

REMARKS ON THE DELIVERANCE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA RELATIVE TO UNION WITH THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

[The following paper is from a respected contributor; and the general spirit of it is charitable, catholic and *henotic*; any little asperity, by which some parts of it may be thought to be characterized, obviously proceeding from the vexation of a warm heart, at a felt want of reciprocal liberality and generosity. We know that our readers are divided, in opinion, respecting the course proper to be adopted in the present posture of affairs between the Free Church and our own. Many hold that discussion, on our part, is uncalled for, and inexpedient,—that our distinctive principles are sufficiently known, both by our own body, and by the religious community at large, and are withal very extensively approved of, and are, every day, commending themselves, more and more, to the enlightened and candid portion of our fellow citizens of all denominations. Others contend that we ought to guard ourselves against being misapprehended, not to say misrepresented. To a moderate extent we are willing to afford the latter class the opportunity they deem desirable; trusting that no harm can result from a calm and temperate exhibition of truth. At the same time, still earnestly wishing, and hoping, and praying, for a union with the Free Church, we deprecate exceedingly any thing calculated to excite, or increase, animosity on either side. Leisurely, dispassionate reflection, and continued walking together, in the meantime, so far as we are agreed, we are persuaded, are all that is needed, under the blessing of the God of love and of peace, to lead to the discovery that the two churches are sufficiently one, in their principles, for all the purposes of an honourable, comfortable, and useful, ecclesiastical incorporation. Soon may we see, in the result, a blessed fulfilment, in part, of the prayer of Him who continually intercedes with the Father that His people may all be one.]

We have never been sanguine on the subject of Union with the Free Church: nor do we think it at all desirable now, that by their late Resolution they have given us some better idea of their position and sentiments. Union with them at present, could we suppose it practicable, would throw us back, we fear, at least into the last century, and greatly injure the cause of scriptural consistency and truth. To be united with a church which seems practically to forget that "charity never faileth" would be to renounce that catholic spirit of christian forbearance and christian liberty, by which our denomination is characterized, and to fall back into the unenviable ranks of intolerance and sectarianism. No: we deeply regret to say, there can be no union, and no wish for union, with our brethren of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in the attitude they are now so openly assuming, and with the views they have, we trust, rather hastily expressed. It is, indeed, lamentable, to see a body of men, whom we respect, and whom, in charity, we consider christians, presenting themselves, not to us merely, but to the public at large, in aspects seemingly so unamiable and uncharitable, and so contrary to the genius of that gospel which they are so zealously seeking to propagate. What would their Divine Master, the great King of the church and King of nations, say to them under such an exhibition, were he to speak to them with a voice from heaven? What could He say more than He has done in His word? "Charity suffereth long and is kind: charity envieth not: charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up: doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." It is with deep regret that we perceive any tincture of an opposite spirit among the leaders of this Free Church, and we shall rejoice if we find ourselves mistaken; or, if not, that a different spirit from the Lord may be found soon to pervade their ranks. We doubt not that many of them have the right spirit, were it rightly directed: but we fear that either timidity or indecision prevents them from speaking out. For it is to be deplored, that whilst, as it is believed, the mass of ministers and people in that church can have no sentiments materially different from our own, they seem to permit themselves to be controlled by individuals among themselves, who have got into the use of certain hackneyed phrases and insinuations which savour too much of the ungen-