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Contributors & Correspondents.

THE ASSEMBLY'S RESOLUTION ON COLLEGIATE EDUCATION.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—Thanks for giving us the explanations of "Aliquis" regarding the resolution of the Assembly. How far your "younger correspondents" may be profited by his lucid exposition I do not pretend to know; but I, who am not of that number, confess to a feeling of complete bewilderment. The explanations of "Aliquis" have only shown the resolution to be more utterly indefensible than I had supposed, and make me sympathize more with the opinions and feelings of the minority than I did when I penned my former communication. Allow me a place for a few words expressive of my embarrassment. 1. I am to understand that although it was supposed that three years would elapse before the endowment of the colleges could be effected, and although the ordinary course of Church procedure would require that time before the union could be consummated; nevertheless the idea was conveyed that neither of these things was to be "considered a condition of union." Surely this means (if it means anything) that union may be consummated at any time, first, before our colleges are rendered safe by permanent endowment; and, secondly, by some extraordinary course of procedure.

I may also note that though "Aliquis" was present at the Assembly, there are some younger as well as older men who were not present, and those men, in forming their opinions, are guided by the printed resolutions, and not by ideas conveyed by irresponsible individuals, but which the Assembly in no way endorsed. 2. I cannot comprehend the assertion "The Assembly did not draw up a basis of union," when I read the following, on minutes of November meeting, page 12: "It was moved in amendment by Dr. Tapp, and duly seconded, that the four articles already agreed to, be adopted as a whole, and shall form the basis of union for the united Church;" and on page 21 it "was moved by Mr. Thomas McPherson, duly seconded, and agreed to, "That the basis of union, and the resolutions on the subject of union as a whole, be sent down to Presbyteries, &c." Nor do I feel that the "absence of more distinct statements, and of anything like an authoritative tone in said resolutions," requires to be "accounted for." The statements are distinct enough, and the tone authoritative enough to satisfy the minority, they even feel them oppressive. What I complain of is, a contradiction between the statements, or rather a fusing into one self-contradicting resolution of opposite sentiments.

3. What does "Aliquis" mean when he says, "The subject of Union will clearly not be before the Assembly in June," while at the same time he knows that (see Minutes, page 21) the inferior courts, after maturely considering the Basis and resolutions, are required "to report to next Assembly"? The course of procedure which "Aliquis" indicates as the one which may be taken, is clearly an after-thought, the consequence of the Kirk's having delayed action on the report of the Joint Committee. No one in the Assembly ever dreamed of such a course. It was understood, and it is so understood now, that the Union will be discussed in June next. It is true that the last clause of the resolution cannot be carried into effect until the other synods have taken action; and now it is manifest that the Assembly blundered in agreeing to it, as action must be postponed for a year at least, in order to carry it out; but this was not the intention of the Assembly, no matter what individuals may now think as their light increases.

4. I have already referred to "Aliquis'" extraordinary statement as to the possibility of a departure from the "ordinary course of procedure" in this matter of union. My alarm is increased when I read also that the report of the inferior courts may, if favorable, be "of use in confirming informally the Assembly's action;" and again the Assembly "may informally receive the reports," &c. Mr. Editor, we have had too much informality already. The matter was initiated by an informal letter from our Moderator; the first report of the Union Committee was informal, as they had gone far beyond their instructions in

drawing up the draft of a basis; the action of our Committee was informal, as they held no meetings by themselves for consultation, but were satisfied with the action of the joint committee; the proceedings of last November were in some things unquestionably informal. All these things the minority has borne with. And now we are deliberately, not in the heat of debate, told by one of our experienced leaders, that the Assembly may still further depart from the ordinary course of procedure and act informally. No wonder that a cautious minority hung back. Who can forecast the end? A most important and delicate question is before us, when, if ever, the observance of forms is a duty, and yet the leader of a majority who have, in a manner confessedly informal, so far conducted this business, tells the minority that that majority may force the thing on by further informalities. A minority has its rights; the maintenance of forms is essential to the preservation of those rights, and if an overwhelming majority, trusting to its power of numbers, disregards these rights and crushes the minority by informal measures, Mr. Editor, who will be held responsible for the consequences?

