

tian candour and courteousness. We are bound to make some reply, in doing which, whilst we shall endeavour to imitate his example in being dispassionate, serious, and conciliatory, we shall, at the same time study to be faithful in endeavouring to do justice both to the views he presents, and to our own. We venture to state, at the outset, that if the same "meekness of wisdom" characterize his brethren, we are even hopeful that some common ground may yet be reached by his church and ours which may at length lead to an honourable union.

Mr. Ure complains of an accusation against his Church, in your Magazine,—of a violation of christian charity. But as he does not state on what that rests, or to what it refers, we shall say nothing more than that no accusation was meant, but a mere expression of regret that any such spirit should be exhibited in public documents and proceedings, of which the world can form probably a more correct judgment than Mr. Ure, or any of his brethren. If there be any want of feeling in the article referred to, it may surely be excused after all the slander and misrepresentation from them which have been silently borne by us, and the whole of which we are willing, should there be no more of it, to consign to oblivion; for it is now with much joy, that we perceive some evidence that the tide is turning, and that any of our Free Church brethren can do themselves and their denomination justice both in the manner and matter of their statements.

Mr. Ure seems to think that our Committee was not left "unsaddled" by their constituents more than his own. On second thoughts he will surely see that this is a great mistake. Our Synod simply stated the fact that the Establishment Principle is with us a matter of forbearance, there being ministers in our church who hold it. They did not ask the brethren of the Free Church to renounce it: they only declared themselves quite prepared to forbear with all the ministers of that church, although they continued to hold it. There was no requisition on our part that the Free Church should change their views in a single iota to effect a union. And so far from having "demands of a more extensive sort," which were not expressed, as Mr. Ure insinuates, we had none to make on them at all. Does he really think that we are capable of such dissembling? But when we saw, or thought we saw, their determination not only to hold by the Establishment Principle themselves, to which we objected not, but to insist on our adopting it into a basis of union, there was surely some ground for a charge of want of christian charity, and certainly the blame of frustrating the attempt at union lay entirely with themselves, and no share of it could reasonably be ascribed to us. We opened the door by saying that we could unite with them, leaving them to hold all their peculiar principles, provided they permitted us to hold our own. They closed the door by saying, as we thought, "we will unite with you provided you renounce your peculiar sentiments, and accede to ours." Here was "the first error" on their part; but where, in this particular, was there any error or blame with us? We have no "platform" of union to present, as Mr. Ure says. We consider the matters of difference between the Free Church and ours as altogether subordinate; and are willing to forbear with them, provided they forbear with us, as to respective peculiarities.

But it appears from Mr. Ure's letter, that we have made another mistake. It is, however, one which we shall rejoice to find correct. He seems to think that his church would be "perfectly pliant to our wishes" in making the Establishment Principle a

matter of forbearance. What immediately follows in Mr. Ure's letter is perhaps the only uncharitable insinuation it contains; and it is one he should have spared, as he might have seen it to be totally without foundation:—It is *that* before alluded to, that the refusal of our Committee to meet with theirs is apt to breed the suspicion that our demands upon them were to be of a more "extensive sort." Why should Mr. Ure have thought, or said, this in the face of a statement that we make no demands on them whatever in the way of altering their views? All we ask is that they do not demand or expect that we alter ours; or, in other words, we did not demand, but we expected, that the forbearance on the point of difference which we proffered to them, would in the same conciliatory spirit, be extended to us. But as this was not reciprocated, and seemed to us to be refused, we thought our Committee were shut up to decline meeting with theirs, and we think so still. As you, Mr. Editor, in your Magazine justly observed, "it was the quietest, speediest, and least offensive termination of a piece of business which evidently could not be prosecuted with any hope of a successful issue, and which probably could not be entered on, without consequences which all good men in both Churches, would have deplored." If our Free Church brethren and we can discuss the matter coolly and candidly, and with a prayerful spirit, in our different periodicals, we believe it will be of more use in removing difficulties and preparing for union, than could possibly be expected, in the present state of matters, by meetings of a joint-committee. We might thus aim at a better understanding of each other's sentiments as preliminary to Committee meetings, which in our humble opinion should not again be attempted till there can be an encouraging prospect of accomplishing the end contemplated in a scriptural union of the Churches.

Mr. Ure quotes our fourth resolution, and in the next paragraph he says:—"I presume, Mr. Editor, 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, beside those immediately connected with the question of ecclesiastical establishments." Whilst we would again remind Mr. Ure that there was no asking on our part that the Free Church should suppress their testimony on any principle in reference to the Magistrate's power, we would state that this sentence, if we could believe that his Church would homologate it, does really present the cause of union in an aspect more hopeful than we anticipated: and if the Free Church brethren would cease to misrepresent us, as they have so often done, and would exercise something like candour and charity in comparing the views referred to with our own, which somewhat differ, they would perhaps find that although we could not adopt their precise sentiments on this subject, yet the sentiments we hold, which we do not seek them to adopt, are such as that it would be no great stretch of charity to permit us to hold; and that they would secure, in a manner at least as effectual, all the practical results which they wish to secure by their own. Our brethren will find that we move in another atmosphere than they had the least idea of; and that in the heat of argument, or rather in the excessive warmth of party feeling, they have never done justice to our views—never really understood them, and often, we hope unintentionally, misrepresented them. In some instances, which we would name, their misrepresentations have been so