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## Contributors & Correspondents.

### THE UNION QUESTION—DELAY CONDEMNED.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—Since the meeting of the Assembly of C. P. Church there has been, as was naturally expected, a lull in the discussion upon the terms of the proposed union between that church and the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, or more simply the Kirk.

It is not intended to open up again the discussion of the terms of union; but the time contemplated before it can take effect is surely a matter of such importance as to deserve the most earnest consideration. For this reason I would ask the favour your columns to bring this matter more fully before the notice of both churches.

I cannot but feel that, the longer the decision of the Assembly is looked at, the less will it stand the test of calm reflection and careful examination. Just notice the position of our Church in this matter. First, the doctrinal articles of the basis of union, generally by far the most difficult to settle, have been agreed upon. Next we wish, nay, the determination of our Church to unite with the Kirk has been unmistakably expressed in the Assembly by voting down every motion and amendment that threatened or was intended to postpone union indefinitely. Lastly, it has been agreed to adopt Morrin and Queen's Colleges, the greatest difficulties in the way of union, in the relation they now stand to the Church, and all the Theological Schools at present connected with both bodies. Why then delay three years? The all controlling reason is, to raise a certain amount of money. All other reasons are unimportant compared with this. I admit that the motion of Dr. Proudfoot does necessarily require a delay of three years. But it almost certainly does. I feel certain that the feeling in the minds of a great majority of the members of the negotiating churches at this decision, is one of regret, surprise and disappointment. There ought to be very grave reasons indeed to warrant it. In order to justify such a step it should be shown that the money we propose to raise, is either an indispensable prerequisite to union, or that it cannot be raised afterwards. But neither of these has ever been attempted to be shown, and I venture to say could not be shown to the satisfaction of any large number in either church. On the contrary, I believe that there are hundreds in both churches who are strongly desirous of union, whose hearts will be so filled with gratitude at its speedy consummation, that they would both give more liberally, and give what they can more willingly if union could be soon accomplished than they will do if it is to be kept pending three years. Why not take a lesson from the American churches in this matter and follow their example? I have no doubt it would be attended with equally good results. It may be said, how could our ministers who are opposed to accepting Queen's College on its present footing, ask money from the people for its endowment as part of a general scheme. But the majority of the ministers of our Assembly whether from necessity or choice, are in favour of taking the college, and these at least could ask aid to endow it. All would feel at liberty to ask aid for the Theological Halls. Let it be remembered also, that the Kirk will form part of the united body, and they could surely as easily contribute money to complete the endowment of the college after union as they can now. It is not at all indispensable, therefore, I conceive, to spend three years in raising money before we can unite.

Look now at some of the disadvantages of delay. While the benefits of it are for the most part doubtful and altogether problematical, the disadvantages are both serious and unquestionable.

There is first the obvious danger of unforeseen difficulties and complications that may arise by keeping union dangling in uncertainty for three years.

Second—The dangers that may arise are almost certain to do so, from the fact that there is a small minority in both Churches totally opposed to union on different but conscientious grounds. If these men are thoroughly conscientious and in earnest in their opposition to union as fraught with evil to the respective Churches, will they not, are they not bound to, make the most of every difficulty that may arise, if possibly they may defer it still longer? Ministers

have their passions and prejudices like other men, and they are not generally slower to act upon them.

Third—Suppose the amount of money be not raised. Suppose the opponents of union try this plan to put it off. What then? Shall we be asked to delay one year more, for a final effort, or two, or perhaps three? Or shall we enter into it at last without the money, confessing failure, with a loss of prestige, and, to a certain extent, of self-respect? The Kirk has indeed a large funded capital. We have not. But have we not hitherto maintained all the Schemes of our Church in as vigorous a state of efficiency, to say the least, as theirs, and can we not continue to do so? It is that and not the mere amount of money that either we or the Kirk may have in our possession that should entitle either party to enter into union upon an equal footing pecuniarily. Could the Kirk point to any of the important Schemes of our Church languishing and dying out for want of sufficient support, then we might for decency's sake wish to wipe out that reproach, and they might fairly ask us to do so. But happily we are not in that position. It ought to be distinctly kept in view by all, which was very little noticed in the discussions in the Assembly, that this is not a partnership for carrying on business merely in which capital is of the last importance, but a union of Christian forces professedly advancing the cause of Christ. If this is really the high and single object for which union is desired, money difficulties ought not to be difficult to surmount.

