and more influential communion. But a church of the dimensions and social and political power that a Union would create, would enlist the sympathies of all Scotsmen, and the children of Scotsmen, as well as Scottish Irishmen. And thus all those whom we are at present in danger of losing, would be retained—we should then be as a church for Scotsmen, what the English Church is for Englishmen, and the Roman Catholic Church for Frenchmen and the bulk of Irishmen.

8. IT WOULD ENABLE THE MINISTERS OF THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF PRESBYTERY TO GIVE THAT

* The numbers respectively in 1861 were, Roman Catholics; 1,337,893; Presbyterians, 469,946; Church of England, 465,272; Methodists, 431,933; Baptists, 18,982; Congregationalists, 17,757.

ENERGY TO PREACHING THE GOSPEL WHICH IS NOW SPENT IN DEFINING THEIR POSITION, extending their peculiar tenets, or, it may be, in some cases, uncharitably misrepresenting their neighbours. This would be an inestimable advantage. We fear Mr. Kemp in his review,* although he notices it, does not estimate it at its full value. It must be acknowledged, as he hints, that sectarianism is a mighty engine, and has accomplished great things in the way of propagandism in connection with other systems as well as christianity; but he has, perhaps, something to answer for who invokes its aid. He might as well almost call up evil spirits *from the vasty deep*; they too would be powerful aids in any enterprise wherein some of the worst passions and feelings of men were to be worked upon. And if the Union that has taken place has had the effect Mr. Kemp ascribes to it, of killing sectarianism in the bodies united—that unhappy principle of antagonism by which alone too many natures can be developed—and pre-eminently so Scottish natures,—we think it has achieved a marked success, and so is the forerunner of the greater toleration and charity which the more widely extended union, we are contending for, would inevitably create. And even if the Union failed in other respects, to the extent Mr. Kemp has attempted to make out, which, as has been successfully shown by Mr. Inglis and Mr. King, † is not the case, this fruit alone were worth creating a Union for.

† *A Review of the state and progress of the Canada Presbyterian Church, since the Union in 1861.* BY THE REV. ALEX. KEMP, M.A., WINDSOR, C. W.

* Replies to Mr. Kemp's "*Review*," published in 1867.

9. Nearly related to the last noticed advantage is the one we have now to state,—UNION WOULD CONFER GREATER INDEPENDENCE UPON MINISTERS AND KIRK-SESSIONS, and so purity of discipline would have a better chance of being maintained. The fear of speaking out the truth, lest it should offend his hearers, and so send them to his neighbour's Church over the way, we can imagine must have a considerable though an unconscious influence upon a man's preaching, tending to make it timid; for no minister, we suppose, likes to see his pews getting empty, especially when empty pockets must be the companions of empty pews. It is reasonable to believe that discipline has become more difficult by the multiplication of sects,—offenders are more likely to become insolent and defiant, when called to account, as they know they can easily find a refuge across the street, with no perceptible change of privileges or worship. But in case of a Union, he that would flee from justice would also have to flee from his Presbyterian faith.

10. The enlarged field which would be thrown open, by a Union, for the exercise of talent and energy, WOULD INCITE *at present* MINISTERS TO A FULLER PROOF OF THEIR MINISTRY AND WOULD BE LIKELY TO ATTRACT TO THE PROFESSION MEN OF TALENT AND ENERGY *in the future*. Of course, if the great men in the church should become greater comparatively, by a Union, there being a larger number below them, so should the little men become less, being lost in a crowd. But in as much as no one is disposed to take it as a foregone conclusion that he belongs to the latter class, the damping

effect which the fact of diminution might otherwise have, would not be felt, and every one would be spurred on to aspire after distinction. It would be something to be first man in a church numbering four or five hundred Ministers. A greater number of eligible positions in the church, as Ministers and Professors, would be open to those who should make full proof of their Ministry, inciting them to greater industry both as Students and Pastors.* And although this may be called a worldly incentive—a low and unworthy motive—still it appeals to things as they are, and helps to stir up an element of great power, legitimate within certain limits; and so it cannot be left out of sight in estimating the results of Union.

