

of Scottish Presbyterianism was accomplished in 1803 on a Basis word for word the same as the Victoria Basis. South Australia in 1865, and New South Wales in September of the same year, witnessed a similar union of the three Presbyterian Churches on Bases very little different from that of Queensland and Victoria. The recent union between the Old School and the New School Presbyterians of the United States closes, in the meantime, this remarkable series of unions. But three other unions are now pending: in England, between the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches; in Scotland, between the Free, the United Presbyterian, and the Reformed Presbyterian Churches; and in our own Dominion, between the four Presbyterian Synods that have been kept apart hitherto, partly by ecclesiastical and partly by geographical barriers. Eight unions completed, and three begun is a fair record of work in this line for ten years. Of this blessed work let us heartily say, "*Esto perpetua.*"

These unions, with their grounds and their fruit, warrant us to advance two statements of considerable interest, not only to Presbyterians, but to Christians in general.

1. On essential doctrines there is a unity among Presbyterians throughout the world. Amid the general unsettling of ancient landmarks, that is surely something to be thankful for. While the Church of Rome, with her uniformity, is without unity, here is a Protestant Church that has unity without uniformity. Difference of opinion there is, of course, on such subjects as hymns, instrumental music, and national endowments, but on the great features of the Confession of Faith there seems (nothing else has come to the surface) oneness of view. This state of matters, we owe, under God, to the clearness with which our subordinate standards define the delicate boundaries between truth and error, and the ease with which our discipline can be turned against incipient heresy.

2. On minor points the misunderstandings of Presbyterians are disappearing. Let it suffice to give one instance. No point, of late years, has been more keenly debated within the Presbyterian Church than the duty of the State to Christ and to His Church. Now that the dust and din of the Voluntary Controversy, as it is called, have passed away, we can see that extreme ground was held by some on both sides. The one side upheld the responsibility: the other the freedom of the Church. Each side contended for an important truth, and therein did the Church and State some service. But extreme men on the Church Establishment side took up at length Erastian ground: and extreme men on the Voluntary side took up ground that could logically be termed Infidel, and the gulf between seemed impassable until, in the Colonies, where there is such a loud call to practical work and so little time for theoretical discussion, men began to speak across the gulf, in mutual distrust, very like David and Saul shouting to each other across one of the deep ravines of Judea. From shouting they came to talking, from talking to shaking of hands, growing all the time in each other's confidence and esteem, till at last, both parties, in the seven instances given above of Colonial union, agreed to live and work on some one side or other of the gulf that had so long separated them. Whether the new settlement is on the Establishment side or on the Voluntary side, or on neither, or in some instances on the one, and other instances on the other, it is difficult to decide. One thing is certain, and the statement is supported by the union negotiations now going on in Scotland, that on the duty of the magistrate to the Church in its higher aspects, there is sufficient unity of sentiment to allow not only co-operation, but incorporation, where there is absent