5. One thing more. "Aliquis" says, "Surely we may trust in one another, and above all trust God's guidance." In the latter clause I fully agree; but God will guide us when we use reason and common sense, not when we shut our eyes and blindly leap into difficulties. He will guide us in duty; but in union in present circumstances and on the conditions proposed a duty? As for the first clause I reply "cursed is the man that trusteth in man, or maketh an arm of flesh his confidence." Let us trust to no man, but use our own God-given powers, as we must give account.

Mr. Editor, let trust who will the minority seem to me to be in the right, when they wish to see a little into the intentions of those wise, far-seeing men, who are negotiating for the Kirk, and refuse to follow men who may be great in faith, but professedly abjure experience as their guide, nor ask counsel at common sense and ordinary prudence. If "Aliquis" really has a majority of young men as his following, I would beseech that majority to respect the gray-headed men who have borne the battle for the last quarter of a century, and those who think with them, and if they must be out-voted and the union be consummated against their opposition, let it at least be done with due regard to the feelings of those who are in the minority, and to the constitutional forms which protect their rights.

Yours, &c.
CUNCIATOR.

UNION.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—As a sincere unionist and a lover of unsophisticated truth and downright honesty, I wish to call the attention of your readers to the utter irreconcilableness of a clause in the Basis of Union with a statement in the "Westminster Confession of faith."

The "Confession," chapter xxiii., sec. 3d, says, "The civil magistrate hath authority and it is his duty to take order, that unity and peace may be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered and observed. For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God."

The Basis of Union, article 2nd, says, "It being distinctly understood that nothing contained in the aforesaid Confession or Catechisms regarding the power and duty of the civil magistrate shall be held to sanction any principles or views inconsistent with full liberty of conscience in matters of religion."

Who that knows aught of the meaning of words can help understanding that the Confession, in the paragraph above quoted, sanctions and teaches principles not only inconsistent with, but diametrically opposed to, liberty of conscience? Why! the Church is thereby subjected to the will of the civil power, both as regards her doctrines and duties, her principles and her practice, thus rendering liberty of conscience and of worship utterly impossible. Surely the respective Assemblies will

grasp this absurd and insulting clause that blurs a Basis that in other respects might be accepted by intelligent men.

The Presbytery of Ottawa, as appears from your last issue, have done themselves honour by rejecting the obnoxious clause, and have substituted there for a statement that can wound no conscience or insult the understanding of any man.

R. Y.
ONTARIO, 20th Feb., 1872.

UNION OF THE FRENCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES, MONTREAL, ADVOCATED.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—There is a subject which I have much to heart, which I should like to be brought forward in your columns. It is that of the union of the two French Protestant congregations in Montreal. I see that the "Craig St. Congregation" has memorialized the Synod of your Church to be received as one of its congregations. Would not this be a good opportunity to see if there is any necessity to have two Presbyterian missions in Montreal, neither of which is self-sustaining. United, they might probably give their minister \$800 towards stipend, besides paying the current expenses, such as gas, fuel, &c. I know that the French Protestants wish for this union, with but few exceptions, and would gladly hail any successful effort to bring it about.

My idea would be to have a French Presbyterian Church, equally supported by the two great Presbyterian bodies, in fact, anticipating the great union. A joint committee of both bodies might be named to manage the business. The choice of a minister could be left to the united congregations. Perhaps, Rev. Mr. Cote, of Chicoutimi, the ablest of our young French ministers, might be induced to accept a call. Being a French Canadian, and married to a Swiss lady, he would probably be the very man to heal the breach, which, as many of your readers are aware, was occasioned by a question of nationality in the Minister.

The division between our Montreal French Protestants has been "a comfort" to the Church of Rome, and has crippled our efforts for French Canadian evangelization. It has led to many disputes between members of the two churches, and occasionally caused a coolness to exist between the two ministers. United they would number about two hundred adherents, and could have a Sabbath-school of forty to fifty children.

