

significance. O that we enjoyed more abundantly that washing of the Spirit, and displayed to all around that Baptism was not a useless, unmeaning ceremony! Let us ever prove ourselves as in covenant relation with God; and when we claim for our little ones the covenant promise, we shall be ready to observe the covenant requirements, and train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

D. D.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HISTORY.

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Having brought our imperfect notices of the Relief Church to the date of their union with the United Secession in 1847, we now return to the Secession Church, with a view to trace some of its movements from the time of the union of its two branches in 1820, for twenty-seven years, when they and the Relief Church, by uniting together, constituted what is now known by the designation of the United Presbyterian Church.

The union of the two great bodies of the Secession had a visible beneficial effect on the religion of Scotland, and on its propagation over many portions of the world. When these denominations were separate they had a silent influence, and each was gaining ground by advances which, although not slow, were little perceived by the nation at large, or feared as in any likelihood of becoming dangerous to the strength and pretensions of the National Church. In their separate state, the design of Providence by these denominations seems for a long time to have been to preserve evangelical truth and order in some degree of purity, during the prevalence of Arminianism and Erastianism in the National Church. These denominations did ten times more good, as corrections to the Establishment, than could possibly have been done, as Dr. Hetherington supposes, by the return of the Associate Presbytery in 1734; for latterly the evangelical party in the National Church increased in proportion to the progress of the Secession denominations; and after the Relief Church was organized and grew into strength, the influence of this new denomination was felt, along with the others, in allaying the rigorous exercise of Patronage; and hereby the public exhibition and ministrations of religion in the Establishment, which had been much corrupted, were materially improved. But Providence seemed to have higher ends to accomplish by the united energies of the two Secession Churches, to which, in a short time, the Relief Church became an able auxiliary. For no sooner were the two branches of the Secession united than the Established Church, which had been slumbering for ages, was roused to activity, and entered on a series of measures and movements, the results of which have told on the general interests of religion, and are destined, doubtless, to do it in a far higher degree. Whilst they continued asunder, there seemed to be no danger apprehended that they would affect the Establishment either for the better or for the worse. But when fairly and firmly united, and when their zeal and activities were concentrated and directed to the grand ends of Christian Churches, the National Establishment felt as if a powerful rival had sprung up, which called for action on their part, to enable them not only to keep their ground, but to prosecute certain measures of progressive Christian enterprise. Before the union in the Secession, the Established Church was in a great measure asleep; and although the Gospel was preached in many parishes, and the number of faithful ministers within her pale had of late increased, yet there were still many, though not so many as before, who were careless in discharging their ministerial duties, and who, being ignorant of the true Gospel, were contented to preach morality, in-