Fourth—There are a multitude of weak congregations and half-starved ministers all over the country in both bodies, the consequence of our disunited state. With respect to such congregations now vacant, or which may become so, how are we to do? Both parties feel it exceedingly undesirable to continue this state of matters, and could union be brought about speedily, it would come to an end in many places at once. But if delayed three years neither party can ask congregations to wait so long for a union that after all may not take place. And so we must go on crushing the spirit out of weak congregations and out of poorly paid ministers.

Fifth—Delay is equally injurious to the mission work of the two Churches. It is constantly coming into rivalry or collision in all our new settlements. Does our Church think for a moment of suspending its activity in this work, in the smallest degree, for the next three years, that in new settlements we may not interfere with the Kirk? Will we give up a single mission station, or withdraw a single missionary? I hope not. Can we expect the Kirk will do it? And so both parties must go on for the next three years wasting their resources—and for what? Simply for the purpose of raising a sum of money which it has not first been shown it is absolutely necessary to raise before we can unite, which there is every reason to believe could as well, or better, be raised after union than before it. The Kirk has not asked us to raise a single cent. It comes forward ready to enter into union, trusting to our ability and willingness to do our part. Why not then go forward, appeal to our people; trust them, avoid the certain risks of three years' delay, and secure within a few months all the manifest and unquestionable advantages of a confiding and friendly union.

This has been decried as unseemly haste. Unseemly haste, indeed, to unite when the subject has been talked of more or less and contemplated for years as a thing which the logic of events was making every day more certain. This is not the first union of Presbyterians that has ever taken place. It is not a new and untried experiment. We have been working side by side in this country for over a quarter of a century; our modes of worship are identical; we hold the same subordinate standards; all our ministers sign the very same Confession of Faith; and yet when union seems near it is decried as unseemly haste. It is longer separation that looks unseemly and unwarrantable. I confess, sir, I am never asked by plain people why it is, but I am ashamed of the paltry, insufficient reasons, rather pretexts, that still keep us apart. I think it is nothing less than a standing scandal upon Christian charity.

I hope, sir, the Synod of the Kirk will indicate its desire, and set us the example of moving in the way of more speedy and prompt action. And I hope, also, that as the last Assembly was a most inadequate representation of our whole Church, and especially of the

strong feeling of the Church upon this subject, since the basis of union has never been submitted to the Church at large, that all Presbyteries and Sessions in favor of union will make their voice heard, and their determination for a more speedy union felt in the constitution of next Assembly.

Trusting, sir, that your known interest in this matter will excuse me for asking so much of your valuable space.

I remain, yours truly,  
W. D. B.

Whitby, January, 1872.

### THE UNION.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—I see from the Prospectus of your Journal (the appearance of which I hail with much satisfaction, and from which I hope our church will receive great benefit) that you are fully committed to the "movement for Presbyterian union, already so auspiciously inaugurated." Although I may differ in my estimate of the auspices of the inauguration, I am very happy to find you prepared to take a decided and clearly defined position. You also pledge yourself "to use all proper means likely to disarm prejudices, reconcile differences, and remove obstacles to the early consummation of so desirable an object." I presume you regard free discussion one of those proper means, and I am confident, that so long as you give a place in your columns to opinions on both sides of public questions, no right hearted or liberal minded man will refuse you his continuance and support, because your opinions are decidedly or strongly opposed to his. Allow me then to suggest one or two difficulties which must be fairly looked at, and what perhaps you may call prejudices which should be kindly and generously dealt with, if a harmonious and happy union is to be accomplished.

I would premise that no argument is needed to convince me that union is in itself desirable, nay a duty; and that great benefits would accrue to our common Presbyterianism therefrom. All declamation on this point is wasted breath. But it must be admitted by you on the other hand, that there are practical matters which require careful adjustment, and feelings on both sides which require tender and delicate handling. Now it is just because I think these practical matters are being adjusted without sufficient care, and these feelings, at least on one side, are not being tenderly dealt with, that I wish not to see the union hurried on over the heads of a small, but certainly not contemptible, minority.

