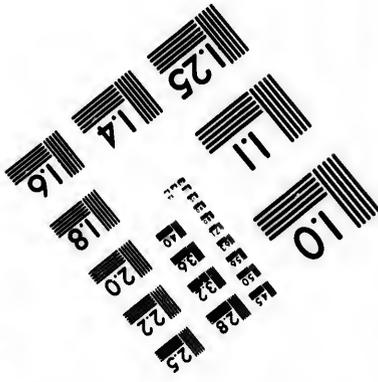
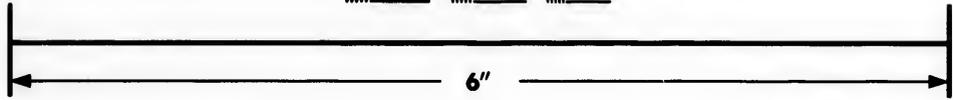
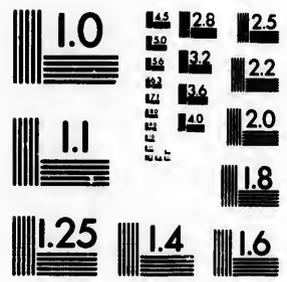


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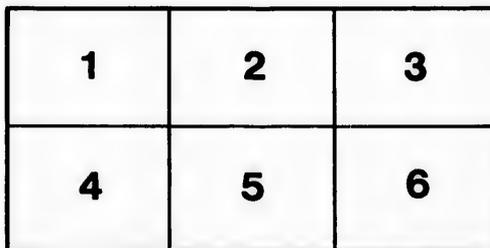
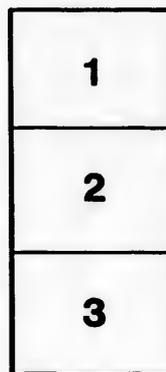
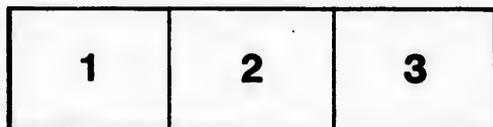
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"THE KIRK"

UNION OF

BY

REV. JAMES BENNETT

A LETTER OF

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SABOT JOHN, N. B.

PRINTED BY BAKER AND COMPANY, PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY.

1861.

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"THE KIRK"

ON

UNION OF PRESBYTERIANS

IN NEW BRUNSWICK,

CRITICISED

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

BY

REV. JAMES BENNET,

MINISTER OF ST. JOHN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

AND

A LETTER OF "A SELF RELIANT LAYMAN."

RE-PRINTED FROM "THE COLONIAL PRESBYTERIAN."

SAINT JOHN, N. B.

PRINTED BY BARNES AND COMPANY, PRINCE WILLIAM STREET.

1861.

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THE following Correspondence, containing report of Speeches delivered on union of Presbyterian Bodies in the Synod met at Fredericton, on the 14th August, and the action of Synod in reference thereto, with the Letters of the Rev. JAMES BENNET, and that of "*A Self-Reliant Layman*," on Synod's speeches and action, are re-printed in the following pages from the *Colonial Presbyterian*, at the earnest request of many who desire to have the whole subject before them in a connected form.

It need only be further stated that the speeches, the sentiments of which are here made the subject of stic-
ture, were reported for the *Colonial Presbyterian* by a gentleman—an adherent of the Kirk—well qualified for the task, and that, in the absence of any legitimate disclaimer, they may be held to be substantially correct.

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UNION OF PRESBYTERIANS.

For "The Colonial Presbyterian."

CONFERENCE ON THE PROPOSED UNION OF PRESBYTERIAN BODIES IN THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW BRUNSWICK IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Last week the Synod of the Church of Scotland held their annual meeting in Fredericton. The question of Union came up on Friday afternoon (August 16), in the following manner:—The Clerk read a letter from the Rev. Mr. Elder, Convener of the Committee of Union appointed by the Synod known as the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick, requesting the earnest consideration of this Synod to certain papers forwarded at the same time, and which were also read. At same time was also read a letter from a Committee on Union, appointed by the Presbyterian Churches of the Lower Provinces, which was also accompanied by a copy of the Minutes,—1st, Of last Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia; 2d, Minutes of the last session of the Synod of the Free Church of Nova Scotia; 3rd, Minutes of the last session of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces of British North America. Read also, from the Minutes now described, the basis of union entered into by the Church in Victoria, by the two Presbyterian bodies in Nova Scotia named, and also by certain parties in Canada. Whereupon, on motion of the Rev. Dr. Donald, the several members of the Synod were called upon to express their opinion on the subject. This accordingly was done by the members present. Some of the members asked to be excused from expressing their thoughts; and all who did speak, spoke shortly, in the order and to the following effect:—

The Rev. Mr. Ogg (of Chatham) said, he had been called upon unexpectedly to speak, and he was therefore not prepared to enter fully upon the subject, or to give his opinion

thereon, as he had not given it a mature consideration. He considered it, however, highly desirable that a union should take place—for union would give them more respectability and influence, and would consequently put them in a condition of being of greater usefulness. Respecting the basis of union, he had nothing to object to; if it was worked out with care, prudence, and moderation, they would no doubt be successful in accomplishing a most desirable object; but at the present time he thought that they, as a Church, were not prepared to take the step proposed. They were still receiving aid from home, which they could not dispense with. They were therefore not in a condition to cast off their connexion with the parent Church—to which result he believed it would come, if they united themselves with the body known as “the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick;” and the question therefore was, whether they would not lose their position as members of the Church of Scotland by forming such a union? whether, if any of their members were anxious to return to their native land (as some of them might be), they would not lose their status as members of the parent Church, if such a step as that proposed was effected? He certainly was not prepared to propose that they should cast off their connexion with the mother Church, and forego the privilege of being one of her ministers. In thus expressing his hasty sentiments, he wished it to be understood that he was quite liberal in his views, and that he entertained the highest respect for members of other Presbyterian bodies.

Mr. ROBERT NICHOLSON (Elder) then observed, that he would not say much on the subject under discussion; but he would say that he had seen no reason why their brethren should have separated from them in the first place. If they were desirous to return again to the fold, they were welcome to come back as members of the Church of Scotland.

Rev. Mr. MACKIE (Moncton) had very little to say on the subject, but his sentiments were in accordance with those which had been expressed by the Rev. Mr. Ogg. Before debating on such an important subject, he thought that the Church at home should be consulted officially.

Mr. GRANT (Elder) briefly said he was in favour of union; but, taking into consideration what would in all probability result if that union were effected, he gave it as his opinion that he would rather stick to the old Church.

