

So gentle, unassuming were his ways,
That many sneer'd, as it will ever be.

Life grows less bright, the hopes of Spring
depart.

And Summer joys; Autumn sheds withered
leaves.

The dead crowd out the living from the heart,
That grave cast sombre shades of grief re-
ceives.

Oh! warning loud, that death of hurried doom,
But prayer, not tears, 'tis fittest to employ
That the poor Widow's and the Orphan's
gloom

May yield to peace, whose light naught ever
can destroy.

CHATHAM GLEANER.



To the Churches of Christ, organized on Presbyterian principles, throughout the World.

Churches of the Presbyterian family are found, though under a variety of names, in Europe, in America, in Australia, and in the mission fields of Asia and Africa. If these could be regarded as one communion, they would constitute, perhaps, the largest Protestant Church in the world. But, at present, they are united by no visible bond, either of fellowship or of work. Of late, however, it has occurred simultaneously to a number of minds in different countries, that those who hold to the Presbyterian form of Church government may, in perfect consistency with their well-known and general interest in all the branches of the Church Universal, inquire for some way of coming into formal communion with each other, and of promoting great causes by joint action.

It is not proposed to form an organic union of all the Presbyterian Churches throughout the world. It is evident that one General Assembly could not regulate, with advantage, the internal economy of Churches in such widely separated countries as Switzerland, Germany, France, England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, the United States, and Canada. Great injury might arise from any attempt to interfere with these different Churches in the management of their own affairs; for all ecclesiastical history shows that serious dangers are to be apprehended from the establishment of any central power, which would be almost sure to interfere with the liberty of local Churches and of individuals. Some Denominations, moreover, have grand historical recollections which they wish to

cherish; and some regard it as their duty to bear a testimony in behalf of truths which others seem to them to overlook. In these circumstances, the Churches will not be asked to merge their separate existence in one large organization, but, retaining their self-government, to meet with the other members of the Presbyterian family to consult for the good of the Church at large and for the glory of God.

In order that a Church be entitled to join this union, it should hold to the Presbyterian form of government, and have a Creed in accordance with the *Consensus* of the Reformed Churches. No new Creed or Formulary of any kind is contemplated.

Several formal steps have been taken with the view of effecting this Presbyterian union. The subject was specially brought before the great meeting held in Philadelphia in 1872, to celebrate the Tercentenary of the Scottish Reformation. The General Assembly of 1873 of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, unanimously adopted resolutions in favour of an Ecumenical Council of Presbyterian Churches, and appointed a committee to have its resolutions carried into effect. In the same year the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland passed a series of like resolutions; and it is ready to join with other Churches in seeking the same great end.

Having respect to this concurrent expression of feeling, the Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America availed themselves of the presence of so many Presbyterian ministers and elders at the Conference of the Evangelical Alliance in New York, in 1873, to hold a meeting for a comparison of views on this subject. The meeting was held on October 6th. About one hundred and fifty persons attended, coming from various Presbyterian denominations in widely distant countries; from the principal Presbyterian Churches in the United States and the Dominion of Canada; from England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland; from Italy and Germany.* The utmost cordiality was shown at the meeting, and the following resolutions were adopted unanimously:

1. That whereas the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, at their last meetings, passed resolutions in

*The French-speaking deputies to the Alliance were otherwise engaged that evening, but a separate meeting was afterwards held with them, when they approved most heartily of the action that had been taken.