

## ENGLISH UNION NOTES.

The Congregational Union of England and Wales met in London last month, with a very full attendance. The clumsy method of electing the chairman, which in our wisdom we have adopted, necessitated four ballots,—765 voting papers were given in at the first ballot; 488 at the fourth. Mr. Samuel Morley was elected chairman for 1887. We congratulate our brethren in thus honoring one of their noblest laymen. Had our example a few years back any influence? Why should a cleric only be eligible?

The present chairman, well-known as the earnest advocate of "Conditional Immortality" or "Life in Christ," delivered in two hours, two-thirds of an address on "Free Church Foundations." The Boston *Congregationalist* gives the following epitome of the address:—

"The main trend of his discourse—which was an Application of the Apostolic Distinction between Law and Grace, to the Theology, Ethics and Politics of the Modern Independents—was in favor of an intenser conviction of what he conceived to be the Evangelical essence of the Gospel, combined with a freer liberty in its interpretation. He recognized a Broad Church party in Congregationalism, and prayed for patience toward them, in the hope that by and by even the sourer clusters of their vine will ripen and a blessing be in them. He advocated baptism for children and consenting adults indiscriminately, as "signing and sealing them as belonging to the race for which Christ died;" the large, comprehensive, local church, gathering all believers in a given place together, "irrespective of buildings;" the sharp distinction of the Christian Sunday as a day of rest, where possible, yet not as by law after the fashion of the Mosaic Sunday, and not as excluding popular scientific lectures; a more generous liberality than the old tithe system suggested; a more rational view of amusements than that now common; marriage, instead of celibacy; temperance, rather than total abstinence, with severe denunciation of drunkenness as excluding from the kingdom of God; and an absolute separation of the Church from the State."

The address so far as delivered, was listened to with unwearied attention, being full of thought, tersely expressed, with fine flashes of humor interspersed.

In the report of the Union Committee, Dr. Hannay, referring to this being the Jubilee year of the Colonial Missionary Society, expressed the hope that the relation of the churches to the Colonies would have "conspicuous attention at the autumnal meeting." A resolution regarding the Colonial Society was passed in which it is stated that "the interests of Congregation-

alism in the Colonies have been unfavorably affected by the failure of the Congregational Churches of the mother country to realize their obligations in regard to it."

Dr. Wilkes was received with distinguished honor, the entire assembly rising to greet him. Here is what the *Christian World* says of his appearance there:—

"He is a venerable looking man, in his 81st year, with plenty of white hair on his head, and a white beard; a rapid speaker, with plenty of vigor and earnestness; with eyes that he proved are still undimmed, by reading part of a hymn without his spectacles, which he had forgotten. He wasted no time in bandying compliments, for, as he said, 'You love us and we love you;' but before finishing, he took care to say that he was a thorough Englishman, who, being a good sailor, thought very little of taking the voyage to and fro. He gave a little sketch of part of his own history, which showed the great zeal he felt for the work in which he had passed his life. He might have made money, being, as he said, a good man of business; and he even mentioned the nice little amount of £50,000 as that which he might have realized. But the cause of Christ in the Colonies had been all in all to him; and of this he gave further proof by asking for £3,000 towards the endowment of a college. He finished a speech heard throughout with the deepest interest, with a testimony to the joy he had had in the grand work of the ministry."

The joint assembly of the two bodies, the Congregational and Baptist Unions of England, took place on Friday, May 14th, in the City Temple. The meetings were eminently successful. The *Christian World* says: "Probably no event in the history of nonconformity has possessed more significance or more promise of fuller and richer life." The *Nonconformist and Independent* speaks of it as a "remarkable gathering," which "the youngest christian who took a part, however humble, will preserve the memory of till his dying day." Congregationalism and the Baptist churches in England have very much in common; the form of an ordinance only dividing; the wonder is, not that they have in this manner come together, but that they have been parted so long. It would be a blessed thing here could a similar gathering be conceived, and as happily carried out. Why not? We pause for a reply.

The fiftieth annual meeting of the Colonial Missionary Society of the English Congregational Union was held on May 13th, last. The event for us has double significance in the fact that Dr. Wilkes was present to recount his fifty years' experience in the Colonial field of Canada, and to enter a plea for those churches, which, under his eye have struggled and labored un-