

Church missionary, met with an accident whilst in company with Dr Wilson, when travelling from Poona to Sattara. The bullocks got off the road, and with the vehicle and passengers fell down a steep bank. Dr Duif suffered some slight injury, which, however, did not prevent his continuing his journey. Dr Wilson escaped with a slight bruise.

AUSTRALIA.

PROPOSED UNION OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA.

The Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria held its annual meeting on the 6th November at Geelong.

The Rev. Dr MACKAY stated that negotiations for union had been going on for two years past. He believed that the articles of union, which had at length been drawn up, were on a basis which met with mutual consent.

The Rev. Dr CAIRNS read the articles of Union, which were as follows:—

“Articles of Union between the Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria and the Synod of Victoria (colonial branch of Established Church), agreed to by the Union Committee of the former body, and submitted to the Union Committee of the latter:—

“I. That the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the form of Presbyterian Church Government, the Directory for Public Worship, and the Second Book of Discipline, be the standards and formulas of this Church.

“II. That according to the views and principles laid down in the said Confession, on the duty of the civil magistrate in regard to religion, setting forth that he is bound and required to use his official power and influence for the maintenance, protection, and support of the truth, and the restraining and putting down error and ungodliness, but that this be done only in accordance with the requirements of the Word of God, and within the sphere to which mere civil authority is by that Word restricted; and that, in subscribing to the said Confession, the ministers and elders of this Church are not to be understood as encouraging or countenancing persecuting and intolerant principles, or as professing any views inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment.

“III. That, according to the rules and principles laid down in the said Confes-

sion; in regard to the sole Headship of Christ over his Church, and the authority with which He has invested her rulers, they have an independent and exclusive jurisdiction over the government of the Church in all spiritual things, and that it belongs to them alone to admit or exclude members and office-bearers, and to license or ordain ministers, to induct and settle them over congregations, and to suspend or depose them: and that with these and the like functions, it is equally presumptuous and unwarrantable in the magistrate to interfere, and faithless and sinful in the Church to permit or submit to such interference; and that from any of the decisions of her judicatories, in reference to such spiritual matters, there can be no appeal to any civil court or ruler whatever.

“IV. That, according to the views and principles laid down in the Confession of Faith and Second Book of Discipline, in regard to the Headship of Christ over the members of the Church individually, they have rights and privileges secured to them which may not be interfered with; and that the rulers are to exercise their authority so as to have respect to these, and take care that no elder or minister be intruded on any congregation contrary to their will; and, in particular, that it shall be a fundamental rule of this Church, that the election of a minister, ruling elders, and deacons, belongs to the members of each separate congregation in full communion, the judicatories of the Church superintending and regulating the same.

“V. That this Synod, while holding itself at liberty to maintain communion and correspondence with all other faithful Presbyterian Churches throughout the world, has yet of right, and is determined to maintain, a separate and independent character and position, and to preserve unimpaired a supreme and independent jurisdiction over its subordinate judicatories, and congregations, and people, irrespective of any other Church or body whatever; and that all privileges, whether ecclesiastical or temporal, held by any of the ministers, office-bearers, or other members, in virtue of their office and membership respectively, are and shall be possessed and enjoyed free from the interference or controul of any ecclesiastical body foreign to itself.

“VI. That the foregoing principles be summed up in the subjoined formula, and be signed by every licentiate before