

Dr. Burns, Dr. Willis, Professor Young, Messrs. Reid, Rogers, Grogg, Scott, and Ure, Convener, Ministers; and Messrs. Shaw, Hall, and Heron, Elders.

The Convener after having opened the meeting by prayer, read the correspondence which had passed between the Convener of the Committee of the United Presbyterian Synod and himself, the most important part of which is contained in the following document, which gives the result of a meeting held by the other Committee:

Toronto, 31st August, 1854.

REV. DEAR SIR,

I beg to acquaint you that, agreeably to an intimation, I had the pleasure of forwarding to you some weeks ago, the United Presbyterian Synod in Canada's Committee on Union, met here, yesterday, and adopted the following motion viz:—

"That the committee having read the Deed of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, relative to Union with the United Presbyterian Church in Canada, dated Toronto, 17th June last, and having conversed, sometime, thereon,

*Resolved*—"I. That the committee express their continued, cordial, approval of the Resolution of the United Presbyterian Synod in Canada, respecting Union with the Presbyterian Church of Canada, under date 8th June last; and in particular, their approval of the second of said Resolutions, in which it is set forth that there are, in the judgment of the Synod, no sufficient reasons for this Church, and the Presbyterian Church of Canada, continuing in a state of separation; and that many great and obvious advantages might be expected, under the Divine blessing, to result from their heartily uniting, on sound and scriptural principles.

II. That the Committee deeply regret to find themselves precluded, by the terms and purport of the above cited Deed of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, from taking any steps, at present, towards the accomplishment of the Union in question.

III. That the Committee adjourn *sin die*; and that a copy of these Resolutions, together with a respectful letter from the Chairman, be transmitted to the Convener of the Committee named in the foresaid Deed of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada."

Now, dear sir, permit me to assure you, that it would have given me the most unfeigned satisfaction had matters presented a more favorable aspect. Nevertheless, I have in no degree ceased to wish and to hope for a union; and in all this, I am sure, I express the mind of many of the best of the ministers, elders, and members of our Church. It seems to me, however, that nothing can be more injudicious than to push the measure prematurely. I trust that in the meantime the great King and Head of the Church will overrule everything for the furtherance of his own glory, and the promotion of pure and undefiled religion.

With respect and esteem,

I am, Rev. dear sir,

Yours faithfully,

JOHN TAYLOR, Chairman.

REV. R. URE, Streetsville.

After lengthened conference the following motion was unanimously adopted: That the Committee having read the resolutions of the Committee of the United Presbyterian Synod in Canada, agree to express their deep regret at the decision come to by the last named Committee which seems to preclude for the present the hope of a joint meeting of the Committees, and declare, that while not disposed to modify in any degree their estimate of the importance of the principles referred to in the deed of their Synod, they are nevertheless of opinion that such a joint meeting might be productive of beneficial results in the way of removing any possible misunder-

standings that may exist, and of facilitating the progress of a union on a basis mutually satisfactory.

The Convener was instructed to transmit a copy of the above finding, accompanying it with a respectful letter, to the Convener of the United Presbyterian Synod.

ROBERT URE, Convener.

### UNION AMONG PRESBYTERIANS.

MR. EDITOR,—

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th inst., in which you request me to forward for insertion in the *Record*, the minute of the recent meeting of our Union Committee. In complying with this request, I shall crave the liberty of prefacing my notice of that meeting, and its result, with such explanatory statements as may be necessary to enable your readers generally, to form a correct idea of the question at issue between the United Presbyterian Synod and our own Church, and of the causes which have succeeded for the present in arresting all negotiation on the subject of a union between the two bodies. In other circumstances I would have satisfied myself with simply transmitting to you the deliverance of the Committee, which you ask for, and would have permitted that deliverance to go forth to the public eye without note or comment; but it is manifest, I think, that this would now be inadvisable, inasmuch as we have been publicly accused, through the columns of the *Canadian United Presbyterian Magazine*, with a violation of Christian charity in the course we have pursued in this matter, and with cherishing a disposition to interpose needless barriers in the way of union on a scriptural basis. These, sir, are not very pleasant accusations to lie under; and it will be allowed by most persons, that charges of this sort should be made, when made at all, with extreme caution. It is certain that they can serve but rarely to promote any good end, even when they happen to be based upon tolerably adequate grounds, and it is no less certain, that they seldom fail to operate mischievously when they originate, as they seem to do in the present instance, merely in a little unnecessary warmth of feeling, proceeding as that in its turn may do, from a misconception of the views and sentiments of the party accused.

