

tian union, if it can be brought about without sacrifice of principle, is surely also a good thing. It deserves some sacrifice also. It is a fine thing to be true to principle; but it is a finer thing still to sacrifice personal or party scruples in the view of a common Christian good. It is obvious that the abolition of Patronage has not removed the chief obstacles of the Free Church—as a Church—to reunion with the Established Church. But if there are those within the Free Church who think that much has been done to remove those obstacles—who, in fact, can barely see them any longer from *their point of view*—it is hardly becoming on the part of members of the Established Church to flout the reverse of this in their face. Every man should get credit for his convictions; and if there were two or three, or half-a-dozen, Free Church ministers to signify their wish to join the Established Church since the abolition of Patronage, they are, upon any ground of fairness, just as much entitled to honesty and credit, from their point of view, as those who obstinately refuse to join. It is a prevailing but fallacious idea, that honesty and high-mindedness are more associated with obstinacy in maintaining a position once taken up, than in yielding a position when it is seen to be untenable. Nothing could be more reasonable, therefore, than to open a way for the honourable return of any Free Church minister who may possibly wish to return to the National Church, if this could be done consistently with the Church's constitution and dignity. The Church has passed in its day Acts of exclusion. These may have been necessary in their time. But there is a time also for Acts of inclusion, and especially in reference to those who have received the same education as her present ministers, and been ordained by those who have gone out from her pale. The "Overture and Interim Act on the admission of Ministers of other Presbyterian Churches" contemplates this object. No minister whatever who has *not received an education the same as that received by our own ministers, and been ordained in the same manner*, can be admitted under this Act. It may remain inoperative. But an Act of comprehension so reasonable and well-founded—even should it lead to no re-

sults whatever—is yet creditable to the Church, both to its Christian spirit and its constitutional breadth and freedom of action.

The only remaining portion of the Assembly proceedings which deserves mention at present is the Overture sent down to Presbyteries anent the Subscription of Elders to the Confession of Faith. This Overture was agreed to be transmitted unanimously. It opens up a most important subject, which it is to be hoped will be calmly and fully discussed. It is the result of the labour of a committee on the Eldership which has worked diligently for some years. It claims, as such, respectful consideration. It is intended to meet grave difficulties which cannot be long ignored. This intention should secure it, if not from argument and opposition, yet from mere cavil or unreasoning rejection. J. T.

### What are the Real Foes of the Christian Cause?

BY THE REV. D. MACRAE.

Continuing his interesting lectures, 1st Cor. xii. 1—6, on last Sabbath, the Rev. D. Macrae said, we have seen what were the principal cause of the agitation existing in the church, to which this epistle was addressed; what fired zeal, stimulated fervor, worked energy, and created a life among its members, which they mistook for religion, but which was really the feverish life of an envy and a dissension that tendered to their ruin. They were animated, not by love to Christ—His name was not a rallying centre of peace and good order—but a war cry of strife and party feeling. They were banded together not by sorrow at the actual evils existing in the world around them. No. They were letting the spirit of that world pervade their ranks, while they were busily engaged in magnifying the differences between sect and sect.

How is it in our day? What, in our time, excites the liveliest interest of men in questions bearing upon morality, religion, and the higher life of our race? Is it sorrow and shame at the degrading habits of vice, and the actualities of crime that occur from day to day in our communities? Are we, as Christians by profession, concerned very deeply