

was set before them, asking no question for conscience sake. Will any one maintain that difference of view on the Magistrate's power, such as prevails in the Free and United Presbyterian Churches, is to be compared in magnitude to this diversity in the primitive Church on the obligation of the ceremonial law? It is believed every candid mind who looks at the question without prejudice will at once admit they are not for a moment to be placed on the same level. Yet what does the inspired Apostle enjoin as Christian duty in the primitive ground of difference? It is just Christian unity in mutual forbearance. These are His words, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." This is the law of Christ respecting union of Christians, where they are agreed on the great truths of salvation and the plan of worship, but differ on subordinate points of belief. They are commanded to receive each other, mutually reckoning their brother weak in the faith on the matter of difference, and this not for the purpose of disputations respecting the question at issue, as if each were eager to gain the other over to his views. The will of the Master is, that Christian brethren receive one another, unite with one another, concede freedom of opinion to one another, exercise forbearance towards one another, and thus endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The application of these remarks to the union of the United Presbyterian and Free Churches is not difficult. He who denies that forbearance should be exercised on the sole question which divides them, is bound to prove that difference of sentiment on the Magistrate's power goes nearer the central truth of justification by faith, and is of greater importance in the Church than was diversity in the primitive age on the obligation of the ceremonial law. This I believe to be impossible, and therefore submit that the Apostolic injunction to forbearance in the one case makes it much more an imperative duty in the other. Taking into account the diversity of circumstances and training of the early Christians, and the numerous allusions in the inspired epistles to their differences of sentiment, it appears to me if the same demand had been then made for uniformity of creed as is made now by some for oneness of opinion on the Magistrate's power, there could scarcely have been such a thing as union of Christians and Churches in the same fellowship at all. But they loved one another with a pure heart fervently, and afford a beautiful example to us to exercise forbearance towards brethren who differ from us. Thus it is that Christian Churches, as well as individuals, are affectionately exhorted to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

In drawing these observations to a close, I may be permitted to say that I have conversed with not a few in our Church here, on the subject of the proposed Union in Canada, and I have not heard two opinions expressed as to its proper Basis. The uniform conviction is that the United Presbyterian Church in Canada cannot agree to the Fourth Article unexplained, without a surrender of a principle of perhaps all but universal belief within her pale, and that it is infinitely preferable to