11. IT WOULD REFRESH AND CHEER THE HEARTS OF BOTH MINISTERS AND PEOPLE. It would give them all an impulse onwards in the divine life, to feel themselves moved to that charity *which beareth all things, hopeth all things, believeth all things* generously. This is the opposite of that state of things which sectarianism creates; and if it would be less zealous and noisy it would be undoubtedly more beautiful and Christlike. If Ministers and people would only lay aside suspiciousness, which is the parent of uncharitable antipathies, and estimate each other's character as it really is, without prejudice, they should find more good in each other than they suppose. They should find it not so impossible to have intercourse

* Taking in the Presbyterian Churches of the Maritime Provinces, the number of Ministers, according to the returns of 1866, was 566, of whom 165 belonged to the Lower Provinces. The latest returns show the number in Ontario and Quebec to be 488; and that in the Maritime Provinces 158: in all 646.

with each other as they had thought ; and, although that intercourse could not be expected to be very easy among older people, yet the very effort to carry it on would expand their generosity and rejuvenate their hearts. One can conceive how it would refresh and delight two of the antedistruption Ministers, who had been previous to the stirring events of 1844 intimate companions and friends, but who from honest convictions took different sides then, to be able to meet again, after a quarter of a century's separation, in terms of fraternal relationship. It would stay the dial of time and bring them both back upwards of twenty years in their pilgrimage, to revive the friendship of their youth, which, though held in abeyance in the meantime, had not died out in spite of adverse circumstances. The capacity for friendship remains ; for, although sects the most nearly related are often keener in their animosity against each other than they are against others far apart from themselves, this is upon the same principle that the members of a family quarrelling feel more bitter against each other than they do against their common foes. The very nearness of their relationship occasions this—the wrong, they conceive they have suffered at each other's hands, is aggravated by the thought that one so near as a brother or sister had done it. But every one knows that these feuds, though bitter for a time, are easily settled—some little affliction, or an absence from each other's sight for years, causes them to forget their differences, and binds them together again ; and why ? just because there remains the capacity for love, by reason of the nearness of their relation-

ship. So doubtless, in the case under consideration, though the elements, proposed to be united, have been estranged and separated for a time, their unity of origin, and their former relationship, would make it possible for them speedily to forget the hard things they once thought, said and wrote against each other. It would do good to one and all, taking away all occasion for morbid antipathies; for it is a strange phenomenon that those feelings which ministers caution their people against cherishing towards each other, they make a practice of habitually indulging in themselves, under the questionable pretext of "contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints," as if that faith needed that evil should exist to promote its good.

Surely the thought of securing the foregoing advantages, to result from Union, ought to have the effect of making us willing at least to try if it can be brought about. The Province has lately seen the unwonted spectacle of politicians, long hostile to each other, agreeing to forget their differences in order to accomplish confederation with the Maritime Provinces, and thus to ensure not only the mutual interests of all the Provinces, but also the perpetuation of British Institutions on this continent.* Is it to be inferred or allowed that politicians, who are for the most part confessedly men of this world, are more capable of the christian grace of forbearance, when occasion calls for it, than those who profess to be influenced by the spirit of Jesus and His Apostles, whether people, elders or ministers?

* Referring to the Coalition Government formed in 1864, of which J. A. McDonald, Cartier and Brown were members.

CHAPTER IV.

IV. THE BASIS OF SUCH A UNION.

1. The only principle on which union would be possible is THE PRINCIPLE OF FORBEARANCE IN REGARD TO ALL THE POINTS OF PAST DIFFERENCE betwixt the bodies to be united.

But what, says some one, are we to give up all that we have been contending for, and declare that our past testimonies have been worse than useless? Not necessarily so. The attitudes of the different sections of Presbyterianism in Canada may have done their work in aiding the *morale* of the different churches in Scotland in the days of conflict; but the conflict may be said to be over even there, as all parties have now taken their places; and inasmuch as it was never more than sympathy on the one hand and the other that led to the past respective positions, they now cease to have much meaning; and, if it be desirable otherwise that we unite, they need not hinder.

Besides, it is doubtful whether any thoughtful observer, not committed to any side, who considers the condition of things existing in Canada up till 1844, would not say that it was worse than impolitic to disturb the harmony and peace of a Church, doing its work faithfully and well here, merely in order to affect the state of things in another part of the world. It was surely introducing a present and palpable evil to accomplish what was after all only an intangible and sentimental good; sacrificing the interests of our Church and people for the sake of aiding and comforting one side or other in the Churches of the Mother Country.

