

says Calvin "not merely to have a verbal assurance, but to have it certified to them by visible signs, (as in infant baptism) that the grace of their heavenly Father is so great as to extend, not to themselves only, but to their offspring." If Christian parents do not feel, as they ought, the practical encouragement to duty, which the ordinance, as a recognition of the divine promise, presents and do not act cordially (and all of us must be sensible of criminal deficiency) the fault lies, not with the ordinance or with its author, but with their own want of faith and of right disposition.—*Dr. Wardlaw.*

The Monthly Record.

MARCH, 1868.

During the Week of Prayer, at the beginning of each year, the ministers of the different denominations have been, in most parts of the Province, brought into close and friendly relations. In the case of the ministers of the two branches of the Presbyterian Church, this friendly spirit has in many instances been kept up throughout the whole year, and has found expression in occasional exchange of pulpits, united prayer meetings, united missionary operations, &c. Such friendly co-operation commends itself as the right thing to every pious and intelligent Christian. Now, it is natural to raise the question, should the friendliness stop here, or should it go on to an actual union of the two Churches? On this question very many of our people as well as of our ministers, are musing; and, accordingly, we should judge that it cannot but be interesting to all our readers to peruse the following able article, from the pen of the minister of St. Matthew's, Halifax. Whatever view each may take of the subject, all must admire the earnest and decided tone of the writer.

Union of Presbyterians.

I have seldom felt myself under so grave a responsibility as now when approaching and beginning to write on this subject. On the one hand it may be said, 'we are doing well enough as we are and there is no necessity for any change.' On the other hand, I am strongly of opinion that the time has come for effecting a union between the two great Presbyterian Churches in the Maritime Provinces, and I know that others, who once thought very differently, are now from various causes in favour of such a policy; and to be quiet and make no sign is not the course that duty in such circumstances dictates. To write and express such a conviction and thus test its truth is surely my duty; and I pray God that my brethren and the readers of the *Record* generally may read the words of this article in the spirit in which they are written. I am aware that it is easy

to talk of the feelings that actuate us, and that such talk of itself goes for little; but I think that my conduct in this matter shows that I have no wish but to march in line with my fellow-churchmen. Seven years ago I returned to my native Province filled with an ardent longing to see the different members of the same Church, family reunited under one roof-tree. The state of feeling then prevailing and the elements at work on both sides were barriers that could not be ignored or overcome. Union was then impracticable. To talk about it only exasperated. Reconciliation was required first. Since that time I have laboured in each of our three Presbyteries, have preached in every Church and almost every mission station in our Synod, have thus been obliged to study the question in the light of the facts of the case from every point of view, and though I have my likes and dislikes, and prejudices and Church feelings as much as any kirkman in the country, I have been forced year after year more and more to the conclusion that union is the one thing now needed by Presbyterianism, that it would do us all good and the country good, and that to oppose it longer is to be blind to the signs of the times, and to be unfaithful to the work given us to do by the Great Head of the Church.

In the United States, Presbyterians never divided into hostile camps, because Church patronage in Scotland was sometimes exercised in a high-handed manner; nor because of an abstract theory on Voluntaryism or Church establishments or endowments; nor because of a Burgher oath that no Burghers in America was ever asked to take; nor because church courts in Scotland maintained for a year or two views on Spiritual Independence, that the highest legal tribunal in Great Britain decided to be incompatible with the civil rights of the subject. True there are Covenanters, and Dutch Reformed and other small Presbyterian Churches in the States, that have grown up alongside of the great bodies, and are composed chiefly of emigrants from European countries; but the divisions of the great body have arisen from differences of opinion among themselves chiefly on doctrinal matters less or more important; and the current of opinion now is that even such divisions were unnecessary and unwise, and that the sooner they are healed the better it will be for the cause of the Church and the cause of religion. The great convention in Philadelphia last year is of itself a sufficient proof of this.

In the Colonies—with one or two insignificant exceptions, Scottish Church divisions have been faithfully and zealously imitated in every particular. The battles of Burgher and Anti-Burgher, of intrusion and non-intrusion have been fought over again in almost every Colony. The fact is to be deplored but hardly to be wondered at when