

Larger Catechism, shall be held as subscribing these standards subject to the exclusion of such portions."

### INDIA.

**HINDOO WIDOWS.**—A bill is at present before the Legislative Council of India, to enable Hindoo widows to marry without sacrificing their rights, and for legitimising their children. At present, a poor girl scarcely released from the nursery, may become a widow before having seen her husband, and for the rest of her days is not only condemned to celibacy but to slavery. The proposed law, which is purely permissive, has been petitioned against by a considerable body of the wealthiest Hindoos in Calcutta, on the ground that as practices prevailed amongst them three thousand years ago, such as cannibals might blush for, they ought still to be protected and perse-

vered in. The Hindoos of Bombay, in a spirit more besitting the age in which they live, and the character for good sense they have acquired, are now petitioning for the passing of the law, which we hope will be given effect to without loss of time.

The Marquis of Dalhousie, by the last accounts, was making a round of farewell visits to the several provinces; and his last legacy to India, is, the grant to the Bishop of Madras of nearly a lac and a half of rupees for the building of four churches in different parts of the province of Pegue.—*Observer*.

**CONVENTS.**—In 1845 there were thirty-one convents in Britain; now there are ninety-one, three times as numerous. The monasteries have increased from three to seventeen,—about six times as numerous.

## Editorial Review.

### UNION OF PRESBYTERIANS IN AUSTRALIA.

By the intelligence in another part of this number it will be seen that the preliminary arrangements have been made for a union between the Free and Established Churches of Scotland in Australia. It will be seen also that an attempt has been made to include the United Presbyterian Church, but the negotiations with that body are not yet brought to a conclusion, and the success of the proposal is yet doubtful. We scarcely understand from the proceedings whether the last proposal has been finally agreed to, or whether it is merely a proposal, still *sub judice*. In looking at the articles we see little in them to which the members of the United Presbyterian Church can object. The only point of difficulty is that the second acknowledges that the civil magistrate "is bound and required to use his *official power* and influence for the maintenance, protection and support of the truth, and the restraining and putting down error and ungodliness." This, however, is explained in the remaining part of the article, so as to be nearly harmless. His power is not merely to be confined within the limits of mere civil authority, but there is to be no interference with liberty of conscience. With such limitations fully carried out the article might pass: but we suspect that it would puzzle the authors of it to show *how* he is to exercise his *official power* in the "maintenance and support of the truth" without interfering with liberty of conscience. We presume that the language has particular reference to the principles of a Church Establishment—of supporting religion by pecuniary grants—and how can the magistrate by his official power raise money for this purpose, without interfering with the liberty of those who do not concur in his views of what is truth. Perhaps it will be said that the magistrate is to make them pay the money and allow them liberty to think and feel as they please. But as Andrew Fuller has well said, liberty to think is no liberty at all. He who made the human mind made it independent of any controll-