Rev. J. H. McLARDY (ordained Missionary) would not speak at length on the subject; it was one that required the deepest consideration. It was no doubt a desirable thing that all professing Christians should draw together; they were all of one mind as to the desirability of union, and were all agreed, as far as the abstract principle was concerned—but there were great difficulties in the way. He could see no likelihood that all the members of Christ's body would ever be formed into one Church. There had always been diversities of opinion; there had been branches separated from the parent Church from the beginning, and there always would be such diversities and such separations. But he believed that there might be a union of spirit among the Churches, and this he conceived was the thought of the Saviour in the text so often quoted in the argument for union. The meaning of that text was, that all believers should be one in spirit; evidently not that all should be one body; it was a spiritual, not an outward, union that was here shown forth. With that interpretation of the word of the Saviour, he could conceive how there might be a union of spirit and sentiment in separate bodies. There were particular difficulties, moreover, in the way of an external union, through which he could not "see his way straight," and the first was with regard to the recognition by the Church at home of such a union. That Church had not yet decided what would be her conduct to the united bodies of Presbyterians in Victoria. It was true she had not censured them, but it was equally true she had not praised them. They should therefore wait the decision of the Mother Church with regard to her bearing towards those bodies, before they commenced a similar action of such serious importance. Besides, it appeared to him, if a union took place immediately it could not be permanent: there were so many differences between the two bodies, not in things of the highest importance, but in such as would require a great deal of consideration to adjust. A perfect union could only take place when they were all agreed in thought; and he believed there were such differences of thought and feeling between themselves and the body that sought to be incorporated with them, that a permanent union would be impossible. No doubt several advantages would be derived from such a union as was proposed; some small struggling congregations would thereby be rendered self-supporting: but would we not be withdrawing labour from the great vineyard, by thus helping to strengthen a few congregations? He would not enter into the question

how the status and position of clergymen would be affected by union; but if the basis proposed were such as would sever their connexion with the Church of Scotland; if after the union was effected, they would thereafter no longer be received as members of that Church, he, for one, was not willing to relinquish his status. The basis of union, moreover, was not such as had received the approbation of the Church at home—at least such an approval was not before them; and in absence of that, they might well pause before they took steps in such an action. The probability was, that the Church at home would not support the Church in Victoria as before, and that in the future she would deal with it as a castaway. He was not willing, therefore, to unite on such a basis as was proposed.

REV. WILLIAM MURRAY (Dalhousie) said, that the subject under discussion was one on which he had strong feelings. He believed in his heart that union was a right thing. But with regard to the language of the Saviour so often quoted as the strongest argument in favour of union, "That they all may be one, as Thou Father art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us," the simple meaning of "one in us," was one in spirit with us; and therefore that passage could not be held to constitute a Divine command for external union. The chief objection to the union of the two bodies that had been stated was, that they would not be received as members of the Church of Scotland after it was consummated; but if a union was according to the interest of the Church in this Province, he, for one, would be willing to forego the privilege of being accepted as of the parent body. But he believed that a union would not promote their interests at all. He was, therefore, opposed to it; and his final opinion was, that they should answer with all courtesy the letter of the Convener of the Committee on Union, appointed by the Church known as the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick, and then let them give up all thought on the subject.

Rev. Mr. KEAY, on being called on to deliver his opinion on the subject before the Synod, briefly remarked, that before they could entertain the question, "How shall those two bodies come together?" another question should be answered, "How did they go apart?" Of their own will the Free Church went out from them. Were they to receive its members back again, now when it suited their interests to be once more united? He did not see how

there could be a union at the present time. When the larger branches of the Church of Scotland were yet separated, how could the smaller in the Province twine together? He desired to maintain all brotherly love towards the ministers of that body; but he did not see, if they had a due regard to their own interests, how a union could take place at the present time. Not until there was a union between the parent Churches, could there be an enduring bond between their offspring.

Rev. JAMES MURRAY (Tabusintack) said, that there was nothing that he would desire more to see than a union between the churches: if that union was perfect, it would strengthen their hands, advance the cause of religion, and do away with all petty jealousies. But he thought that the question was then untimely. He did not see how there could be a union immediately, for several reasons. There had been as yet no communion between the two churches. They must be first drawn together in the spirit of the religion of Jesus, and commune with each other in prayer. They must first interchange good offices in all love and kindly feeling in their pulpits, and in their intercourse with one another—as yet, there had been little of that, and before they could think of union, there must be that communion. He would say nothing about their standing as clergymen of the Church of Scotland, which would be lost or jeopardized by union. If their Church was self-sustaining, he might be content to give that up; but as yet they were dependent on the Church at home for their very existence, and could not therefore throw off their connexion.

While he thought that union at the present time was unadvisable, and impossible if advisable, no member of the Synod was more desirous of union in mind and spirit with the other Presbyterian bodies in the Province than he was, or more willing to interchange kindly offices with any minister of Christ, let him be of what Church he might.

Rev. Dr. DONALD (St. John) said, that it had been agreed on all hands, by those who had expressed their opinion, that union was desirable, but that the time for incorporation had not yet come. That was precisely his opinion also. No doubt a union was to be desired, but there were then several practical difficulties in the way. Before there could be an incorporation of the two Churches, a union of sentiment and feeling must take place, and unless it was one

in head, hand, and heart, the union would be founded on compromise and not on principle. Then neither churches were self-sustaining: if a union did take place, with the consequent severance from the parent branches, what condition would they be in? They all knew the difficulties in the Church at the present time; how would those difficulties be increased then if it was obliged to sustain itself? There was only one church in the Province, at St. John, that could do more than support itself—there might be one in Richibucto also; but beyond these two, there were none other that could put forth a helping hand to the many struggling congregations throughout the Province. He did not think, therefore, that their church would be strengthened by such a union. And further, it was much to be feared that those who were so anxious to promote that union were desirous that the Presbyterian churches in the Province might be strengthened politically; but nothing, to his mind, was more to be deprecated. If the churches united were thereby strengthened politically, there was every reason to fear that the influence of their body would be merged and lost in that with which they were incorporated. Union demanded of necessity a compromise of principle. The members of the other Presbyterian body had been led to entertain different opinions from themselves as to the right of interference by the civil magistrate in any ecclesiastical procedure. Difficulties would therefore in time arise on that point among the members of the united body: many parties would refuse to recognize such interference, while the members of the Synod on principle would do so. Here then there would be an ever recurring cause of disagreement. There was another difficulty in the way of union, and a no small difficulty, and that was the position held by them as members of the Church of Scotland. At present they enjoyed certain privileges; they held the same status as the clergymen of the Church of England: it was a position that was to be highly prized (he had been surprised to hear members of the Synod say that they would be willing to give it up under certain conditions—he would relinquish it on none); but it was as certain as anything, if that union did take place their status would be lost.

There must be a union of feeling and sentiment before an incorporation of the two bodies could take place. Let them exchange friendly acts as individuals; let them assist each other in the pulpit (several of the ministers of that body had preached for him and he had preached for them); let them go along and unite in that friendly way; let them bear and

forbear with each other; and at some future time the union that had been anticipated would in all likelihood take place.

He entertained a very great respect for the ministers of every Presbyterian denomination—as high as any other member of the Synod did; but he was firmly of opinion that the time for union (which he believed would come) had not yet come. Till the churches were self-sustaining, there could be no prospect of union.

Rev. Mr. HENDERSON (Newcastle) who spoke next, observed that he had very little to add to what had been already said. He coincided with all the sentiments expressed by the members of the Synod who had spoken. He considered that union would be exceedingly desirable, but at present an incorporation without a union of sentiment would do more harm than good. It would be their duty however to remove all the circumstances that lay as obstacles in the way of that union: in the meantime let them cultivate such feelings and sentiments, and exchange such good offices as would help to bring them into closer communion with each other. He hoped that the time would come when the more practical difficulties in the way would be got over and a union be consummated; but, in the meantime, these difficulties could not be got over.

