

respecting terms of agreement, we hope, may, sooner or later, be turned to good account. At the same time, we abide by the opinion we have oftener than once expressed, that all direct attempts at the accomplishment of a union must, for the present, be regarded as premature, injudicious, and likely to prove mischievous in result. We entirely approve of the course adopted by the Committee of our Synod on Union, who, we are sure, aimed—and, we think, wisely—at bringing to the quietest, speediest, and least offensive termination, a piece of business which evidently could not be prosecuted with any hope of a successful issue, and which probably could not be entered on, without consequences which all good men in both churches would have deplored;—one, moreover, for which the leaders of the Free Church had manifested in their Synod the strongest aversion. It is constitutional to say that “all Synods or Councils, since the Apostles’ times, whether general or particular, may err, and many have erred.” With the greatest deference we say that, in our humble judgment, the Synod of our Church, in June last, did err, though in the best spirit, and with the best intentions, when it appointed a committee on union. It would have been quite enough to put our resolutions on the minutes. If the Free Church had reciprocated these resolutions, a committee might next year have been appointed; if otherwise, the matter might have dropped, and things would have been in a much better position than they are. *Festina lente* must be our motto. Our precipitate haste has already retarded, we fear, for a number of years, a consummation most devoutly to be wished—one for which we should counsel that everything be sacrificed but a good conscience.]

In our last No., we presented the views of the Presbyterian [Free] Church regarding the civil magistrate, in seven articles. Before remarking on the differences between that Church and ours on these particulars—a subject, however, which it may be expedient to waive for the present—we shall present the views of our own Church, as we have done those of the other, by themselves—subjoining some suggestions towards common ground on these articles.

The United Presbyterian Church, “1st, Holding that the revelation of Christ’s appointment as Ruler has not added anything to the department over which the civil magistrate is placed, nor formed any new relationship between him and his subjects, nor imposed any new duties different from those to discharge which he was previously bound—and, moreover, as the whole institution and end of his office are cut out by, and lie within the compass of, natural principles—it is not their opinion that there can, or ought to be, any exercise thereof towards its end but what would be argued for, and defended from, natural principles. 2. That the duty of the civil magistrate is only to protect every subject in the exercise of the right which God has given him, to judge for himself in matters religious, and to act in them according to his own judgment, so far as not to interfere with the rights of conscience. 3. That the Scriptures do not enjoin a national Act, incorporated into the constitution of the State, and made the basis, so far as