

ges. To me it was painful to hear the coolness with which these important principles were handled. To me the discussion seemed not at all to enter into the merits of the case. The speakers seemed to speak under restraint, not grappling with the subject as free men should do in a free country.

I could wish some of my Cape Breton friends by my side to hear that discussion, I think it would be at this time a salutary lesson to parties who being once freed from the yoke of bondage desire again to throw down their necks under its galling oppression.

DONALD MORRISON.

UNION IN SCOTLAND.

It is in the highest degree gratifying to observe that the union movement so auspiciously going on in the colonies has commenced in the parent churches. The supreme courts of the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church discussed the subject with the utmost candour and ability, and the practical step was taken by each of appointing Committees to commence negotiations. We think the subject of such great importance and of such general interest to our readers, that we may devote a good deal of space to extracts from addresses delivered by leading men in both the churches.

SPEECH OF DR. CAIRNS.

There are two kinds of difficulties in the way—accidental and essential—the one class arising out of causes that do not at all make a necessary and constant obstacle; and the other class arising out of causes which do. To the first head of accidental difficulties, I refer the short time the subject has been seriously under discussion, the want of cordiality in some quarters between the representatives of different Churches, the occasional quarrels and misunderstandings that may have arisen or may still subsist, the strong love of things as they are, just because they are and have been found to work well. These, I say, are mere accidents; and I do hope that no one will rest much upon them, because they may change any day, and without the slightest change in anything else, make the very parties that may now hesitate eager for incorporation. I hope nobody will be offended if I refer to this same class of accidental difficulties—supposed differences in regard to Christian doctrine. These, I humbly think, are mere accidental misun-

derstandings, and will, I trust, give place before fuller and more careful inquiry. I am not aware of anybody in the United Presbyterian Synod that objects to the doctrine of the Free Church or any other Church named in this overture. We give them full credit for holding sincerely to the Westminster standards; and though they do not all agree among themselves on points left open by those standards, we are perfectly satisfied to meet them on the common ground, and to allow them their liberty. In some quarters, however—I do not think numerously, and, as I hope and pray, not incurably—there is a disposition to charge us, or at least some of us, with departing from Westminster Calvinism. I am thoroughly persuaded

but this is a pure misunderstanding. If these brethren had gone through all the discussions and mutual explanations of the Atonement controversy, and especially, if they had experienced, as we have done since, the atmosphere of delightful and unbroken doctrinal harmony which has succeeded, they would never dream of any discord being among us, either with one another, or with the Westminster standards; and they would dismiss this obstacle as a mere accident—an accident, I hope, of a transient and temporary influence,—which will soon vanish before inquiry—before truth and charity. There are, however, real and not inconsiderable difficulties which are involved in the very nature of the movement, and which require more than mere kindly feeling and accurate knowledge of facts to overcome. The first and chief of these is, the undeniable difference which generally prevails in regard to the power of the civil magistrate. Here, undoubtedly, however our formularies may approach or even coincide, we are not in point of general belief at one. There are views held in the Churches with which we seek to unite, with which most or probably all of us cannot agree as to the right and duty of the magistrate to endow the church, and support religion from state resources. I do not think we differ as to the so called headship of Christ over the nations, and as to the duty of civil governors to regulate their legislation by the revealed will of God. It is rather as to the application of these great principles, more especially in relation to the support of the Christian Church, and the means which the magistrate may lawfully employ, and the Church lawfully take advantage of for that end. * * * Let us remember, Moderator, that this question is not standing still and cannot stand still. Union is effected in Nova Scotia, in Canada, in Australia; and all these Presbyterian Churches have equally friendly relations to us, and to the Presbyterian Churches at home. We are not required to adopt formally the unions carried out in these parts of the world, but we cannot hinder their re-