

and history will pass its verdicts, and it is wise, prudent and necessary to leave church disputes to the decisions of the great and solemn day, and adjourn the court at least to a time when posterity, standing upon the silent graves of the once noisy wranglers, shall, amid its hurrying life, pause to pronounce a sentence rendered calm by time and death.

As regards the act of separation, there can be no doubt as to which party is responsible for that—for there is always a separating party. According to scripture it is a sin. The Word does not *recognise* a *divided* church, and it rebukes a disputing church. Repentance for this evil is the duty of those who have done it. But who are they, or rather where are they? Repentance must be towards God, and to Him they have gone. Even in the most recent separations the responsible parties have gone the way of all the earth. Their posterity are neither accountable for their doings nor liable to perform their penance. One thing they are liable for:—they are liable to repair their errors. They may not be called to confess the sins of their fathers, but they are liable to correct their mistakes, and this they do most effectually by Union. Union is their only effectual confession and reparation, and when they seek it, and effect it, the world will then pass its verdict upon the controversies of the past, and no amount of sophistry can prevent men from seeing the right.

*Presbyterian Union* means the incorporation of the Synods and Presbyteries of one or more Presbyterian Churches. Where the number of Presbyteries is large, Presbyterian government provides for the maintenance of unity and efficiency by a General Assembly or Council. The size of the General Assembly varies with rate of representation, which may be made one in three or one, in six or whatever the Constitution provides. In the Scotch Church 1100 parishes with burghs, &c., promised to the General Assembly a membership of about four hundred. At the same rate a General Assembly of British North America would show at first about 150 members.

Thus Presbyterian Union does *not* mean an incorporation of Kirk Sessions and congregations. Local administrations remain unchanged, and, for aught in union, people may claim their ancient

privilege of joining or leaving congregations and paying or not paying as they please. It does not mean a change in the tenure of congregational property, which remains for the benefit of those for whom it was acquired. Churches and mansees will be held by those for whom they were built.

(To be continued.)

### Notes of a Trip to the Magdalene Islands.

The Magdalene Islands, seven in number, were discovered by Cabot on St. Magdalene's day, and therefore were so named. About eighty years ago, they were settled by the descendants of the French (Acadians) and by Nova Scotians. The late Admiral Coffin received the grant of these islands from the British Government in 1798, and his nephew, aged 84, now enjoys the title of proprietor, and his heirs in perpetuity. They are situated in the Gulf, about 106 miles to our north and 50 from P. E. I. and their chief value is as a fishing station, where mackerel, herring and cod are caught and cured in great abundance by the inhabitants and by American fishermen. Also some of the islands abound in natural fertility; grasses grow luxuriantly, and potatoes, oats and other grains are raised with ease. Gypsum composes the soil, and hence the farmers on some of these islands have been able to raise the same crops year by year, for, in some cases, fifteen years, without manure. The salubrity of the Magdalenes is undoubted. Surrounded on all sides by the waters of the Gulf, in some places with a beach of only a few hundred feet in breadth, over which the sea at certain seasons dashes, they must be healthy and vigorous; too much so indeed for the consumptive, and too much so for the very trees, for it is a remarkable fact that the trees that line the shore are everywhere short and stunted, the foliage presenting a dwarfed and ruffled appearance, and the fir and birch no higher than bushes, owing, it is believed, to the strong impregnation of salt that fills the air. There exist two great natural drawbacks, one, the scarcity of timber on these islands, and the other the want of a harbour for large vessels, which latter defect the Dominion