Rev. Dr. BROOKE (Fredericton), in expressing his opinion, remarked, that after what had been said so well by several members of the Synod, he would not take up their time by speaking at any length on the subject under consideration. If the question had been absolutely one between union and disunion, he would certainly have pronounced in favor of union. But that was not the question. They had been asked to enter into an incorporation with another body; but before they thought of entering into such a union they must know the terms on which it was proposed to found it, and then decide whether a greater good would result to the two bodies by their being united than by their continuing separate. The word union seemed to have a charm for some ears. Many seemed to think by virtue of the word all were bound to listen to it: that all would be well if only a union were effected. But union in name only was, he believed, good for nothing. Two horses of different breeds might be harnessed together to a vehicle, but if one of them would trot while the other galloped, or both pulled different ways, then "union" would not result in comfort to themselves and to him who drove them; or when a man and woman of

incompatible tempers were joined together in marriage, surely their happiness was not promoted by "union;" and it was his opinion if the two bodies were united in name at the present time, before many years went over they would be separated again. In justice to themselves they could not entertain the thought of union with those who called themselves the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick: that properly was their own title; and to enter into a union with that body would be to admit that it had a right in assuming that title, and to allow themselves to be swallowed up by it. If those who seek union are really desirous of it, let them return to the parent church. They "went out from us." There could be no middle ground—they could not be met half way. Let them return to their first love, and they would be received graciously. But they could not be received at present on their own terms. Such a union could only be parent of a new secession. He had been surprised to hear a member of the Synod say that he was ready to give up connection with the Church of Scotland. He confessed he was very much surprised at such a sentiment. They had been indebted to her for every thing, and it would be ungracious, ungratefully to break off their connection with her under *any* circumstances.

The Rev. Dr. DONALD then stated that it was a serious subject with which they had been engaged, that it had been seriously discussed, and that the minds of all were seriously impressed. He therefore thought that it was a fit occasion to call upon the Moderator to engage in prayer for the union of the visible Church of Christ, and more especially for those branches between whom there is so little difference.

The Moderator then offered up a very earnest and impressive prayer, for the object referred to.

DELIVERANCE ON THE SUBJECT OF UNION OF THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW BRUNSWICK IN CONNEXION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

At Saint Paul's Church, Fredericton, the 16th day of August, 1861.

The which day the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick, in connexion with the Church of Scotland, being met and constituted.

Inter alia, the Clerk read a letter from the Rev. William Elder, Convener of a Committee on Union, appointed by

the Synod, known as the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick, requesting the earnest consideration of this Synod to certain papers forwarded along with the said letter, and which were also read.

At the same time was read a letter from a Committee on Union, appointed by the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces, which was also accompanied by Copy of Minutes—1st. Of the last Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia; 2d. Of the last session of the Synod of the Free Church of Nova Scotia; and 3d. Of the first session of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces of British North America.

Read also from the said Minutes the basis of Union entered into by the Church in Victoria, by the two Presbyterian bodies in Nova Scotia now named, and also by certain bodies in Canada.

Whereupon the several members of Synod were called upon to express their opinions on the subject, beginning with the youngest. This, accordingly, was done by the members, all expressing their earnest desire for union with their Presbyterian brethren, but stating their conviction that the time had not yet arrived when such a union could be formed, with any prospect of its being satisfactory or permanent.

Dr. Donald remarked that it was a serious subject in which the Synod had been engaged, and that it had been discussed in a very solemn and earnest manner; that the minds of all appeared to be seriously impressed, and he, therefore, thought it was a fit occasion to call upon the Moderator to engage in prayer for greater unity in the visible Church of Christ, and, more especially, among those branches of it which have so much in common.

The Moderator then offered up a very earnest and impressive prayer, chiefly for the objects specified.

Thereafter, it was moved that the Clerk be instructed to acknowledge the receipt of the communications from the Synod of the Church known as the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick, and that from the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces on the subject of union; and to intimate, at the same time, that the subject had been carefully, and at great length considered by all the members of this Synod; that all most earnestly desire to manifest and cultivate the most friendly and christian intercourse with the Synods of the other Presbyterian Churches, in furtherance of the great object contemplated in the communications received, until an opportunity for a satisfactory and

permanent union should, in the good providence of God, be presented.

Extracted from the Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick in connexion with the Church of Scotland, by

JOHN M. BROOKE, D. D., *Synod Clerk.*

Letter from Rev. Dr. Brooke, accompanying the foregoing extract:—

MY DEAR SIR,—I send you extract of our Minutes on the subject of union. The question received our most earnest and prayerful consideration. We are all agreed that union is exceedingly desirable, but, as yet, we do not see our way clearly to a satisfactory accomplishment of the object. There are grave questions, both ecclesiastical and civil, that must be settled before a union can take place. In the present state of matters, I am persuaded that a union could neither be satisfactory nor permanent; and so long as a large number of our people continue to think as they now do, I should fear that, were a union attempted, it would just lead to another secession, if not in your connexion, at least in ours.

I see no reason, however, why we should stand apart, and in a hostile attitude to each other, as has too long been done. Let us cherish friendly relations with one another, so that ministers and people being more frequently brought into contact, all may be prepared for such a union as we long to see consummated. In what I have said I am not to be understood as speaking officially; but I believe I express the views of every member of our Synod, and of the great majority of our people; and I have no objection to your using this note in any way you please.

I will send you a copy of the printed Minutes in a few days.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

JOHN M. BROOKE.

Manse, Fredericton, 31st August, 1861.
Rev. William Elder.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "COLONIAL PRESBYTERIAN."

LETTER I.

SIR—Being of the number of the members of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick who were most desirous and hopeful of union between the two largest sections of the Presbyterian Church of this Province, I felt all the more grieved and disappointed with the evident death-blow given to all such expectations and desires for at least many years to come, by the action taken by the Synod in connexion with the Church of Scotland, and by the sentiments of its members, as expressed in their supreme Court, and recorded in your paper of the 4th Sept. The dominant feeling however which arose in my mind—the dominant feeling, I believe, which every one must have been conscious of—on reading the whole action of that Synod on the occasion, was one of extreme surprise, I might say wonder mingled with sorrow, at the quality of the objections against the union sought: these being not against the proposed basis of union, but consisting of three elements—1st. A money consideration; 2d, A personal status and thoroughly selfish concern; and 3d, An apparent anxiety to give the civil magistrate all freedom of interference in the affairs of the Church. I was further grieved, in view of the manifest opposition between the action of the Synod and its professed desires and solemn prayers, and at the apparent finality of its action: even after its prayers for union no measures having been taken to ascertain whether there were any validity in the objections made, and which were only hypothetical, against the union, nor any committee appointed to take any further action for the removal of these difficulties. I felt too that a tone of arrogant assumption runs through the whole of the speeches delivered on the occasion, exceedingly offensive towards the Church of which I have the honor to be a minister, and towards Presbyterian Churches in general. The speeches delivered on the occasion also seemed to me, and indeed to all with whom I have conversed on the subject, to look at the question from such an entirely selfish, worldly, and personal point of view, that I could not but feel that while the speakers were consulting for the maintenance of civil status, they had lowered their ministerial dignity and Christian character; that their anxieties about money to carry on Church operations had blinded their minds in regard to any true conception of the

