

erous spirit of suspicion and calumny against brethren in Christ, whose opinions on circumstantial matters, because they somewhat differ from their own, they unscrupulously, and too hastily, condemn, whilst there is good reason to believe them to be wholesome scriptural truths. There is even reason to fear that such differences from themselves, perhaps in some instances only seeming differences, in matters only of church polity, have on some occasions been designedly magnified or misrepresented for sectarian ends. As long as such a spirit is cherished, in any degree, by leading individuals in the Presbyterian Church of Canada, any negotiations for union would be a waste of time, and a beating of the air.

In their Resolution they first express their earnest desire for union, provided it can be attained on scriptural principles. We cordially reciprocate this desire; but never can it be obtained on scriptural principles while they shut themselves up in the darkness of sectarianism. A union on scriptural principles is certainly not a union on points connected with the civil magistrate's power, otherwise we know for certain that there is no union among themselves; for we are quite aware of the fact that multitudes of their people, and not a few of their ministers, hold our principles on this point; and agree with us that difference here, even as wide as can be conceived to exist between those who rigidly maintain the Establishment Principle, and those who as rigidly maintain the Voluntary, should still be matter of mutual forbearance in order to a scriptural union. The Free Church, we fear, will always be a divided church, a house divided against itself, while they insist on what they never had, and never can have,—a uniformity of opinion on the power of the civil magistrate in matters of religion:—at least till they fall from the seemingly arrogant and intolerant notions of some of their ministers, and embrace more mild, rational, and scriptural views. It would be well that the Free Church would tell the public what exactly they mean by scriptural principles. Forbearance, christian forbearance, to a far greater extent than would be necessary to unite and consolidate their denomination and ours, is a scriptural principle. But we fear they are far deficient in the exercise of this forbearance, and even in understanding what it means.

In the Resolution they "declare their willingness to consider opinions on the lawfulness of State-endowments without erastian submission to the State as a matter of forbearance." This may seem to some a great stretch of christian forbearance. To us it appears to be no forbearance at all. The following incontrovertible sentiments from that admirable "Reply" to a "*Friendly Address to Dissenters by Ministers of the Established Church*," at the time of the struggle which originated the Free Church, may be here quoted as a lesson to those who are able and willing to learn on this subject: "If you will depend on State-pay you must be subject to State-control. Is the State to pay the clergy, preach and live as they may? You do not think so. They are paid to give bread; must they be paid for giving poison? With your whole hearts, you say, no. But must not the State then, which concerned itself with the 'creed and constitution' of the church, in order to see that all was sound before it gave its sanction, concern itself still, to see that the creed be not corrupted, or the constitution invaded or set at nought; or otherwise desert the duty it undertook in taking care of the creed at the beginning? And if so, is not this effective supervision and control, besides the pecuniary influence? And is that body independent over which this power is stretched? Ought the spiritual church of the Redeemer to be thus subject to a foreign or secular power? We feel some surprise, we must say, that this should be questioned, particularly by those who, like you, have honestly, and unreservedly, subscribed the Westminster Confession. In defining the duties of the magistrate in regard to religion, it is not a little remarkable, his endowing the church is not included, the money check is not thought of, but sufficient powers of a different sort are assigned to him. He hath authority, and it is his duty to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions or abuses in worship and discipline prevented, or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call Synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God." Our friends of the Free Church tell us "that they do not understand the passages relating to the duty of the civil magistrate as teaching or sanctioning an erastian control of the church by the civil magistrate, or the persecution of individuals for conscience' sake." But what right have they, or any one, to put any construction on English words but what the language itself bears; and if this passage, to which they subscribe *in toto*, does not involve erastian control