

PRESBYTERY OF STIRLING.—OVERTURE ON CHRISTIAN UNION.—Early in November notice was given in the Free Presbytery of Stirling, of a motion on Christian union, by Mr. McCorkle of St. Ninians. At the meeting in December, the motion was brought forward in the shape of an overture to the Assembly, which Mr. McCorkle proposed and supported in a speech of considerable length. After several members had expressed their opinion on the overture, the discussion was adjourned. The Presbytery met again on the 6th instant, and the whole question of union, in connection with the recent movement in Liverpool, was deliberately considered. The Presbytery appointed a Committee to report on the overture, and, in the meantime, agreed to adopt the substance of it, and resolved, "that the Assembly be overtured to take the subject of Christian Union into consideration, and to give no countenance to any scheme of union inconsistent with the principles and the constitution of the Free Church of Scotland." At the same meeting Mr. Beith read a series of resolutions with reference to this question, drawn up by himself, and which he proposed the Presbytery should publish. They bore very strongly against the projected union between members of our own Church and ministers of the Establishment. The resolutions were referred to the Committee on the overture to be included in this Report.

FRANCE.—Colportage is already in vigorous operation all over France, now that the winter, which drives the people to their homes and firesides, is fairly commenced. In the south of France, the agents of the Geneva Evangelical Society are scattering the Divine seed far and near,—labouring, praying, selling the Holy Scriptures,—reading to little groups of hearers the blessed truths of the Word of God,—visiting the towns and villages, and hamlets upon their errands of mercy,—sometimes animated with the most cheering evidences of success, at other times encountering every species of obstacle and opposition. This department of missionary labour has for many years engaged the interest, and called forth the exertions of the American Foreign Evangelical Society; and it has been customary either for wealthy individuals, or more frequently for single congregations, to undertake to maintain one of these humble pioneers of the preachers of the gospel during the months of winter. Several friends in Scotland have felt that the same system of supporting colporteurs might be introduced in our own country; and two individuals in Paisley, about two months ago, undertook to pay for the maintenance of a colporteur connected with the Geneva Society during the commencing winter months.

The Continental Committee of the Free Church convinced of the importance of this department of labour, have already voted £200 for the support of ten colporteurs during the winter months. The journals of these devoted labourers will be sent from time to time to the Secretary of the Committee, and will furnish interesting details of their difficulties, and trials, and labours, and successes. It is farther gratifying to learn, that other individuals and congregations are beginning to follow the example of the friends of the cause in Paisley, so that, we trust, it will not be long before Scottish Churches will begin to enter with interest and with energy on the great work of scattering the Divine and immortal seed of the kingdom over the continent of Europe, and especially over France, the most important of all the continental countries, and that in which God has granted to His Word the greatest success.

THE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLE.—what is it? A writer in the United Secession Magazine for January lays down three propositions, which are as follows:—1. "That the kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom, distinct from the kingdoms of this world." 2. "That it is the duty of those who are the subjects of Christ's kingdom, or member of his Church, to support the ordinances of his gospel." 3. "That it belongs to the Church and not to human governments, to extend the gospel for the salvation of men." Now, we are not Voluntaries, nor are we of those who are a whit more reconciled to the *Voluntary principle* by the position which evangelical Churches have been compelled to assume, namely, that of com-

plete, and, as we take it, final separation from civil governments, yet, although no Voluntaries, we can, honestly, as we do most heartily, subscribe to the three propositions in which the writer before us attempts to embody the *Voluntary principle*, or at least his own views of what that principle is. This is curious. It is not less curious, that out of every ten expositions of the *Voluntary principle*, given by those who ought to know it best, there are not fewer than nine in which we could coincide. There must be a great deal of misconception somewhere. There is, we suspect, some little discrepancy between the *Voluntary principle* and the *principles of Voluntaries*,—that is, there are few who hold the *Voluntary principle* in its ultimate form.—*Witness*

DEPARTURE OF THE FIRST MISSION SHIP FROM LIVERPOOL.—The mission ship Warree sailed from the Trafalgar Dock on Tuesday morning, for Old Calabar, on the West coast of Africa, provided with everything that human forethought can suggest for establishing and prosecuting missionary operations there, under the auspices of the United Secession Church of Scotland. The idea of this mission originated with the emancipated negroes in the island of Jamaica, who have embraced Christianity, and now long for the evangelization of their fatherland. This desire was communicated to the kings and chiefs of Old Calabar, and by these a formal invitation was given for missionaries to take up their residence with them. Four of the missionaries who have sailed in the Warree are coloured persons, two of them negroes, the other two descendants of the African race. Their constitutions are thus adapted to the climate. To engage in this work they have cheerfully relinquished comfortable situations and favourable worldly prospects in Jamaica, and accompany their minister, the Rev. Mr. Wallell, on his errand of mercy. The use of the ship Warree is the spontaneous gift of an opulent merchant of this town, who has done much for the civilization of Africa.

AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE.—The Rev. Adolph Monod gives the following illustration of the benefits arising from the reading of the bible:—"The mother of a family was married to an infidel, who made a jest of religion in the presence of his own children; yet she succeeded in bringing them all up in the fear of the Lord. I one day asked her how she preserved them from the influence of a father whose sentiments were so openly opposed to her own? This was her answer—"Because, to the authority of a father, I did not oppose the authority of a mother, but that of God. From their earliest years my children have always seen the Bible upon my table. This holy book has constituted the whole of their religious instruction. I was silent that I might allow it to speak. Did they propose a question, did they commit any fault, did they perform any good action, I opened the Bible, and the Bible answered, reproved, or encouraged them. The constant reading of the scriptures has alone wrought the prodigy which surprises you."

KEEPING THE SABBATH.—A French pastor relates the following anecdote:—"In a district in Haute Vienne, where an astonishing revival has lately taken place, and where almost the entire population seem to be desirous of leaving the errors of Romanism, a farmer requested his neighbour, one Saturday, to come over and assist him on the next day in labouring in a field. 'You forget,' replied the neighbour, 'that we are Papists no longer, and that we must not work on the Sabbath.' 'True enough,' said the farmer, 'but really I cannot find time for this piece of work next week.' 'Well, then leave it be, and I will come on Monday and do it alone.' This was agreed upon, and on Monday the Sabbath keeper went and performed alone in his neighbour's field the labour of which he had been requested to do only half. The same man once said, with the simplicity bordering on sublimity, in reply to some who urged that it was impossible to avoid losing money in business without telling falsehoods, 'It is better to lose than to be lost!' Now our friend had not read this in any book, for he does not know how to read."

THE RELIGION OF MONEY.

The following curious document, quoted in the *Archives de Christianisme*, discloses to us the business carried on at Rome, by the Agency of the Roman Catholic Apostolate, established there for transacting certain ecclesiastical matters. We extract from a circular addressed to the Roman Catholic clergy in France. After expressing a firm belief that any work tending to the glory of God, the edification of the faithful, and the advancement of the Holy See, will meet with the approbation of the clergy, it goes on to say, "I have the honour of transmitting to you a list of the chief requests which the Agency charges itself with at Rome;" and this is accompanied with a hope that orders may be sent gratis, as in that case alone prompt attention will be given to obtain, if possible, what had been solicited:

LIST OF DEMANDS, WITH CHARGES ANNEXED.

	Fr. c
For obtaining the special favour of an "altar privileged," by means of which, plenary indulgence may be obtained for souls in purgatory,.....	13 50
For obtaining plenary indulgence, after having confessed and communicated,.....	10 80
For obtaining the same favours twice a month, both for one's self and for parents	10 80
Dispensation from the celebration of certain enjoined masses,.....	27 00
Dispensation from the recitation of the daily service of the Church, and other works of obligation,.....	21 60
Permission to perform certain duties reserved to Bishops,.....	12 50

These are specimens of some of the charges made by this Apostolic Agency for obtaining certain supposed privileges. We may add, in the words of the writer in the *Archives*, in reading such things one is tempted to believe that he is dreaming.

NOVA SCOTIA.—ST. JOHN'S CHURCH SOIREE, HALIFAX.—The soiree in behalf of the funds of St. John's Church, came off last evening, agreeably to announcement,—his Worship the Mayor presiding, supported by the Rev. Messrs. Robb and Begg. The vice-chair was ably filled by James Foreman, jun. Esq., supported by the Rev. Mr. McTavish and Dr. Fraser of the rifles. The company, numbering about 220, were served with tea and coffee, which was succeeded through the evening with a variety of cake and fruit. Dr. Belcher asked the blessing, and Rev. Mr. Smith returned thanks, after which the whole company joined in singing the 100th Psalm. The meeting was then addressed by the Rev. Messrs. Robb, McLeod, and Begg, Joseph Howe, Esq., Dr. Belcher, and Rev. Mr. McTavish. The meeting closed about half-past ten, singing Bishop Heber's Missionary Hymn,—Rev. Mr. Begg pronouncing the benediction. The proceeds amounted to about £20. For the very successful accomplishment of the undertaking, the company were indebted to the ladies, whose untiring efforts were seconded by the members of the Young Men's Association, about twenty-four of whom had the pleasure of waiting upon the company.—*Halifax Morning Post, Dec. 27.*

HOME MISSION FUND. PRESBYTERY OF HAMILTON.

DANIEL MACNAB, ESQ., TREASURER.

Ladies' Association, Dundas.....	£8 0 0
Guelph congregation.....	11 10 0
Galt do.....	1 17 6
Ladies' Association, Saltfleet.....	3 0 0
Woodstock congregation, per Mr. Smith	3 5 0
Dundas and Ancaster congregation, per Mr. Dixon.....	5 17 11
Aldborough congregation.....	5 10 0
Welland do.....	6 10 0
Dunwich do.....	2 10 0

THE SUSTENTATION BOARD OF THE Presbyterian Church meets, by adjournment, at Hamilton, on the 21st inst., at two o'clock P. M., in Knox's Church,

JAMES WALKER, Sec.

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