These remarks, indeed, apply chiefly to the two larger sections of the Church proposed to be united. The United Presbyterians may, if any section may, arrogate to themselves the right of shaping a Presbyterian Church in these Provinces; for to them must be given the credit of supplying the first missionaries, not only to Canada, but to all the British Provinces. They, indeed, in large measure surrendered the field in 1840, the Church of Scotland Ministers in the colony having extended their numbers and attained to positions of influence, so as to be able to form a Synod in connection with the parent Church; but all of them did not agree to this arrangement, and at that period, and for many years afterwards, some of the points of practical difference between the established Church and the U. P. Church at home existed here.

But whether an impartial and thoughtful observer would say that there never was any ground of difference between Presbyterians in this colony, or not, he would say that *now* at least, considering their respective positions, there is nothing to keep them asunder, if it should be to their advantage to unite; so that in advocating this Union, we are not justly liable to the charge of latitudinarianism, or to be met with the statement, that the principles and advantages set forth in this essay, would warrant a Union between all denominations of christians in this land. The different sections of Presbytery are all branches of the same stream: in doctrine, in history, and in Church polity, we are one. Episcopacy, Methodism and Congregationalism, are the products of another country and people, different in their genius and temperament from

the people of Scotland and the North of Ireland ; and we and they could never coalesce. Besides, there are differences of both doctrine and Church policy which would render a Union with them impracticable ; but between the Presbyterians in this colony, there is no difference that any one except a Presbyterian can apprehend—and even he has to acknowledge that such difference is of no *practical* moment. It is indeed so unimportant and unreal that truth is not compromised, and the most sensitive conscience can scarcely be offended, by the exercise of forbearance upon it. But these differences have been already virtually disposed of by the Union that has taken place ; for between the Church of Scotland Section and the Free Church Section there is no difference, except in feeling and sentiment ; and when the latter found a basis of Union with the United Presbyterians, there could be no difficulty in the former doing so.

And lest it should be said that the result would be to produce a Church without any vigour, because having no particular testimony, it is sufficient that there are evils of a present, felt nature to be grappled with, besides that Presbyterianism is historically a protest against prelacy on the one hand and Congregationalism on the other, and would still have its occupation as such in this country. The *real* evils are the prevalence of the idolatry of reason and the discarding of the principle of faith on the one hand, and on the other hand, the prevalence of ritualism, which consists in the exaltation of sensuism and credulity, and the dethronement of reason. To correct these opposite tendencies of the age, and to keep the even balance be-

tween faith and reason, ought to furnish a platform to that branch of the Church which has always claimed to be the most thoroughly reformed of all modern Churches, and to have returned the most nearly to the model and spirit of the first christian Church.

It is having great real evils to grapple with that keeps the Church from morbid self-dissection ; for, so long as the ancient Church had heathenism to contend with in Europe and Asia, it was one ; but when this contention ended in triumph for christianity, then the church broke up into fragments. And the probability is, if Scotland had not become so thoroughly protestant at the reformation, and so more outward work had been left for the Church to do at home ; or if the Church of Scotland having got her machinery at work at home, had then turned its energies to propagating the gospel in foreign lands ; there would not have been so many divisions amongst Presbyterians, breaking out from within on the slightest grounds.

2. WE CAN ALL AGREE TO ACCEPT THE WESTMINSTER CONFSSION AND CATECHISM AS OUR SYMBOLS, whatever our other differences ; just as all classes in the Empire, whatever be their interpretation of the rights of citizens, are agreed to rejoice in the British Flag. All British Statesmen are sworn to support the Queen and Constitution, and yet how great is the diversity of ways in which they seek to fulfil this obligation ! In like manner although slightly different meanings may be attached to certain chapters and clauses of our Symbols, by different sections of Presbyterians, all are willing to accept of them with explanation. And although certain parts of those

standards may in the opinion of some, be capable of improvement, the same difficulty would be found to attend any attempt at change that has been experienced in attempting to alter the English Book of Common Prayer, or to obtain a new version of the Scriptures into our language. Men cannot be found to agree upon the changes and emendations required, although all are agreed that some changes are necessary; and the same latitude must be allowed in dealing with the standards that is granted in dealing with the English Scriptures—that of explaining and annotating whenever the reader feels that such explanation or annotation is necessary to free the passage from obscurity and prevent misconception. This is, in effect, what has been done in the case of the Union amongst Presbyterians in Australia, in Nova Scotia, and in Canada, so far as union has yet gone.

