

would vibrate to the ends of the earth. Are you prepared to forego all this, or even defer all this? I am not. In the contemplation of it my apprehensions change sides, and from dreading ill-assorted combinations I dread the result of schism and its sorrows. Two facts have more weighed with me than any reasonings: The eminent men of our Church with whom Providence has brought me into contact have been mostly and characteristically unionists, and they have become increasingly so towards the close of their career. When I was newly licensed, I had an appointment to preach for Dr. Pringle, of Perth, and I could never forget a conversation with him. Its words I forget, but its substance—I trust in some measure its spirit—rests with me. In fatherly and affectionate accents he indicated to me that he had been very jealous about landmarks, and he was far from despising them still; but he had come to discover that every one of them did not define a holy land or a widow's inheritance, and he had come to accept with more comprehensive import and more entire self-render the lesson, love of the brotherhood. This personal lesson was delicate advice, and I feel at this moment as if he had given it to me not only for acceptance but for transmission. Let me disappear, then, in thought from our younger brethren. Let them behold instead that venerated patriarch while he smiles upon them with benignant regards and prayerful hopes, and, uncoiling the map of life, points with the finger of devout experience in the direction of concord, and says with accents almost valedictory—'That is the way, walk ye in it.' I might state many like incidents—report many such remarks made to me by such men in their studies or on their death-beds; but I may say in general, that to the extent of my classmates, and more immediately within the range of my friendship, a lessening estimate of differences and enlarging estimate of agreements has been one of the distinguishing marks of ripening for glory; and the fact that weighs much with me is, that unions already formed have falsified only fears, and have fulfilled and exceeded hopes. Perhaps I appeal to feeling and you mistrust such advocacy. Be it so. It has long appeared to me that the wisdom which is from above has less to do with the head than with the heart, and that they seldom err who follow Christian affection. In any case I retract nothing from these pleadings. A few years have elapsed since I stood in this Synod. What may be in the future we know not; but if I should never return, I do not think it will burden my conscience that my last words here were for the peace of Jerusalem, as related and equivalent to good upon Zion.

Other addresses were delivered from which we would gladly make extracts did our

space permit; but we must now turn to the utterances on the same subject in the

FREE CHURCH ASSEMBLY.

Dr. ROBERT BUCHANAN of Glasgow, the distinguished author of the "*Ten Years' Conflict*," opened the discussion.

IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT

I look upon the question which these overtures have brought before the Assembly as the most important with which we have had to deal since the great event of the Disruption itself. It is a question which cannot have taken any of us by surprise. It has been coming across our minds every now and then ever since we were called to take up our present position as a dis-established Church. From the very first it was manifest to all thoughtful men that two such bodies as the United Presbyterians and ourselves could not long resist the necessity of carefully considering the relation in which we were to stand to one another. Had there been points of difference between us as numerous and as strongly marked as those, for instance, which separate the Congregationalists and the Wesleyans of England—points both of doctrine and of ecclesiastical government—there might have been no reason whatever why we should not have gone on indefinitely as we are, without raising any question of union at all. But the case being so that with us the matters of differences are so few, and those in which we are at one so many—it being the broad and conspicuous fact, that in doctrine and worship, in discipline and government, we are essentially agreed—that we adhere to the same standards and to the same ecclesiastical polity—that we boast of the same ecclesiastical pedigree—that we look back with equal pride to the same ecclesiastical history, and cherish with equal fondness as our common inheritance the memory of the men whose mighty deeds that history records—the case, I say, being so, it was obviously inevitable that the question must sooner or later arise, whether in a word, it were not the will of God, that we twain should be one. The question has arisen. After being long canvassed in private circles, and recently in more public places and forms, it has at length found its way into Church courts, and reached the floor of this General Assembly, where I am sure it will receive a not less earnest, candid, and friendly consideration than that which it has already met with in the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church.

REASONS IN FAVOUR OF UNION.

The times in which we live are eventful times, especially as concerns the truth of God and the Church of Christ. Almost every where there are influences extensively at work, unsettling men's minds on all the