

far are we apart?" but, "how close are we to each other?" Not that any one great principle has been given up by either, but ultraism has on both sides got a blow. A greater measure of allowance has been granted on the score of changed circumstances; while a common enemy not far off has indirectly exercised a wholesome impression on all.

We are aware of the objection to the "preamble" that it takes away what article fourth of the Basis gave. It does nothing of the kind; and yet we allow that "preambles" have always been ricketty things. It might have been better expressed; for it looks as if it courted difference of sentiment. No one will say that that was meant, and yet it was not intended to construct a Procrustes' bed. Could either party at this time of day, really expect perfect unanimity on the possible applications of a principle which, apart from them all, had itself been debated for centuries? And had not both Churches agreed ten years ago to sink in oblivion the *most valuable* application of it, in a secular point of view, ever known, that, namely, of public endowment? Is it not also a plain matter of fact, that diversities of sentiment as regards the application of the principle obtain in the one branch of the Church to nearly as great an extent as in the other. Curiosity led us a few days ago to look into the life of Dr. Macrie, by his son, the present Professor Macrie, of the Presbyterian College, London. We know that Dr. M. was "sound to the bone on the principle;" and yet in regard to one of its applications, at least, he thus speaks: "I hear that the day of the king's fast will be chosen by numbers of our congregations as a fast-day either in place of the day appointed by the Synod, or before the Sacrament, which many have fixed for that time. *Our session have agreed not to observe that day.*" p. 99. The reason was, as noticed by his biographer, "the implied assumption of an Erastian power by the State to interfere in matters purely spiritual, and which belonged to the church." Such examples may appear amongst us yet; but in spite of them, we cannot afford to lose such men as Professor Bruce or Dr. Macrie. With regard to the objection that the Basis had not been sent down to *congregations*; our impression has all along been that in sending it down to sessions, both churches felt that they were taking the most constitutional way of obtaining the sentiments of all the members of the Church. Formal meetings of the people may not have been in all cases held, and for the best of all reasons. *Their* sentiments were well known, and in point of fact, the people were *in advance* of the courts! If any disrespect had been felt as done to the body of our people by this apparent neglect, surely some indication of it would have appeared in the shape of complaints from one or more of the congregations. We are not aware of a single instance of this, at least prior to the settlement of the terms of Union. On the whole it appears to us to be a manifest duty on the part of ministers, office-bearers, and people to stand by the