real value of the object which they professed to have in view ; that there was much want of candour in their past professions, that their principles, as applied to the relations of the civil magistrate with the Church in this Province, were the same as those of the Free Church, and therefore that there was no necessity why there should be division of the Church here. These and many other disagreeable thoughts arose in my mind as I read the speeches of the various members of the Synod at Fredericton, on the 16th August. The general impression, I believe, which has been produced by the publication of them on the minds not merely of those popularly denominated Free Church, but upon the minds of the members of the Kirk, is one eminently unfavorable to the gentlemen who uttered them, and calculated to produce a bad impression regarding the views and motives of ministers generally ; one Kirk adherent, in my presence, sneering at their going to pray for the accomplishment of that which they had determined should not be done ; another shaking the head, with the remark that the less said about the subject the better ; while a third, in a phrase of classic form and gentle yet stinging pungency, remarked concerning the sentiments of the speakers on the occasion, " that they were not by any means heroic."

After reading the neatly expressed minute of the venerable clerk of Synod, and the very polite letter with which he accompanied it, one favorable to the union of the two Churches might feel disappointed ; but it is only after perusing the speeches and hearing of the prayers, which led to the elegant minute and not less beautiful letter of the clerk, that one can appreciate at their true value the professions of desire for union which from time to time have been made by the members of that Church. I feel thankful to your correspondent who has furnished you with, I shall suppose, a true account of the speeches delivered on that important Friday afternoon, the 16th August last, by the members of the august Synod of the Church of New Brunswick in connexion with the Church of Scotland. You, also, I thank for having given them publicity in your paper, though in doing so I fear you have put these gentlemen in a position before the public which they never intended to occupy ; for I solemnly believe that there is not one of the ministers who uttered his thoughts on that occasion, and who has read the record of them in your paper, who has not already come to the conclusion that their speeches, taken altogether, " are not by any means heroic."

I could have earnestly wished that nothing had occurred

to oblige me to say or do anything offensive to the estimable brethren of the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland. I feel, however, compelled, in presence of the spoken and published sentiments of those gentlemen, to subject their utterances to a criticism which may very likely offend them. While speaking my mind with all freedom, I trust, however, I shall not transgress any rule of politeness or propriety. It is due to myself, due to the Church of which I am the pastor, due to the Synod of which I am a member, due to the Presbyterian people of this Province, and to the public in general, that the speeches of these brethren and the action of their Synod should be placed in their true light, should be translated into the vernacular, that he who runs may read the sentiments which they entertain regarding their status and ours, and the principles which they hold relative to missionary money, the civil magistrate, and ecclesiastical union. These matters I, at all risks of dissembling the courtesy of a distant friendship, intend in a series of letters thoroughly to discuss.

Preliminary to the observations which I feel it to be my duty to make on the sentiments embodied in the action of the Synod in connexion with the Church of Scotland, and in the speeches of its members relative to union, I have to present to the Christian public of New Brunswick a copy of the minutes of the action taken by the Synod of that Church in favour of union, in order that it may be made apparent that our overtures to that Synod were not made without strong encouragement, I might say solicitation, from it; that, on the contrary, from time to time, said Synod did in a very public and impressive manner, urge this matter of union upon other Presbyterian bodies, and by so doing did hold us up before their own people and the public in general as schismatics, who would listen to no reasonable terms. Concurrent also with this Synodical action on their part, the members of that Church, both lay and clerical, in general conversation, did throw all the blame of standing aloof from them upon the ministers of the Free Church in the Province, and so gained for themselves a sympathy, which, as is now apparent, was procured through fictitious representations, for no sooner does the Synod popularly denominated Free, propose a basis of union, to which no member of the Church of Scotland Synod has made the slightest objections, and which has been positively approved by at least one of its ministers, than the same Synod, so desirous of union, after "solemn" discussion, and "earnest and impressive prayer" for union, proceeds to answer that

they cannot confer with us further on the union so earnestly sought by their Church in the past, so earnestly and impressively prayed for by the Moderator of that august body—cannot go further than make a courteous acknowledgment of our premature advances in seeking union with them, as thereby their ecclesiastical pocket might suffer some depletion, their dignified status take damage, or, still further, should the civil magistrate interfere in our clerical concerns, lest some of us might not take the same placid view of his proceedings which those who have so long breathed in the atmosphere of a State Church are always prepared with delight to submit to. That all this may with the utmost lucidity penetrate the minds of the readers of the *Colonial Presbyterian*, I beg to lay before them the following rather lengthy document, and to which I trust they will give all due attention:—

“At St. James’ Church, Newcastle, the 7th day of July 1854. The Synod met pursuant to adjournment, and was constituted with prayer. Sederunt &c.

“*Inter alia*:—The Committee on Union with other Presbyterian bodies in the province, reported that a letter from the Rev. Wm. Elder, Convener of the Committee of the ‘Presbytery of New Brunswick, adhering to the Westminster Standards,’ had been received, requesting information, 1st, as to the fact of a Union with the Synod and the Presbytery (embracing the great bulk of the Presbyterians of the Provinces) being desired on the part of the former, and 2d, As to the basis on which it was deemed desirable and possible that such Union could be realized.

“The Synod re-appoint the Committee, consisting of Messrs. Henderson, Ross, Donald and Murray, ministers, William Napier, Richard Hutchison and John Gillis, Elders, with the addition of Mr. Brooke, who is appointed Convener, instructing them to furnish Mr. Elder with all the proceedings of the Synod on the subject; to receive any proposal that may be made them by the Committee of which Mr. Elder is Convener, to meet with said committee to discuss the question, if desired; and to report to next meeting of Synod.”

The documents above referred to are—

I. Resolutions moved by Mr. Hannay at the meeting of Synod in the year 1844. They are as follows:

“The Rev. Mr. Hannay read and moved the adoption of the following Resolutions, which motion was seconded by the Rev. Mr. Steven.

"Whereas, in order to promote the peace and unity of the Church, it is desirable that the Synod should remove certain doubts and difficulties that have recently arisen with respect to the connexion with the Church of Scotland, and the obligations and responsibilities which that connexion involves: Therefore Resolved:—

"1st, That, whereas the Church of Scotland 'disclaims all jurisdiction over her Branches in the Colonies,' leaving them to exercise free, full and supreme ecclesiastical and spiritual authority over all their members, this Synod remain, as heretofore, in connexion with the Church of Scotland, as by law established.

"2d. That as the Synod is not represented in the General Assembly of the Parent Church, and has no voice in the Councils of that body, it is not legally qualified to express either approval or disapproval of their acts.

"3d. That the Synod has acted, and will still continue to act on the principle of maintaining friendly correspondence with all other Presbyterian Churches throughout the world, that hold the Westminster Standards, and of receiving such qualified Ministers or Probationers of said Churches as may feel desirous of placing themselves under its jurisdiction and control, agreeably to the terms of the aforesaid resolutions.

