

We recollect hearing a distinguished Free Church Minister once say, in exact accordance with the view of Dr. Harper :—"There is no more needed in order to a union than just that we should declare our willingness that the Establishment principle be matter of forbearance," and he was pleased to add, "I think we ought to make that declaration." It is needless to say, We think so too; for that is just saying We approve of the position occupied on that point by the United Presbyterian Church, which by no means requires its ministers or members to be voluntaries, and which contains some of both, who, as we well know, warmly approve of an Establishment. But had we access to Free Churchmen we would plead for the concession on two grounds. First we would respectfully submit, whether, granting the soundness of the Establishment principle, it is of sufficient importance to be insisted on as an indispensable term of communion, especially when it is, as in the Free Church, a mere abstraction. Secondly, we would plead that the concession would extricate the Free Church herself from an inconvenience, and be a relief to the consciences of many of her excellent members and elders, we do not say, ministers. For we know that not a few of the two former classes are decidedly in favor of forbearance, that is to say, they hold the principle of the United Presbyterian Church rather than of their own. Nay, we know that some of them are as resolute voluntaries as any of ourselves, and if we mistake not the number is rapidly increasing. It would be presumption to hope that all this can have any weight. But perhaps Sir George Sinclair may be listened to :—

"You must all," says he, "be aware how completely the different bodies of unendowed Presbyterians are identified in other respects; they acknowledge the same standards; preach the same doctrines; are governed by the same office-bearers; are equally tenacious of Sabbath observance; and are equally zealous in the cause of foreign missions. Their ministers are all maintained by the spontaneous and ungrudged oblations of their flocks; and all parties are desirous, to their power, and even beyond their power, to contribute to the support of a Gospel ministry in those localities where the deep poverty of the inhabitants renders it necessary that they should, in part at least be supplemented by the abundance of the liberality of their Christian brethren, who are in easier circumstances, at a distance. We, therefore, who are connected with the Free Church, may surely bear with our United Presbyterian brethren who have, during three generations, experienced (as they think) the efficacy, as well as the comfort, of the self-sustaining system. Why should we who are practical voluntaries from necessity, refuse to be united with those who are so from conviction (as far as the sustentation of the minister is concerned), and who object not to our holding the opposite principle, to which they are conscientiously opposed?"

The following extract, also, is well deserving of attention. It is long, but we are sure the space will not be grudged :—

"The axiom, that it is the duty of the civil magistrate, in his official capacity, to 'honor Christ,' is, as it seems to me, so vague and indeterminate, as to be liable to very serious objections. It must, of course, in each separate instance, depend on the consciences of those in authority to act in this matter according to *their own* views, without assuming *ours* as their standard or their guide. In this sense, Christ is at this moment 'honored' in every country throughout Europe. The 'civil magistrates' in Italy, Spain, Portu-