

THE MONTHLY RECORD



OF THE

Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia and the adjoining Provinces.

"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—PSALM 137, v. 5.

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IMPORTANT MOVEMENT IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES.

Contemplated Union Between the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church

The undersigned LAY MEMBERS of the said Churches, in subscribing the following Resolutions, think it proper to state that nothing is done from their wishes or intentions than to enter into any premature discussion in Church Meetings or at Public Meetings, or any precipitate attempt to accomplish the great object which they have in view. Without committing themselves to any future line of action, they are at present simply of opinion, that the subject should be deliberately considered by the Members of both Communions, in the spirit of Christian brotherhood and love.

RESOLUTION I.—That charity, unity, and mutual confidence are inculcated with so much plainness and solemnity throughout the New Testament Scriptures, that all the followers of our Lord Jesus Christ are imperatively called upon, not only to follow, as far as possible, the things which make for peace, but to do so gently and affectionately to co-operate in bringing all such divisions as may unhappily have sprung up amongst them; and that the maintenance and enforcement of these great principles, which are applicable to all times and circumstances, are rendered peculiarly important by the exigencies of the present

RESOLUTION II.—That as honest and conscientious differences (in no wise affecting the essential truths, which they hold in equal measure) prevail amongst the professing members of Christ in regard to ecclesiastical government and discipline, the Evangelical principle is an institution admirably adapted to be used as a common platform, on which all who are united in the faith may cordially assemble for the salutary and important purposes of promoting love, softening asperities, obviating misunderstandings, and devising such means, under the Divine blessing, may serve to promote the spread of the everlasting Gospel.

RESOLUTION III.—That where no diversities of opinion as to Ecclesiastical order, subsist between two or more Churches, co-existing

within the limits of the same country, it is both their duty and their interest (when convinced that they are of one mind and of one judgment as to the things which accompany salvation) to avail themselves of the earliest auspicious opening for breaking down the wall of partition, so as to constitute one united and fraternal communion.

RESOLUTION IV.—That this is, happily, the relative position between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches, inasmuch as both are equally attached to the Presbyterian form of Church Government, adhere to the same standards of doctrine and discipline, and have for some time manifested their reciprocal feelings of confidence and affection, by admitting each other's ministers to their respective pulpits, and inviting them to assist at the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and that the happy consummation is all the easier of attainment that no legislative sanction is required for its accomplishment.

RESOLUTION V.—That both Churches maintain, with equal steadfastness and sincerity, the great principles of non-intrusion and spiritual independence, on behalf of which their fathers contended with unflinching and self-sacrificing devotedness.

RESOLUTION VI.—That in the judgment of both Communions, it is a duty incumbent upon all men, and especially upon those in authority (from whom He who has given them much is entitled to expect the more), to recognise the paramount supremacy of our Lord Jesus Christ to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth, as being the Governor among the nations, as well as the Supreme Head of His Church and consequently to regulate their conduct, in whatsoever capacity, by His laws. But as those who entirely concur in all other ecclesiastical matters may, and do, entertain different views as to the course which the State is bound to pursue in reference to the interests of the Church, and more especially on the question of endowment (some holding that one denomination should be supported at the public cost; others, that different sects should be so, simultaneously, and proportionally; and others, that the pastors should be maintained by the members of their own communion), this point ought to be left as a question of forbearance, on which ministers and members may be allowed to entertain such a view as they deem most consonant with Scripture, and most

conducive to the welfare of the Church—more especially, as any formal deliverance on this subject is of no practical consequence, in the case of self-supporting communions.

RESOLUTION VII.—That both Communions attach equal and paramount importance to the predominance of the religious, and more especially of the Scriptural element in all the schools and seminaries which are subject to their own influence and control. But that as, not only amongst themselves, but in all denominations, considerable difference of opinion prevails as to the power and province of the State in reference to education, it is not necessary that any fixed principle on this subject should be laid down, in the event of an union being happily effected.

RESOLUTION VIII.—That both Churches reverently acknowledge the Divine authority and perpetual obligation, as well as the inestimable blessedness, of the Lord's-day, as a hallowed season mercifully ordained for religious improvement and repose from worldly toils—and they concur in regarding it as the duty and province of a Christian Legislature to enact such laws as are necessary, not for enforcing attendance on Divine Worship, but for protecting against encroachment the privilege—which ought, as far as possible, to be secured for all of resting from their week-day occupations, and devoting the Lord's-day to His service.

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