"It was moved by the Rev. Mr. McMaster, and seconded by the Rev. Mr. Henderson, that the following be put as an amendment to the second resolution, viz:—

"That as this Synod is not represented in the General Assembly of the Parent Church, and has no voice in the Councils of that body, we hold ourselves not to be responsible for any of her acts, and as a Synod, are not legally qualified to express either approval or disapproval of these Acts.

"This amendment, being then put from the chair, the state of the vote was 3 'yeas' and 9 'nays,' whereupon it was carried in the negative. And the original Resolutions being then put to the vote were carried by the same majority."

II. Overture of Mr. Ross, laid before the Synod, and adopted in 1845:—

"It is overtured that the Synod appoint a Committee to prepare a Pastoral Address explanatory of the Resolutions of last year, and to correspond with the Presbyterian Ministers in the Provinces, who are not members of this Synod, with the view of effecting the Union of Presbyterians into

one body ; and that, in the meantime, the pulpits of ministers in connexion with the Synod, be open to such ministers of other Presbyterian denominations, as occasion may require."

The Synod unanimously adopted the overture, and appointed Messrs. Ross, Halket, Brooke and Henderson, a Committee to carry out its intention : Mr. Halket to be Convener.

III. Overture of Mr. Brooke, in 1846 :

"An Overture on Union with other Presbyterian bodies in this and the adjoining Provinces, was brought forward by the Rev. Mr. Brooke. Several members expressed their anxious desire to promote the object contemplated in the overture, and, after reasoning at some length, the Synod resolved in terms of the Resolution of 1844." (See 3d Resolution).

IV. Mr. Henderson's motion in 1850 :—

"Mr. Henderson brought under the notice of the Synod the subject of Union with other Presbyterian bodies in this Province, and after reasoning, the following Resolution was unanimously adopted :—

"The Synod, deploring the divisions that exist among Christians, and feeling the importance of uniting in one body those who hold the same doctrines, and adopt the same forms of worship and of Church government, and, believing that the differences, which keep such denominations asunder, and form them into separate bodies, have no proper cause for their existence here, in this Province ; do hereby record their earnest desire for the accomplishment of such a Union of all Presbyterians ; and, with this view, appoint a Committee to confer with any who may manifest a desire to heal those divisions that unhappily exist among religious denominations that have so much in common.

"The Rev. George McDonell, Mr. Henderson, John M. Brooke and William Donald, Ministers, with Richard Hutchison and Thomas Nesbet, Esquires, Elders, were appointed a Committee to carry out the object contemplated, and to report to the Synod at its next meeting."

V. Overture of John Gillis, Esq., laid before the Synod and unanimously passed, in the year 1853 :—

"The Committee on Bills and Overtures reported that they have been requested to transmit to the Synod an overture from the Presbytery of St. John, to the following effect :—

"At Fredericton the twenty-fourth day of August in the

year 1853. The which day the Presbytery of St. John met in terms of adjournment, and was constituted with prayer.

“*Inter alia* :—It was moved by John Gillis, Esq., and unanimously agreed to. That, whereas the disunited state in which the several congregations in the Province, adhering to the Westminster Standards, are at present, and for some time have been, is a great evil, and tends to weaken the Presbyterian body, generally ;—It be respectfully over- tured by the Presbytery of St. John, to the Synod of the Presbyterian Church adhering to the Church of Scotland, that the said Synod take into their serious consideration the propriety of endeavoring to promote a Union of all Pres- byterian bodies in the Province into one Church, and also the best means of promoting such Union.

“The Synod took up the overture. John Gillis, Esq., was heard in support of it, and the members generally expressed their opinions on the subject.

“After which the Synod resolved cordially and unani- mously, to record their high approbation of the object con- templated by the overture before them ; and to show that they have all along been desirous of a Union with their brethren of the different Presbyterian bodies in this Pro- vince, refer to a Resolution adopted at their meeting in 1850.”—(See No. IV).

“The Synod, farther, with a view of forwarding such a Union as is now proposed, recommend to their several members to pursue the same conciliatory course, as they have hitherto done ; and appoint the following Committee, with instructions to use their best endeavors to promote the object contemplated, and to report to the Synod at next meeting :—Messrs. Henderson, Ross, Donald and Murray, Ministers ; with Messrs. Wm. Napier, Richard Hutchison, John Gillis and Angus M’Caskill, Elders.

“Extracted from the Minutes of the Synod of New Brunswick by

“JOHN M. BROOKE, *Synod Clerk.*”

What a change has come over the spirit of their dream ! The same Synod which in 1854 appear to have had a stand- ing Committee on Union, and which was re-appointed in the same year, not merely to exchange documents and receive proposals from the Committee of the Free Church Synod, but actually to meet with this Committee to dis- cuss the question of union if desired ;—this same Synod, consisting of very much the same individuals, has, in the

year 1861, after serious discussion, with seriously impressed minds, and earnest and impressive prayers, shut against union the door of hope—at least as long as there is money to be had from the Church of Scotland, or a minister in the Colonies solicitous about his status, or with an eye to a fat parish in Scotland, or in any respect anxious about non-interference with the interference of the civil magistrate in the concerns of the Church—that is, I dare say, they have deferred the further discussion of the question of union till the Second Advent at least. We all know what changes occurred while Rip Van Winkle slept so many years in the Kaatskill mountains, and how surprised he was at the figure of Washington in the room of that of King George over the door of the village ale house where he was wont to regale himself; but if one of those elders who was appointed on the Committee of Union in 1854, and who may have gone to his account, were permitted to revisit the august Synod of which, while in the flesh, he was a worthy member, on the memorable 16th of August, 1861, his surprise would surely have been almost as great as that of the sleepy Rip, as, rubbing his eyes, he surveyed his rusty gun and gazed on the transmutation of the alehouse signboard, and the whole scene how changed. It surprised Hamlet that, with the counterfeit presentment of two brothers in her hand, his mother could so soon forget the Hyperion curls, the eye of Mars and front of Jove of the one, for the mildewed form of the other, blighting his wholesome brother; and scarcely less surprising is it that the Synod of the Church of Scotland in this Province should so earnestly have held out proposals for union, so persistently appointed Committees to initiate it, adopted overtures to procure it, and professed themselves ready to accomplish it on any proper basis, and now when all things seemed to run parallel with their long-cherished idea, when a “basis” is proposed to which they cannot even find an objection, when their brethren of the Free Church to which they held out allurements for so many years, are ready to forget the unpleasant reminiscences of disruption scenes, and to stand on the broad grounds of a common Presbyterianism, that they should give the lie to all their former protestations, and refuse to consider the matter of union further at all—certainly this is very wonderful, seemingly also not very creditable, and eminently suggestive of various inquiries as to the cause of the change to that course which they now think it appropriate to pursue.

Among other inquiries which people will make, are the

following:—Was the status of these ministers anything different in 1854 from what it is now? Was it not likely to be tarnished in the former year, and what has arisen since to make it of such delicate brightness that union with the Church of New Brunswick should pale its present glory? Why think that the Church of Scotland would cast them off now, or treat them differently from what she would have done in 1854? Were they prepared to bear the martyrdom of her frown then, and are they more dutiful and kind to their old mother now? What reason have they to suppose she would knit her brow, or scold, or cut off their allowance, or cast them off as reprobates? Why when so earnestly desirous of union, did they not ascertain how the venerable old lady would deal with them if they should, following their desire, unite with the Church of New Brunswick?

