

would certainly supply both in some measure, by a redistribution of the men already in the field and by a saving in the cost of administration. The economy in connection with educational and literary institutions would be a marked consequence of an organic union among Presbyterians in heathen countries. Take for example India, with three similar yet distinct and rival colleges at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Can it be doubted that one well equipped college at each of these centres would suffice? Would not the gain far more than compensate for the sacrifice, if such it should be called, of surrendering a charter or changing a base of operations? Dr. Chamberlain, a missionary of the Reformed Church in America, put this matter forcibly before the Belfast Council. He said there were thirteen different branches of the Presbyterian Church engaged in mission work in India at the present time; they have together 168 ordained ministers and a much larger number of elders—"Enough to form a General Assembly for India if the home churches would permit them to do it. But as yet they have no effective bond of union." Speaking of his own field, inhabited by three millions of Tamil and Telegu people, among whom they have thirteen ordained missionaries and a Christian community of 5,525 souls, he says:—"But we stand alone, having no connection with the missions and Presbyteries of the Church of Scotland and of the Free Church in Madras. Is there, can there be any reason, God-given, why we should not unite and form the Synod of Madras of the Reformed Church holding the Presbyterian system? Why should not the Presbyterians in the Bombay Presidency unite—British and American—and constitute the Synod of Bombay? And so in Bengal; and then, rising in their oneness in Christ, form one united General Assembly. This must come." Rev. K. S. Macdonald, a missionary of the Free Church of Scotland says:—"Our divisions have been a source of weakness in the face of heathenism. We in India are much more in advance in the direction of union than the Home Church whom we represent." Mr. Macdonald stated on the floor of the Council that the blame of perpetuating Presbyterian sectarianism in India lies at the doors of the Home Churches. The missionaries themselves are ready for co-operation and

even for organic union. It is evident, therefore, that whatever efforts are to be made, the initiative must be taken by the Home Churches in Britain and America, and who can tell but decisive action in this direction, while proving an inestimable boon to the cause of foreign missions, may also prove to be the stepping stone to a corporate union of the Presbyterian Churches in both of these great Christian countries.

Missionary Cabinet.

ASAHEL GRANT, M.D.

AMONG the medical men who have gone to heathen lands with the double purpose of relieving bodily distress and opening blind eyes to the light of the Gospel, none hold a more distinguished place in the history of missions than Dr. Asahel Grant, a devoted medical missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, who was sent out to assist the Rev. Justin Perkins their first missionary to the Nestorians of Persia. Dr. Grant was born of pious parents, in the town of Marshall, in the State of New York, on the 17th of August, 1807. His father, who was a farmer, had destined him for the same profession, but a severe wound by an axe in his youth having unfitted him for that occupation, he turned his attention to the study of medicine. After obtaining his diploma, he married and entered into a lucrative practice in the village of Brainton, Pennsylvania. But his bright hopes were soon clouded. His wife died, leaving him with two young children, when he returned to the old home-stead. He was ordained a deacon in the Presbyterian Church and, like the New Testament deacons, he began to preach the Gospel. The stories that his mother had told him in childhood about Eliot and Brainerd came back to his mind and he became filled with a desire to go to the heathen. He offered his services to the American Board and was appointed to join their mission in Persia. Having married a second time, he and his wife, accompanied by Rev. James L. Merrick, sailed from Boston in May, 1835, for Trebizond, near the head of the Black sea. Thence, by a laborious journey of seven hundred miles, through a