

UNION OF PRESBYTERIANS.

Compiled from the proceedings of the Free Church Synod, as published in the *Globe and Missionary Record*. The action of the U. P. Synod, on the subject will appear in the next *Tribune*, as a supplement to the following:—

Free Church Synod, London, 18th June, 1856.

Last evening the subject of Union with the United Presbyterian Church, was brought up by the Rev. Mr. Ure of Streetsville, Convener of the Committee on Union. Mr. Ure, with a few prefatory remarks, introduced the Rev. Mr. Skyner, who, along with Mr. Proudfoot, had been appointed at the late meeting of the U. P. Synod, as a deputation to attend the Synod, of the Free Church.

Mr. S. said, he appeared as one of a deputation from the U. P. body, to reciprocate the kind and fraternal feelings expressed by the Free Church towards that body, and which he was then ready to offer in his turn on their behalf. There are very many considerations which might be brought forward to shew why this friendly intercourse should exist and be strengthened. Had they not one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in them all? When they recognized this truth, should not their minds be solemnized, and their hearts knit in love and Christian affection to one another? The time had come when all portions of the Church which acknowledged Christ as their Head, were called on so to feel and so to act towards each other. We have godlessness in all forms, and modes of influences on every hand. Popery is using every means to extend and consolidate its rapidly increasing power. We see men not unwilling to yield to its pretentious claims—yea our public men ready to cherish them, men who are unfaithful to Protestantism, to patriotism, to their God. These things, together with the powerful influence of duty, intimate the strong necessity there exists why they should unite together, and thus offer an unbroken front to the cunning and powerful enemy. Mr. S. then referred to the special subject of Union. In the state of separation, said he, a state which ever since the events of 1843 he had hoped to see soon terminated, God had done much for both churches. He had honored them with a large measure of success. If so, when united and fellow helpers of each other, might not a still larger measure of success be fairly anticipated and looked for? In expressing his kind regards to members of that court, he was speaking but the feelings of all his brethren in the U. P. Synod, who wished both them and their congregations God speed. Mr. S. concluded his remarks, which were warmly cheered by the meeting, by saying that the members of the late Committee on Union had been reappointed by the U. P. Synod, as it was felt that much might be gained by not having to go over the same ground a second time, and as they desired that during each succeeding session, they might be enabled to take a step in advance.

On motion of Rev. Mr. Lowry, the Moderator expressed, in a short but happy speech, the satisfaction they felt in receiving the deputation, and in reciprocating the feelings of regard which had been conveyed to them from the Synod which the delegates represented. He hoped that the time was not far distant when a union would be effected on just and righteous principles.

Mr. Ure, as Convener, reported that the Committee had met on the 4th and 5th June, in Hamilton, and

had engaged in conferences regarding various points on which conflicting views were supposed to be held, and on the state of feeling in the different congregations. The first day was chiefly spent in devotional exercises, and in conversation on those principles and doctrines which they held in common, while at the second meeting they took up the questions touching the duties of the civil Magistrate, regarding which there prevailed a variety of opinions. He regretted that the report was less satisfactory than he could have wished. He would have liked to lay before the Synod a written statement of the views held by each, as a deliverance of both Committees on the points, on which variance of views existed. They met, however, without any reference to past transactions, and without any desire to make past proceedings the standard of future action. They met to see how far they were united on questions on which they were supposed to differ. So far as regarded certain doctrinal points, as for example, Arminianism, on which the U. P. body had been represented as having peculiar views, he (Mr. Ure) could testify to the perfect agreement there was on these matters. At the second conference, the clauses in the Confession of Faith regarding the duties of the civil magistrate were discussed, and the views of each in regard to them elicited. He thought that even on these a common basis of Union could be found. It was felt that the idea prevailed amongst the U. P. brethren that the question of endowments had some force in keeping them apart. But it had been made sufficiently plain that diversity of opinion on endowments might exist consistently with holding by the general principle that the civil magistrate is bound to consult the Word of God, and to act in his capacity as magistrate according to its dictates. They did not ask the magistrate to step in and hand out funds to certain favored churches in preference to others. On this point unanimity of views prevailed. Great good, he thought, would flow from such communications, and at the next meeting they would be prepared to place before the Committees a written statement of the views held by each on these matters, and if no material difference was found, they would be delighted to welcome to a union their United Presbyterian brethren.

REPORT OF UNION COMMITTEE.

The Committee on Union beg to report to the Synod that they met with the Union Committee of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church within the McNab Street Church, Hamilton, on the fourth and fifth days of the current month; and that they were engaged during a considerable portion of these two days in conference with their United Presbyterian brethren, on various matters, and especially on the points in regard to which conflicting views were believed to be held by their respective Churches.

At both meetings there were present a pretty full attendance of the members of the two Committees; the first sederunt being composed on the side of the United Presbyterian Church of Dr. Taylor, Messrs. Jennings, Ormiston, Thornton, Skinner, Kennedy, and Proudfoot, Ministers; and on the party of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, of Messrs. Lowry, Inglis, Ross, McLaren, Laing, and Ure, Ministers, and William Heron Elder. One of the gentlemen above mentioned, named Mr. Ormiston, was obliged from circumstances, to be absent from the second sederunt, but, with the exception the members named, continued their attendance until the close of the proceedings.

A considerable part of the time occupied at both sittings, was spent in devotional exercises: it being