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*"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."—Psalms 137, 4-5.*

### THE PAN-PRESBYTERIAN COUNCIL.

EDINBURGH, July 5th, 1877.

The opening of the Pan-Presbyterian Council, which had been anticipated with so much interest by the Presbyterian churches throughout the world, took place in this city on the 3d inst. by religious services and a public meeting.

#### THE OPENING SERMON

was preached in the High School by Professor Flint to a large audience, his text being John xvii., 20, 21. After noticing the circumstances in which the words of the text were first spoken, Professor Flint went on to say that the unity prayed for had often been grievously misrepresented, and the consequences had been most lamentable. The aim of all philosophy was to reach a true intellectual unity; yet that had been the chief source of its errors. All false systems of speculations, like Materialism, Idealism, Positivism, and Pantheism, were simply systems based on false or narrow and exclusive unities. There were also caricatures of unity in political life; but nowhere had erroneous views as to the nature of unity been so mischievous as in the province of religion; for in its name men had been asked to sacrifice the most sacred rights of reason and conscience. Going on to speak of what Christian unity was, the preacher

pointed out that it had its origin in heaven, and was the natural and necessary expression of the common relationship of believing men to the one God, one Saviour, and one Holy Spirit. It was in itself separated by a broad and clear boundary from the unity opposed to it and glorified by Positivists, and Humanitarians, and Socialists—the mere unity of the human brotherhood. But the signs of the times seemed clearly to indicate that, in some form or another, what had been called the "religion of humanity," which was belief in the brotherhood of man, separated from belief in the fatherhood of God, would be one of the chief enemies which Christianity must contend with. The unity of the Church was not a thing merely to be hoped for in the future; it was a thing which already existed. Christians were certainly far indeed from being one as Christ desired they might be; but to the extent that they were Christians at all they were already one. Any unity, therefore, which they were entitled to look for in the future must be merely a development of that which already bound together Christian men of all denominations. Some seemed to think that the great duty of Christians in this matter was to ignore, or conceal, or get rid anyhow of their differences. They appeared to find it difficult to understand how there could be unity co-existing