A few remarks upon the Basis of Union and accompanying resolutions which are now before the Presbyteries, Sessions and Congregations, will make my meaning plain.

The Basis meets my own view because I conceive that the Confession of faith is sufficiently explicit on the Headship of Christ over his church. Nevertheless I think that the other churches might have had regard to the feeling of many among us of the Canada Presbyterian Church, who feel strongly on this point, and should have been willing to allow a formal recognition of a principle which they all profess to hold, and which events yet recent show us, may at any time come into practical prominence even in America. But even if the other churches should refuse this, the majority of our own Assembly might have allowed the proposal to be made that a fifth article to this effect be added to the Basis. It does not promote union thus to prevent discussions between the negotiating churches on points of vital importance, by simply refusing to propose an article which has ever been very dear to both branches of this church, giving unnecessary offense by disregarding prejudices which have deservedly a strong hold on many members of the church.

The next point, on which probably the greatest difference of opinion exists, is the resolution adopted by the Assembly regarding Collegiate Education. My objection to it is in a word, it really gives us nothing practical. It decides nothing. It is a motion altered, added to, and so constructed as to meet everybody's view, and commits the church as a whole to nothing.—Please, Mr. Editor, answer me a few questions.

1. After union with the united church have power, to do away with Queen's College? would it be in honour committed not to use that power? I find men

holding opposite opinions on these questions who nevertheless agree to preserve the colleges, &c., "on terms and conditions like to those under which they now exist," and also to understand "that all other matters pertaining to the colleges be left for the adjustment of the United Church." Some interpret this as including among the other matters, the abolishing of faculties, the changing of the constitutions of the colleges and of their relation to the church. This others deny, yet both parties support the resolution. How do you answer these questions?

2. Is the Union to be delayed until the \$250,000 for our Theological Colleges is raised, and the endowment of Queen's College is completed? or may it be consummated within the "three years" mentioned in the resolution? Many voted for the resolution because apparently, union was not by it delayed; while quite as many supported it, because it gave three years for consideration. Which interpretation Mr. Editor is right?

3. Simply noting that the second clause of the resolution does not commit either Church to raise a cent for endowments, but deals only with the efforts and expectations. I ask does the clause "so that neither it (Queen's College) nor the Theological Institutions referred to, may be a burden to the United Church," mean, that the United Church shall not be required to afford pecuniary support to those institutions? or is Queen's College to be hereafter as much entitled to support as our Theological Institutions? Those who hold both opinions support the resolution, which opinion is right?

4. The resolution informs the negotiating Churches that this church "still adheres to its repeatedly expressed opposition to State grants for Denominational Colleges in these provinces; and further instructs their committees to ascertain whether there is a definite prospect of harmonious action in the United Church in this matter." Is this intended to be a practical issue. In other words does the C. P. Church intend to make the acceptance of this position by the United Church a condition of union? or was this tacked on simply to neutralise opposition by making a show of holding to the position of the C. P. Church in the past, while it is quietly insinuated that that position will be abandoned rather than that Union should fail. Both opinions again are held by some who support the resolution. Which is right?

Thus you see that on these four points the Church is committed to nothing. It is doubtful what the Church after union could do, or might in honour do with Queen's College; whether the Union is to go on *quam promum*, or be delayed for three years; whether after union Queen's College would be entitled to the same support as our Theological Institutions, supposing expectations to be realised, which may utterly fail; and whether harmony regarding State grants to our Colleges shall be made a condition of union. Let me then ask, What does the resolution mean? I know full well that the majority of the Assembly was in favour of union, and that as soon as possible; and that to obtain it they would accede to any terms regarding Queen's College that might be proposed. But there is a minority, not numerous perhaps, and not disposed to cause unnecessary strife, who wish to know what they are going to do before they are committed. Surely, Mr. Editor, their opinions and feelings should be regarded by the majority; surely they should not be provoked to say things which may wound others as well as injure themselves, nor be forced into an attitude of hostility which will make union impossible, except at the cost of bitter feeling and unbrotherly enmity.