Whatever be the reason of this marked change in their procedure, it is evident that the Church which they dismiss from their court with all the official courtesies, yet with all peremptoriness, was not the first wooer. The decisive *No* comes after a vast deal of coquetting. We have been lured on by fair speeches, glozing sentiments of equality and brotherly love, till we are now in the position of those who have paid "rejected addresses." Like an old flirt, the Church of Scotland in this Province having procured, by the arts of an intriguante, a declaration of our desire for union, now chooses to turn up her nose at our status, pleads that her mother might be unfriendly, and cut short her allowance, if she should form a mes-alliance with such a contemptible partner, and tells us that there is a question or two upon which we might differ in our married relationship. In regard to all which reasons of refusal we have simply to say we are glad to think we have escaped from an alliance with one whose conduct has been so deceptive, and whose sentiments are—well, "not by any means heroic."

Feeling, Mr. Editor, that I have occupied too much of your paper, I shall not further transgress at present, trusting that in your next weekly issue I may find room for some further comments on the same subject.

Yours, &c.,

JAMES BENNET.

LETTER II.

SIR—In my letter of last week I expressed the feelings of disappointment, surprise and sorrow, to which the action of the Synod of the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland had given rise, and shewed how strange was the conduct of that Church, how changed her views on the subject of union; how she had stood forth as its advocate while there was no prospect of its accomplishment; but as soon as a fair and honest proposal was made to her, against the essential basis of which no reasonable objections could be made or were even tendered, she shut the door against any further consideration of the subject, leaving the unhappy inference that she had been thoroughly disingenuous in all her previous proceedings. The objections offered to the union itself, I have affirmed, and still hold to be of such a meagre kind, that though they might form matter for discussion and adjustment previous to union, they could not form premises to the conclusion that the whole subject should be dismissed, and its further consideration postponed *sine die*. In my present communication I shall consider the doctrine of union, as propounded in the Synod of Fredericton, for to the meagre views on this subject presented to the minds of the members of that Synod may we attribute the fact that it could be dismissed on such light grounds as status, the supplement of a few salaries, or a hypothetical disagreement on the power of the civil magistrate in the province of New Brunswick.

And here, I am happy to agree with one of the speakers on that occasion, in repudiating as altogether unworthy of the subject, the idea of union, on the ground that it would aid in attaining political power, or personal aggrandizement. Political ends should be the last thing aimed at in ecclesiastical organizations. Personal glory is altogether foreign to the Church of Christ. It is curious, however, and betrays a great confusion of ideas to see a learned doctor repudiating a union which might be sought for such political and personal ends, and then maintaining so firmly a personal status, which is merely political; for the status of a minister connected with the Church of Scotland as opposed to the status of a minister of the Church of New Brunswick, can be only political. If Dr. Donald have any status in connexion with the Church of Scotland, which he would not have out of that connexion, can it be anything but political? I cannot see, therefore, that the Doctor was at all consistent in repudiating the political

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status which union might confer, since he so strongly held by a status of a similar nature, and that so strongly that he would give it up on no ground whatever, and appeared wonderfully surprised that any member of Synod for any advantages, was so silly as to propose foregoing the benefits which it was supposed to confer.

There is indeed one point of view which will relieve the Rev. Doctor, who deprecated union for political purposes, from the inconsistency which we have indicated. The Doctor probably did not repudiate union on political grounds simply as political, but because the separate political influence of his Church was likely to be lost in the greater political influence of the Church of New Brunswick. "It was much to be feared," said Dr. Donald, "that those who were so anxious to promote union were desirous that the Presbyterian Churches in the Province should be strengthened politically; but nothing to his mind was more to be deprecated. If the Churches united were thereby strengthened politically, there was every reason to fear that the influence of their body would be merged and lost in that with which they were incorporated." The Doctor after all may not deprecate political influence—may still love it as he loves status—and love it so well that he would not for any consideration of advantage to the Church give it up. Now, this is a sentiment which, though of the same warp, and woof, and texture, and colour, with that other one about status, is, we take leave to say, "not by any means heroic," and, what is worse, is not by any means Christian. I fail to find in that self-renunciation, that self-sacrifice for the good of the Church, which is of the very essence of the Christian life, and which, I have no doubt, forms on all appropriate occasions the subject of the Doctor's pulpit exercises. If political influence be good for the Church, should it be deprecated as a reason for union, when the smaller body would lose as a separate personality, what would reappear in greater lustre and power in the united body! Is such deprecation rational, wise, heroic, or christian? Supposing the Doctor to have spoken from this point of view, and as it is most consistent with the other part of his speech about status, this may be the meaning. I hold that as a christian man and as a christian minister, he should have been ready to renounce on behalf of his own small Church, an influence which would benefit the united Church—his own together with that to which it was proposed to become united.

I cannot for a moment suppose that the Doctor contem-

plated the possibility of the absolute loss of any influence in connexion with the Church of New Brunswick, but only its loss as a separate entity wielded by the Church dignified by the distinctive name of Scotland. I also find it difficult to suppose it possible that he could contemplate the loss of his own or his learned brethren's influence in the united Church for either political or ecclesiastical purposes. In either of these views could the Doctor contemplate anything but gain? Surely he was not afraid of wielding an influence in the United Church inferior to that which he now apparently possesses. Nor with the splendid abilities of the members of his Synod just displayed in the speeches against union, could he speculate on the possibility of a lesser influence when brought into competition with the small modicum of learning and talent which might be charitably supposed to belong to the members of the Church of New Brunswick. Had the Doctor no more confidence in himself and his brethren than to suppose such a possible loss? It would not have been at all wonderful if some of the men who cannot boast of status, who have very small political influence, whose congregations are not rich, had feared that in the larger body their little influence might be utterly lost sight of, but for Dr. Donald and his compeers in some or all of these advantages, to fear the loss of influence—really this betrays a cowardice which we could not have credited had the knowledge of it come from a less informed source.

Leaving the grounds of union, which were repudiated in the Synod of Fredericton, I come to the statements of positive doctrine relative thereto.

The first and most useful speaker on the subject of union propounded the doctrine of its desirableness on the ground of the respectability and influence, and consequently greater usefulness, which it might procure to the members of Synod. This elevation of personal status in respectability, influence and usefulness, might have been supposed to equal the civil status derived from connexion with a state church at the distance of two thousand miles. Not so in the opinion of the learned doctors of the Synod of Fredericton. They may be right, but we could wish that they had condescended to weigh the two things in their theological balance. They did not do so, but dismissed the subject with a reproof to the gentleman who was so heroic as to declare his readiness to forego the status if it should appear that the advantages indicated by the first youthful speaker were of an important kind.

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Leaving the lower ground of expediency, however, two succeeding speakers, with a valor greatly to be admired, grappled with the doctrine of union as propounded by the great founder of our religion. Let us hear these young men at whose feet the Gamaliels of the Synod were content to learn wisdom.

