

this good work, this consummation devoutly to be wished! But—

2. Another course of action, not at all inconsistent with the former, but rather, indeed, supplemental and essential to it, may, in conclusion, be pointed out as incumbent upon all who desire church union. It is that we see by our faithfulness and activity to make our Church, as at present constituted, an instrument for good, a reality in the land. We should never forget that the order indicated in Scripture, is "first pure and then peaceable," and that vigorous spiritual life, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ the head of the universal church, is indispensable, and most conducive not only to mystical union through love, with all the members of Christ's body, but also to actual visible union with Christian bodies in our own country. Without such life every professing member of the Church of Scotland is a stumbling-block and cause of offence in her way to unity with other true churches. Than this life nothing is half so efficacious in uprooting pride, in removing prejudices, in sweetening the bitter waters of strife, and in smoothing the way to incorporation. And, therefore, if our Church would be fit and ready to unite with other churches worthy of union, when God in His providence gives opportunity, she must live—in all her members—live in all her parishes, live in earnest—live not as the sleeper lives, unconscious of all that is passing around him, witless what the watchman says of the night,—dreaming—breathing stentorously perhaps—repeating in jumbled confusion of ideas the thoughts and histories of former days, but putting forth no useful exertion, whether of mind or of body. She must live as a church only really lives—in constant watchfulness, in perpetual action, instant in season and out of season in saving souls and in glorifying God. She must "preach the Gospel to the poor."

The people are perishing for lack of knowledge. The heathen are sunk in the pit of corruption. From the lanes and alleys of our large cities, from the overgrown villages of our mining and manufacturing districts, from the remote regions of our highlands and islands, from the log cabins of our expatriated countrymen in the colonies, from the weary-footed tribes of Israel, from the burning plains of India and of Africa, from China, travelling in unprecedented excitement from every corner and quarter of the world, is coming to us the affecting cry, "Come over and help us." We live as a church in answering that appeal, up to the measure of our ability; and in girding ourselves to discharge the duty of aiding to evangelise the world, we at once, most glorify God our Saviour, and best pave the way for future union with all the faithful churches of the land.

The union based upon such a foundation is perhaps most practicable. It is certainly most likely to be permanent. Common action in a common cause is the best anti-

dote to animosity—the most effectual bond of concord among those whom former strife has alienated.

Suppose that at present we should seek reunion directly by itself. Suppose we should summon a grand convocation of the leading men of all the Churches, and try by argument, conference, and debate, to remove the obstacles lying in the way of general incorporation, and is it not more than probable that the cause of union would be hindered, not advanced by such an attempt, that divisions would be multiplied, not healed, and that points of dissension, instead of disappearing, would only swell into larger dimensions, and be exaggerated into greater importance. But let our Church, while removing such grounds of disunion as arise from the subject of patronage, instead of prematurely attempting by unlikely means, impossible or improbable coalitions, engage with her whole heart and soul in prosecuting such schemes as the Endowment Scheme, in the great work of evangelising men, the heathen at home and the heathen abroad, and in the zealous prosecution of such enterprises, such enlargement of spirit will be gained, as, rising superior to all party prejudices, to all narrow sectarian jealousies, will not only embrace in the bonds of charity, but eventually rush into manifest union with all that are like-minded in the land.

Only let the work of missions go on,—go on as it has never yet gone on, with the whole heart, and soul, and strength of the Church thrown into it. Let us rise above such miserable disputes as have recently agitated the Church,—for instance, on the question of grants in aid in India. Let us seek to accomplish some really great work for our Lord and Master at home or abroad, and be assured that the accomplishment of this will, more than any rallying cry, more than any adroit stroke of policy, more than any formal overtures of peace and reconciliation with them, gather our estranged brethren back to us, and make our Church truly the Church of the nation.

We have recently seen an example of this in the civil and political intercourse of nations. For ages the British and the French had been horn and sworn enemies. On many a field incarnadined with blood they had occupied opposing sides. Agincourt and Waterloo, with many a dismal day of death between, had seen them slaughter each other by thousands, till at last they seemed pitted as foemen for ever,—jealousy, hatred, envy, revenge, conspiring to separate them even more effectually than the intervening chanel of the ocean. Vain were all diplomatic protocols,—vain all royal visits,—vain all courtly negotiations to heal and repair a breach so inveterate. But see, at length, in the course of events, a common cause invites them to common duties, to common toils, to common dangers. For freedom's sake they have buckled on their armour, and gone together to the scene of foreign war. On many a deadly field, in many a thundering breach, they have borne

each to each a brother's part. And still, as the heroes in their ranks have fallen before the assault of a common foe, and in death have filled a common grave, as foemen have been routed by their joint exertions, and sympathy in sufferings, rarely paralleled, has strengthened and sanctified mutual regard engendered first on the battle-field,—prejudices, jealousies, former animosities, have one by one shrunk and disappeared, and the alliance between France and England, subject though it be, like everything else on earth, to change, is a fact embazoned on the page of history,—a fact which diplomacy cannot annul nor the changes of dynasties utterly destroy.

And as it has happened in the case of these nations, so would it happen in the case of the Church of Scotland and the various bodies dissenting from her. If, instead of selfishly confining ourselves each to the garrisoning of his own citadel, or to sleeping away precious time in listlessness and inactivity, we would only sally forth in all directions, but with one mind and one purpose, to make a powerful and combined attack on the kingdom of darkness, our mingled counsels, efforts, and prayers, on behalf of others would undoubtedly prove the initial step, the auspicious inauguration of a thorough and permanent union among ourselves, and mutual sympathy and mutual regard would at length issue in complete incorporation. May God, of His infinite mercy to our country, hasten all this in His own good time!

### Influence of Mission in England.

From speech of Dr. Etheridge.

It has often been urged by the opponents of Missionary efforts, that their friends and promoters are exceedingly zealous about the welfare of people ten thousand miles off, but totally unconcerned about the welfare of those nearer, and at home. "Look around you," they say, "and lend your efforts to the amelioration of your own country." We do so, Sir, and we are doing it, among other forms of effort, in this very way—we are fulfilling the trust that Providence has confided to Britain, and without the fulfilment of which, man a blessing that England now enjoys must be of transient duration. The Christian man believes and knows that England has the mission assigned her of extensively evangelizing the world. In attempting the fulfillment of that duty, therefore, we accomplish a work that brings millions of the benedictions of God upon our land, and the failure of which would be, on the other hand, we have every reason to fear, bring maledictions instead. Sir, when the first Christian Missionary who landed on these shores preached the first Christian sermon, there was a voice heard whose echoes are sounding to-day in the most remote parts of the earth. There was planted the germ of a tree the shadowing branches of which are giving shelter to the nations, and the leaves of which can heal them—then, Sir, were laid the foundations of that British empire whose sceptre is going forth with a wider and more beneficent sway every year of time—for it is Christianity that has made Britain what she is, and it is Christianity alone that can make her what she is destined to be. The religion of the Bible is the palladium of our land—it is this which gives wisdom to her—