

tion that one of the parties has found the Confession in error, or that another has violated it, and either insinuation will be repudiated on both sides; and hence it is to be hoped that such will not be attempted.

Should any remonstrate that new light has broken in since the Westminster Confession was compiled, and that such new light should find expression in the basis, we do not question the statement, but we question the inference. To make changes on the confession now, either on itself or on its relation to the church, is to alter the whole character of the union negotiations. The union committees cannot take up such questions. The history and binding power of confessions of faith are the great questions of the age. The scripturalness of many expressions in our confession is, also, not one question but many. It is a simple fact that the earliest church formulas were of the simplest nature. It is also a simple fact that during the two hundred years since the confession, biblical learning has achieved its greatest triumphs since the ascension of our Lord, and that none of that light has been admitted into the columns of our confession—and it is by no means in the spirit of stern and unreasonable constitutionalists, who believe themselves right and all others wrong—who think that because they have a sort of a conscience, no one else has such an organ, and who could easily be shown that the true practice of our ancient church is against them. We mean simply that it is no business of a union committee to take up such matters. All such questions must lie over for the church of the future. The first and essential condition of union now is a simple adherence to the one common standard as the point where all were one when they parted company. The road they may travel afterwards is a future question for their united wisdom.

## UNION ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC.

This is a proposal in which the Church of Scotland has not been by plan or by actual negotiations included. It has been confined to two offshoots and active rivals of the National Church. About ten years ago the public letters of Sir George Sinclair were the occasion of some leading city ministers of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches conferring together with a view to union. Early deliberations were so harmonious that even the more cynical portion of the public were of the opinion that, though delay would be necessary, yet ten years would scarcely elapse ere the proposed union would be consummated. Yet ten years of active negotiation and diligent use of all those methods of agitation and popular influence, with which the projectors were so familiar, have passed away, and the union is now farther away than before the conferences began. Contending factions, for and against, have rendered the Free Church particularly a scene of perpetual excitement. There has been more harmony of movement in the U. P. Church, but some leading men there also are opposed, and, if opposition be not so demonstrative as in the great debate of 1864, it may be because they have ceased to believe in the ultimate success of the movement in any other sense than as a means of producing a serious schism in the most energetic dissenting denomination in Britain, and the most successful rival of all dissenting churches—one whose efforts have thrown them all into the shade. The wise leaders of the U. P. Church may see that a calm attitude and, at least, an apparently harmonious action in approval of union are a wise policy; for, if the union does not proceed, it will probably split the Free Church, and if it does proceed, it will both split the Free Church and supply them, in the adherence of the uniting portion, with active aid in carrying on their ancient feud with all established churches.

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The Rev. Dr. Jenkins sailed for Britain on May 11th to attend the meeting of the General Assembly in Edinburgh.

As to the Free Church, the negotiations have been for some years brought up to the point of union, and over again referred to