3. THE UNITED CHURCH WOULD BEAR THE SAME RELATIONSHIP TO ALL SECTIONS OF PRESBYTERIANISM IN SCOTLAND. Of course the *nominal* connection with those churches would be broken off. No demand could be made to any one section of them in particular for either men or money; but the probability is that both men and money in proportion to our necessities would be furnished to us to the extent they are at present, without any solicitation on our part, as is being done in the case of the United Church in Australia, Committees having been appointed in each of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland for the purpose of aiding that Church.

And there can be no question, that in the event, which in the nature of things must be rare, of a minister, licensed

by any of the churches of Scotland who should cast in his lot with us, getting a call back to a charge in the mother-country, there would be little difficulty in the Church at home receiving him without a forfeiture of status by his entering our United Church. That is to say, a minister of the Established Church becoming a minister of the United Church of Canada, would retain his old status in the Established Church of Scotland; a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, his in the Free Church; and a minister of the U. P. Church, his in the U. P. Church. But if a U. P. minister, we shall say, sought admission into the Church of Scotland, through the channel of the United Church in Canada, his relations to the established church would be nowise different from that of a U. P. minister in Scotland. And when the fostering kindness of the three parent churches is considered, it would only be a fitting thing that, previous to a Union in Canada, their approbation of that union should be sought, as it would no doubt be given; and by conference, an understanding might be arrived at as to the future relations of individual Ministers, belonging to the United Church of Canada, to the different branches of Presbyterians in the mother country, if any of them should seek admission into one or other of these churches:

In any case, even though the relations to the parent churches, should be broken up by connection with a United Church here—which is not likely; it would surely not be worth hindering the advantages that we have seen would accrue from Union, for the sake of the rare chance of one of our Scottish Ministers getting a call back to his native country; and any one who covets a berth in any of the

parent Churches, would no doubt be willing to submit to such enquiries as those Churches think necessary in admitting strangers to their privileges.

4. It has been said in discussing the subject of Union in the Synod and press of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland, WHY WILL NOT THE OTHERS COME BACK TO US? Let them come back and we will receive them. We have seen that if any section has the right to assume to be the parent church in these Provinces, it is not the church of Scotland, but the U. P. section. And then, apart from the ungraciousness of the proposition; such a proposition as no loving father, to use the favourite metaphor employed on these occasions, would make to his prodigal son, for certainly its spirit is not that of the father in the parable; that proposition cannot be made in sincerity, for 90 out of every 100 of them never were in that church, and so going back "is not the word." There are only about a dozen in the Canada Presbyterian Church, and the same number in the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, now remaining of those who belonged to the latter Church in 1844. But if this call to *come back* means that all the Canada Presbyterian Ministers are welcome into the Church of Scotland in Canada, it is enough to show the insincerity of the challenge that some of those putting it forth, have uniformly and with great consistency, from the year 1834 onwards, opposed the admission, on equal terms, of Ministers not educated in connection with the Church of Scotland, either at home or in Canada. The only way to effect Union is to meet on

middle ground, as Cæsar used to meet the Gallic Generals; one cannot pretend to a right to absorb the other.

5. BUT WHAT GUARANTEE IS THERE THAT IF THEY WERE UNITED THEY WOULD LONG REMAIN SO? Would not the united Church be in danger of again falling to pieces for want of homogeneousness? The tendency of the age, for one thing, would help to keep them together, until such time as the old division lines had been forgotten. And the very fact of uniting would imply a determination *not* to break up again. A sense of consistency too would help to prevent a recurrence by any of the parties to the Union, to the old party watch-words, so that a revival of the old cries would be impossible. And then if the teachings of the past go for anything, they should tell us the folly of dis-union and the wisdom of keeping together. The Secession Church first broke into fragments, and then came together again; and the principle of union, in this case, has been long enough in operation to be thoroughly tested and found sufficient. The same is true of Union in the U. P. Church of North America and in the Church of the Lower Provinces; and so far as the Union in Canada has yet been tried, it has worked most harmoniously. Here, then, are *facts* which should go to combat the speculations of those who predict that the Union, we are arguing for, would be of short duration. There must be no more seceding by minorities, because they cannot get things their own way. "Come ye out from among them," is a sublime motto, when a minority in a Church feel that the great principles of christianity are lost sight of in that Church, and cannot, by any effort of theirs, be restored, as when Luther