These youthful theologians, to whom it was committed to propound the scriptural doctrine of union, observed that there had always been diversities of opinion, and that there always would be diversities and separations, that, however, there might be union in spirit among the churches, and that this was the thought of the Saviour in his prayer that his people might be one. The simple meaning "one in us" was one in spirit with us, but the passage could not be held to constitute a divine command for external union.

Such is a condensed statement of the doctrine of Union, as propounded by the Synod and acquiesced in by all.

There is no doubt much truth in the position assumed by these gentlemen. It is true that there always have been diversities of opinion leading to separations, and that there always will be such differences and sects is likely also. It is true that the unity of the Church should be formed outwardly from the unity of spirit within; not that the interior spirit should be moulded to suit the measure and shape of any external form, but it is also true that a spiritual unity ever tends to take to itself the same external mode of manifestation, and to realise itself in union of plan and purpose. The more complete the spiritual unity is, the more complete also ought the external manifestation to be. There ought ever to be as complete an external unity as there has been attained of spiritual harmony. The unity which Christ prayed for was visible, for it was one which was to show the world that they were his disciples, and each section of the visible Church should leave as little room to the world as possible to scoff at their diversity of sentiment. Where unity of sentiment on important doctrines has not been attained, it is a sad necessity that there should still be division, but where such spiritual unity has been arrived at, the sin of schism is committed by those who keep apart.

Now, either there is or there is not an irreconcilable difference of opinion on important doctrine between the two Churches which it was proposed to unite. If we may believe the Synod of New Brunswick in connection with the Church of Scotland, which was holden in the year 1850, "the differences which keep such denominations (Presby-

terians) asunder, and form them into separate bodies, have no proper cause for their existence here in this Province." Doctors Brooke and Donald, however, in the year 1861, think differently. The sun has gone backward on the dial of the Synod, and the death of disunion is adjourned *sine die*. The former learned doctor intimates, in his letter to the Rev. Mr. Elder, that "there are grave questions, ecclesiastical and civil, which would require to be settled," prior to union, though he does not condescend to name any of them. In his speech also he refers to the differences which would render union uncomfortable—differences, however, not on points of doctrine, but such differences as may be forthshadowed, in elegant similitude, by horses of different breed, one of which is a quaint old stager, representing the Kirk, I dare say; and the other a high mettled, prancing, break-and-smash-all courser, meaning, I suppose, the Church of New Brunswick. The doctor further condescends to illustrate the grand idea which possesses his figurative brain concerning the difference of the two Churches, by a picture of married misery, sufficient to keep them from attempting a union which could only result in scolding and squabbling. What the doctor precisely means by this profusion of metaphor it would be perhaps difficult to determine. No ecclesiastical doctrine is indicated, which should become the subject of the matrimonial duel. No difference of opinion on important doctrine is affirmed. But, being of different breeds, the one party would invariably go off at a canter, while the other wished a quiet walk—no matter what were the road to be travelled. But Dr. Donald, being neither so figurative nor so humorous as Dr. Brooke, points out with more explicitness the difference which necessitates disunion. He said, "Union demanded of necessity a compromise of principle. The members of the other Presbyterian body had been led to entertain different opinions from themselves as to the rights of interference by the civil magistrate in any ecclesiastical procedure. Difficulties would therefore in time arise on that point among the members of the united body. Many parties would refuse to recognize such interference, while the members of this Synod in principle would do so." This is sufficiently explicit, and we are happy that the avowal of such distinct and positive difference between the two Churches has at last been made upon competent authority, and that we are no longer to be deceived by the continuous reiteration of the fiction that the Churches are the same, and that there is no necessity for the distinction—

that, in fact, it was an entirely useless affair to introduce Free Church principles into New Brunswick, as there were no circumstances here likely to occur to which they would be practically applicable. Doctor Donald tells us that the two Churches differ so widely on important doctrine that it is necessary they should remain disunited, and the Synod in which he utters the doctrine acquiesces in his opinion. The doctrine about the civil magistrate's power in the affairs of the Church, if Dr. Donald be a prophet, is likely to come up in a practical shape not a great while hence. He and his Church, it appears, are prepared to take the one side, and we—being, as Dr. Brooke says, of different breed—are bound to take the other; it is therefore better, as Homer sings and Dr. Donald says, that like Achilles and Agamemnon, we two having contended, should continue to stand apart.

I must here, as I know your space is limited, cut short my observations on the different doctrines of the two Churches, but hope to have large room next week for further strictures on this important subject.

Meanwhile, I am yours, &c.,

JAMES BENNET.

LETTER III.

It may be necessary to recall to the memory of the readers of the *Colonial Presbyterian*, the doctrine of union as propounded in the Synod of Fredericton, and as corrected in my last communication, as well as to restate the specific objection of apparent validity urged against its consummation between the two churches. The doctrine held in that august court was that a union of spirit was all that the Saviour prayed for. The doctrine which has been asserted by me in a former letter is that unity of spirit is ever to unfold itself in the degree to which it has been attained in a unity which the world can recognize, that is—a unity in plan, purpose, and action—in the case for instance of two bodies of Presbyterian Christians in the same locality, holding the same truths, and animated by the same spirit in the taking of counsel together, and working in concert for the well-being of the common cause of their Divine Master. If they stand opposed to one another—if they take separate and antagonistic counsels—if they are not one body while they have no great truth to contend for, the party maintaining the opposition is evidently guilty of

the sin of schism. Should it appear, on the other hand, that there is some apparently important divine truth held by one, but denied by another of the parties, even the world will give them credit for sincerity, and will hardly condemn them as schismatical. But if the world cannot be made to see that there is any important doctrine in dispute, it will be very likely to conclude that contention is kept up for the love of quarrel, or for some other selfish object, such as the desire of political influence, or status, or other motive not eminently Christian, even though no direct avowal of such sentiments should be unfortunately made, and its conclusions will be that the men who maintain disunion from such motives are not acting quite on the unselfish principles which it is in the habit of hearing from the pulpit, the religious press, and the mouths of professors, peculiarly belong to Christians—it will not have reason to know that these men are Christ's disciples.

In view of saving the Christian character of the Synod of Fredericton, I can therefore say I am happy that it has been affirmed by that reverend body that important doctrinal difference does exist between it and the Synod of the Church of New Brunswick. I could wish, however, that this doctrinal difference had been made more patent to the eyes of the world, which sometimes does not see so plainly as professed theologians do the differential value of opposing doctrines, especially when not of any immediately practical character. It is true we have had a prophecy that the doctrine in dispute may very likely assume a practical bearing in the future history of this Province. This may be so. Far be it from us to affirm the groundlessness of such fears. Troy fell, though Cassandra was not believed when she said it would; and the civil magistrate may unwarrantably interfere with our spiritual concerns, even should we affirm our disbelief of such an event.

The doctrine of the extent of interference of the civil magistrate allowable in the affairs of the church being the only one on which it is affirmed there is any essential difference of opinion between the two churches which it was proposed to unite, it is important that it should be thoroughly investigated, not it may be with much hope of our coming to a unity of opinion regarding such interference, but with the view of enlightening the general understanding, that it may make its election on which side of this important question it ought to range itself.