I feel the more at liberty to urge this union, that I can do so from purely disinterested motives, being ready to resign my charge and seek for another field, if it can be effected. The land is broad enough for all, and fields are not wanting.

I have had an interview with the worthy Secretary of the French Canadian Missionary Society, to talk over the matter, unsuccessfully. Like myself, Col. Haultain is very desirous that a union should be brought about.

Accept, dear sir, my best wishes for the success of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, and may the Great Master and Head of the Church sustain you in your labours for His cause.—Yours very truly,

CHAS. A. DOUDET,
French Missionary of Church of Scotland
in Canada.

Montreal, Feb. 20, 1872.

A FACT FOR BUSINESS MEN TO KNOW.

—Mr. Whitehead, of a Chicago firm, says that the safe of his concern was removed from the ruins three days after the fire. The account books were found so charred that it was necessary to handle the leaves with extreme care to prevent their crumbling. It was found that their bookkeeper had for convenience marked down the balance with a lead pencil. These balances were perfectly legible, although the entries made in ink were nearly obliterated. The fire by its action on the black lead had made the figures very bright. The firm was able to open new books with little delay by reason of the balances being entered in lead instead of ink. It is well known that writing in lead pencil can hardly be affected by thorough drenching of paper with water, but we believe this is the first time it has been proved that lead-pencil marks will pass through fire and thereby become more distinct. Business men should take the hint and use the pencil more on their books.

HEAVEN.

For BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

O, for the bright celestial land,
Where perfect saints in glory stand,
In adoration most profound,
Before the Lamb with honors crowned.

O, speed me to the happy land;
In it I long with saints to stand,
To spend eternity in peace,
Of Him who is my length of days.

A land of day without a night;
A land of love and pure delight,
A land of brightness undecad,
Where groves of an no noxious weed.

O, speed me to the happy land,
To join the holy, happy band—
Who serve the Lord both day and night,
And sing his praise with all their might.

Jehannu's own peaceful land,
The workmanship of his "own hand"
No strife of tongues, no battle's roar,
Is heard upon its radiant shore.

O, speed me to the happy land!
A prosperous passage Lord command!
I long to be the best among;
I long to join the angelic song.

—W. ROSS.

Random Readings.

EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY.

Rev. Dr. Merle d'Aubigny tells how the riches of Divine grace reached his heart:—

We were studying the Epistle to the Ephesians, and had got to the end of the third chapter. When we read the last two verses, "Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory," etc., this expression fell upon my soul like a revelation from God. "He can do by his power," I said to myself, "above all we ask, above all even that we think, exceeding abundantly above all." A full trust in Christ for the work to be done within my poor heart now filled my soul. We all three knelt down; and although I had never fully confided my inward struggles to my friends, the prayer of Rieu was filled with such admirable faith as he would have uttered had he known all my wants. When I arose in that inn room at Kiel I felt as if "my wings were removed as the wings of eagles." From that time forward I comprehended that my own efforts were of no avail, that Christ is able to do all by His "power that worketh in us;" and the habitual attitude of my soul was to lie at the foot of cross, crying to Him, "Here am I, bound hand and foot, unable to move, unable to do the least thing to get away from the enemy who oppresses me. Do all thyself. I know that thou wilt do it. Thou wilt do exceeding abundantly above all that I ask."

I was not disappointed; all my doubts were removed, my anguish quelled, and the Lord extended to me "peace as a river." Then I could comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. Then was I able to say, "Return unto thy rest, O, my soul! for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

Never dare go where you have reason to question whether God will go with you; a Christian should never willingly be where there is not room for his Saviour.

A worthy Quaker thus wrote:—I expect to pass through this world but once. If, therefore, there can be any kindness I can do to any fellow-being, let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it, for I will not pass this way again.

Never forget the three whys. First, What from? Secondly, What by? And thirdly, What to? What from? Believers are redeemed from hell and destruction. What by? By the precious blood of Christ. What to? To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Of all the pretty little songs I have ever heard sung, that is one of the best which winds up—

If at first you don't succeed,
Try, try again.