As to the disposal of the Temporalities Fund, while I quite agree with the decision of the Assembly, I do not see why this Church should be asked to express an opinion as to the disposal of funds with which they have not meant while anything to do, and may never have. Let the Kirk do what they will with their own.

Further, Mr. Editor, our Supreme Court is committed, (so far as a non-committal resolution can commit it) to a certain course of action, viz. to union on certain terms. Surely if common sense is to guide us, we should wait before taking another step and know what the other Supreme Courts are to say. Surely there is no such haste as would require the Church to adopt a Basis and resolutions which have not been considered by the other Churches.

Looking for an answer at your convenience, I am, dear sir, yours,

CUNCTATOR.

## Random Readings.

Reading a false note of alarm in one's ear only increases the liability of his falling into real danger.

We go through life like a man with a dark lantern, throwing light out, on the few steps before; but since, little by little, all the miles of mysterious darkness that stretch beyond our sight will become the few steps before us, the light, thank God! is enough for the whole way.

"He called to Him whom He would." This put Bunyan into a great quirk; for thought he, "Thou canst not like me, Lord; but call me and cure me, I pray Thee."

Here are both the manna, and a golden pot to keep it in,—truth laid up in a pure conscience.—*Journal*.

The English Wesleyans found it expedient some time since to adopt the policy advocated lately in our own Church, of organizing more distinctly their home mission work. The London Watchman says

"The aspect of affairs became very serious to all those who wished to see Methodism still vigorous and useful in the land. At length after much careful consideration, it was resolved by the Conference to modify its arrangements so that at least a few ministers might be set apart specially and exclusively for home missionary work. This resolution rendered necessary certain changes in financial arrangements, and the Fund was thenceforward denominated the Home Mission and Contingent Fund.

I observe that God has chosen the vine, a low plant that creeps upon the helpless wall; of all beasts, the soft and patient lamb; of all birds, the mild and guileless dove. Christ is the rose of the field and the lily of the valley. When God appeared to Moses it was not in the lofty cedar, nor the sturdy oak, nor the spreading palm; but in a bush—an humble, slender, abject bush. As if He would, by those selections, check the conceited arrogance of man.—*Feltham*.

What is the most characteristic in the religion—what is the most wonderful is the fact that it wells up right against a man's desires, his inclinations, his preconceptions. It shatters his old, mouldy crust of habits; it changes the current of his thoughts; it makes the dumb, stupefied conscience talk right out, and speak to the purpose; it transfigures him, it regenerates him. If it cannot make a small power large, it makes it good.

With the prayer, "Lead me not into temptation" on your lip, choose for the right and God, though the choice make you confront a solid rock. God shall render the rock accessible, and cover it with brighter greenness, and make it more radiant with flowers. *Rev. Wayland Hoyt*.

When grief sits down, fold its hands, and mournfully feeds upon its own tears, weaving the dim shadows that a little exertion might sweep away into a funeral pall, the strong spirit is shorn of its might, and sorrow becomes our master.

We should look upon content as the greatest good. Not that it is requisite that we should have only a little to live upon, but when we have only a little we should be satisfied, for this reason, that those best enjoy abundance who are contented with the least, and so that the pains of poverty are removed, simple fare can give a relish equal to the most expensive luxuries.

The secret of being rightly guided—guided of God—is to have our own will thoroughly subdued. "The meek will be guided in judgment; and the meek will He teach His way."

It was a saying of the first Napoleon that every man should make his opportunities—his chances. But as a general thing, while ten men watch for chances, only one makes chances; while ten men wait for something to turn up, only one turns something up; so while ten men fail, one succeeds and is called a man of luck and the favorite of fortune. There is no luck like pluck, and fortune most favors those who are most indifferent to fortune.

"Do you think," asked Mr. Pepper, "that a little temper is a bad thing in a woman?" "Certainly not, ma'am," replied a gallant philosopher; "it is a good thing, and she ought never to lose it."

Any one can drift. But it takes prayer, religious principle, earnestness of purpose, constant watching, to resist the evil of this world, to struggle against the tide.

A wise man looks upon men as he does on horses; all their caparisons of title, wealth and place he considers but as harness.—*Cecil*.