Let us see what are the exact bearings of the case as it now stands, and the sum of the difficulties which have thus far prevented a joint meeting of the Committees.

Our brethren of the United Presbyterian Church did themselves the honour, at their last Synodical meeting, of issuing a public testimony expressive of their earnest desire for union on certain grounds, with other Presbyterian Churches, and with our own Church in particular. The resolutions which they drew up on this subject, and transmitted to our Synod, were conceived in an excellent spirit, and they were no doubt considered by their framers, as exhibiting a fair basis for the union which they desired to see achieved.

Unfortunately, however, this overture has thus far been barren of practical effect, and from present appearances, it is not likely ever to lead to the harmless experiment, of bringing the committee on union together, and giving them an opportunity of comparing views on the points upon which they are supposed to be at issue. This failure of a movement so well mentioned in its origin and aim is doubtless to be regretted; but there is nothing whatever in the circumstances of the case, to furnish parties on either side, with any feasible temptation to the display of temper, or the use of recriminating language. A correspondent of the Magazine above referred to, fancies indeed, that he can perceive the ultimate cause of the whole difficulty in the workings of an uncharitable Spirit among the members of our Synod; and finding, as he imagines, a firm footing on this hypothesis, he is plainly under the

impression, that it is his bounden duty to rebuke us sharply for our swiftness, which accordingly, he does not fail to do. It would serve no good purpose to attempt anything like a formal reply to the effusions of this anonymous brother; but it may be of use to remark, that if obstacles have arisen, of such a description, as to render them, in the opinion of our United Presbyterian friends, a sufficient reason, for their declining any present attempt at negotiation with us, they must, in this case, consent to bear what, upon enquiry, may appear to be their fair proportion of blame.

In my opinion, their first error, if they really wished us to appoint a Committee and leave it unassailed by any conditions, lay in their setting the example of announcing the conditions by which their own Committee were to be controlled; their second error, as I disclosed more particularly by the course which their Committee have pursued, consisted, as it would seem, in the somewhat extravagant estimate they had formed, as to the amount of concession necessary on our part, in order to justify them in even consenting to meet with us, for the purpose of mutual consultation. The terms laid down in their Synodical resolutions, and proposed for our acceptance, constitute professedly a draft of the platform on which as a Church they have taken their stand; and our instant acquiescence in the terms of these resolutions, our obstinate adoption of this platform, appears to have constituted the first stumbling in that line of concession which our brethren deemed requisite, not to a union merely, but simply to clear the way to a joint meeting of the Committees. Even thus far, however, they might have found us disposed to be perfectly pliant to their wishes; but their refusal to meet with us, is apt to breed the suspicion, that this measure of compliance would not have sufficed, and that the demands upon us *in limine* were really intended to be of a more extensive sort than the obvious rendering of their resolutions would seem to indicate. The fourth of these resolutions, and the cardinal one, reads thus:—

"That considering how much unhappily and mischievous division among Evangelical Presbyterians has been occasioned by the question respecting the power of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion, or in plainer terms, by the question of ecclesiastical establishments, the Synod take the present opportunity of stating that the principle of this Church, in regard to that question, has always been, that it shall be a matter of forbearance; and the Synod has great pleasure in reflecting that while this principle seems just and sound in itself, it has thus special excellence, that it presents a basis on which persons differing widely in their views respecting establishments, may nevertheless conscientiously and honourably unite, provided none of them regard these views of such vital and momentous importance as to demand that they be made a term of Christian or ministerial communion."

I presume, Mr. Editor, that we would have no difficulty as a Church in giving in our adherence to the principle here stated, and joining heart and hand with our brethren on the basis it presents, provided we were not asked to suppress our united testimony to other principles in reference to the power or duties of the Civil Magistrate, besides those immediately connected with the question of ecclesiastical establishments. The principle of forbearance on that latter question is, for all practical ends, as fully recognised in our own Church as it can be among the United Presbyterians themselves. We quarrel with no brother, ministerial or lay, for the views which he may happen to hold in the abstract as to the expediency or lawfulness of State aid in favour of ecclesiastical bodies; nor do we demand a confession of faith from any one as to his views of the relation in which any particular Church should stand to the State. Questions of this kind we are quite willing to leave in abeyance; and our "deed of Synod" to which so serious excep-