I recommend it to everybody who is "down in the mouth," and fancies that the best thing he can do is to give up. Nobody knows what he can do till he tries. "We shall get through it now," says Jack to Harry, as they finished up the pudding. Everything now is hard work, but a little of the "try" ointment rubbed on the hand and worked into the heart makes all things easy.—C. H. Spurgeon.

EUROPEAN CHANGES.

Europe, says a Berlin paper, had fifty-six States before the Italian war, while it has now only eighteen, with a total superficial area of 179,362 square miles, and a population of 800,000,000. Of these the German Empire comprises 1,888 square miles, and a population of 40,100,000 (according to the census of 1847.) The principal States in Europe, with a population of more than 25 millions, are:—Russia (71), Germany (40), France (30), Austro-Hungary (30), Great Britain (22), and Italy (20); their total population is therefore four fifths of that of the whole of Europe. A century ago, before the partition of Poland, the Great Powers only possessed one half of the then population of Europe; thus: Russia 18 millions, Austria, 17; Prussia, 5; England, 12; and France, 26; total, 80. The number of Roman Catholics in Europe generally is now 148 millions; 95½ in France, 28 in Austria, 28 in Italy, 16 in Spain, and 14½ in Germany; of Greek Catholics, 70 millions, 54 in Russia, 5 in Turkey, 4 in Roumania, and 3 in Austria; of Protestants, 71 millions; 25 in Germany, 24 in England, 8½ in Austria; of Jews, 4,800,000; 1,700,000 in Russia, 822,000 in Germany. Dividing Europe into nationalities, there are 82,200,000 of the Slavonic race, 97,500,000 of the Latin races, and 93,500,000 of the Germanic race.

I'M HIS MAN.

The death of the Rev. Robert J. Breckinridge reminds us of an amusing incident in his life, which we believe has never been printed. Some member of a presbytery—a country brother—complained that the city clergymen dressed too well, and thus made an undue distinction between them and their country brethren. Dr. Breckinridge, always ready for debate, straightened his tall, thin form up, and "indignantly denied the charge." In a burst of eloquent anger he declared that he was ready to change clothes with any brother on that floor. In an instant a short, fat brother—as broad as long—waddled into the aisle, and called out wheezily: "Mr. Moderator, I'm his man!" The vision of Dr. Breckinridge's arms and legs protruding from the baggy clothes of the other upset the dignity of the presbytery, and spoiled the eloquence of the orator.—Exchange.

THE AMERICAN WILD-CAT.—The animal so generally known in this country as the wild-cat, is not a cat proper, but a lynx. Cats and lynxes differ in their teeth, and in a more readily observed character, the length of the tail, which in the lynxes is less than half that of the body and usually not greater than that of the head. Our wild-cat, or bay lynx, as it is sometimes called, measures, inclusive of the tail, not far from three feet in length, and weighs from seventeen to twenty pounds. Its general color is a pale, reddish brown, and more grayish in winter. The sides have indistinct dusky blotches, and it has a collar of pale hairs at the throat. The tail has a small patch of black on the upper surface of the end, and the inner surface of the ears is black, with a white patch.

This animal is found throughout the country, and varies so much in widely separated localities that naturalists are in doubt whether there are one or several species. The wild-cat mainly inhabits dark swamps, and in the Southern States is frequently found in the wild growth that takes possession of abandoned cotton-fields. It lives upon hares, squirrels, partridges, and other small animals. Sometimes it makes a raid upon the hen-roost of a settler, and will occasionally kill a lamb or young pig. In summer, when the streams are low, it varies its food by catching fish. The animal is caught in steel-traps, baited with meat. The wild-cat of Europe is a true cat, and crosses with the domestic cat. We have not heard of any crosses of this kind with our wild-cat.—Hearth and Home.

Wisdom is, I suppose, the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great deal, and are all the more fools for what they know. There is no fool so great a fool as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom.—Spurgeon.

It is said that because the daily papers are so full of the records of crime, some prison authorities keep them away from convicts for the reason they are dangerous reading. Yet thousands of families admit any daily paper into the circle of young people and children, without a suspicion of impending evil.