came out of the Roman Church ; but in all matters of detail and discipline, we should have sufficient confidence in the power of truth to prevail, and should not lose our patience if we do not find it succeed all at once. By having this confidence, and feeling that right is on his side, every man should work *within* the Church until he finds his views prevail. Government by a majority is the principle of Presbyterianism, and by keeping this principle intact, there would be no danger of new divisions growing out of an United Church.

6. THE NAME. Inasmuch as the whole of the Confederate Provinces have obtained the name of Canada, and inasmuch as the idea of union, which we have applied only to the Provinces hitherto known as Canada, should in time be extended so as to embrace the Presbyterians in the Maritime Provinces as well—and this could be easily effected upon the general principles contained in this essay, forming a church of which all Scotsmen might be proud—the most suitable name would be THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA. This would be different from any of the names *now* existing. And steps should be taken at once, in case of Union, to have a general Assembly ; and for that purpose Ontario or Upper Canada might be divided into four Synods, and Quebec or Lower Canada into one to begin with ; with the prospect of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island coming in at no distant date.*

* If Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Vancouver's Island and British Columbia will enter the confederation, and the name of *Canada* be applied to the whole, it is obvious that the most fitting

CHAPTER V.

V. MEANS TO BE USED TO BRING UNION ABOUT.

1. Let the ministers of the different churches indicated inculcate from the pulpits, with Jesus and Paul, that charity is the chief of Christian graces, and let them exhibit it in their own sentiments and characters.

2. Let there be not only an interchange of social courtesies between the ministers, but also a frequent exchange of pulpits.

3. Specially, let the *people* take the matter into their hands, as it is properly their question—*they* have to bear the burden of disunion, and they would be the gainers by union; and if they said *union there must be*, the ministers would have to follow. The people have taken the lead in all the unions that have taken place thus far*; so that union

title for a church coextensive with this supposed Dominion, would be that suggested above, "THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA." If, however, they choose to maintain a separate political existence, while the Presbyterian population desire to be ecclesiastically united with their brethren of the same faith in the DOMINION, the proper name, although a clumsier one, would then be, "THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA."

* This remark holds equally true of the union now in contemplation as of former ones. In the preceding part of this essay, it is said that the first movement towards union, at least so far as the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland, is concerned, was made by the overture introduced into the Synod of that Church in 1860. But the good work thus inaugurated by the Rev. Dr. George was greatly beholden to the meetings of the elders of the different Presbyterian Churches in the City of Montreal, held in the interest of Union. The meeting held in the house of Mr. J. C. Becket, in that city on the 14th March, 1866, at which 20 elders were present, and the proceedings at which were

is *their* work, as there is no doubt that *disunion* has always been the creation of ministers.

4. Let the subject be quietly discussed in families and communities and congregations first. But let it not be thrust upon unwilling synods—let no effort be made to hurry it on before men's minds and hearts are prepared to give it a cordial support. Let the Synods be the last places in which it is to be discussed. Let the churches first speak from below, and speak in such a tone and with so much of hearty unanimity, that to introduce it into the Synods would be to carry it with enthusiasm. This would be bringing forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, all our people joining in the cry, "grace, grace unto it!"

concurrented in by 10 others who were not present, greatly strengthened the hands of the friends of Union in the respective Synods, eliciting, by their resolutions and by the results of their correspondence with all the elders of the two Churches, the fact that not only in the City of Montreal, the most influential quarter of both Churches, but throughout the entire Synod, two-thirds of the sessions, and presumably also the same proportion of the people whom they represented, were in favour of Union. To the elders in Montreal, therefore, not a little credit is due in hastening Union.