It is not now to be enquired whether the Established Church or the Free Church of Scotland was right in the

views which they severally took on the interference of the civil magistrate with their concerns as a State Church. That matter has been already sufficiently discussed, and its practical consequences are matters of history. Here is no state church, and the question cannot come up in the form which it assumed in Scotland previous to the disruption—at least not till the church becomes established in this Province, which will be so great a time hence that it is not worth considering at present. What a remotely distant posterity may do no man can say, but, to all appearance, no one now living will see an Established Church in our Province, and consequently we need not speculate regarding the views which the respective churches might take of a question which they will never be called on practically to deal with.

There is, however, as most of our readers must be aware, a civil process at present going forward in Scotland in which a deposed minister of the Free Church is the prosecutor and the Free Church itself the defendant; the decision of which is very likely to affect the procedure of the civil magistrate, in relation to every non-Established Church not only in Scotland but throughout the British Empire. It is no doubt with an eye to this case that Dr. Donald said in the Synod at Fredericton, "Difficulties would arise on that point (the right of interference of the civil magistrate) among the members of the united body; many parties would refuse to recognize such interference, while the members of the Synod on principle would do so." Dr. Donald perhaps goes too far in predicting positively that such interference will occur here. Still we agree with him in affirming that it may occur, and we also believe that, should it occur, other parties will take a different view of it from that which on principle the Synod of Fredericton in their present mood would take. I say, *their present mood*, for I am inclined to think that should a similar case of interference of the civil magistrate take place with regard to the procedure of the Church of which Dr. Donald is a member, he would regard it as a high handed proceeding—of course he and his Synod could take a more placid view of it if the object of interference were any other body, such as Methodists, Baptists, or even Free Church Presbyterians.

Inasmuch as it is clearly discerned that the principles of law laid down by the judges of the Court of Session in Scotland, when reviewed and decided upon, as they will be by the House of Lords, will become British law, and as such will apply in all British Colonies, where no colonial

statute is made to modify them, the case of Mr. M'Millan, now pending in Scotland against the Free Church, must be viewed by all churches in these lands as one in which they are practically interested. I beg, therefore, the attention of the churches generally to this case, which may, at no distant date, affect the capacity of every church in the Province to exercise discipline.

It appears that Mr. McMillan, of Cardross, was libelled before the Presbytery of Dumbarton on three counts—the first two charging him with specific acts of intemperance, and the third with making criminal advances to a married woman. The Presbytery found the first count not proven, the second proven with a slight exception, the third also proven with exception of certain words. From this judgment Mr. M. appealed to the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, who sustained the appeal, finding the second and third counts not proven. The Presbytery of Dumbarton appealed against this judgment of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr to the General Assembly—the minority of Synod joining in the appeal. The General Assembly, after hearing the parties, pronounced a judgment, finding in substance all the three counts proven, and pronounced sentence of suspension on Mr. M'Millan. Mr. M'Millan, upon this sentence being pronounced, applied to the Court of Sessions, asking an interdict against the carrying out of the sentence, which was refused by the Lord Ordinary. Having been cited before the bar of the Assembly, he was asked whether he had applied for an interdict to the Court of Session against the sentence of the Free Church, and, on his replying that he had, the Free Church deposed him from the office of the ministry, under a law of the church which ordains that any appeal from the General Assembly to stop the discipline and order of ecclesiastical policy and jurisdiction, granted by God's Word to the office-bearers within the said church, by resorting to the civil power, shall be dealt with summarily without any process or admonition. In consequence of these proceedings Mr. M'Millan raised two actions—one against the General Assembly of the Free Church, and the other against certain members of that body—the first to obtain damages for injury done to him by the sentence of that body, the second alleges malice against the Moderator, and the proposer and seconder of the sentence of deposition. The ground on which he alleges that damages should be awarded him is simply that the Presbytery did not pursue a correct course in taking up those portions of the libel which the Assembly had found not

proven. But in asking for damages he also asks that the sentence for which he seeks damages shall be rendered null and void. The sentence concludes thus:—"Therefore the said pretended judgment or suspension and the whole grounds and warrants thereof, with all that has followed or may follow on the same, ought and should be reduced, retreated, rescinded, cased, annulled, deemed and declared, by decree of our said Lords, to have been from the beginning, to be now and in all time coming, null and void and of no avail, force, strength and effect or judgment, or outwith the same, in time coming, and the pursuer reponed and restored there against *in integrum*. Further, the said defenders ought to and should be discerned and ordained by decree aforesaid, to make payment to the pursuer of the sum of £500 stg. in the name of reparation and damages, and as a soatium to him in the premises." In the other case which Mr. M'Millan has raised against individuals on the grounds of supposed malice, he asks that he be restored by a decree of the Court against the sentence of the General Assembly—because there was no libel served on him, because he was not heard in his defence, and because his application to the Civil Court was no crime, and that he should not have been deposed for such act; and he likewise asks for £3000 damages against the three persons who, he alleges, were actuated by malice against him. Such is a short statement of the M'Millan case, and the decision of which will without doubt affect the whole procedure of the civil magistrate in the affairs of every church, not established, in the British dominions.

Before entering on any question regarding the effect of this cause, it should always be borne in mind that the Kirk in this Province, the Episcopal Church, Methodist, Baptist and all other Churches, are exactly in the same position as the Free Church of Scotland.

Reminding my readers of this fact, I have just to ask them the following questions:—

1. Should Mr. M'Millan succeed in maintaining these actions against the Free Church, would it be possible for it to exercise any discipline on offenders against morals or religion, except at the expense of fine and confinement?

2. Should any offender against morals or religion in the Church of New Brunswick, either in or out of connexion with the Church of Scotland, being dealt with for his offences, make application to the Judges of our Provincial Courts on the ground of some alleged informality, for damages and interdicts, could said Courts refuse, after, as we

have supposed, the law has been declared in Mr. M'Millan's favour?

3. Should an alleged informality in proceedings be held as a sufficient ground on which to raise an action for damages, and restoration to spiritual office as well as civil rights, is there a Presbytery, Synod, Conference, or Bishop in the Province that would dare to exercise what has been hitherto supposed the inalienable right of the office-bearers of every Church, viz., discipline on offenders?

4. Supposing that any offender, upon whom the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland has exercised or may, after the Judges and Lords have decided in Mr. M'Millan's favour, exercise discipline, if they dare such a thing, should, on account of some alleged informality in proceedings, apply not only to have the sentence of the Church Court removed, but £500 or £3000 damages awarded, and be sustained in this application, would Dr. Donald be ready not merely to rescind the sentence complained off, but to pay the damages so awarded?

Every one who knows anything of the conduct of cases either in civil or ecclesiastical procedure, also knows how difficult it is to conduct a case so that technical objections may not be raised sufficient in the eye of the law to invalidate the whole of the action. The higher courts very frequently annul the proceedings of the lower on technical grounds. But in purely legal proceedings the lower courts of law, whatever injustice may have been done, are not held liable for damages on account of the informality. In the review of the Church courts' proceedings, however, the M'Millan case, so far as it has gone, evidently affirms that the Church courts are liable for enormous damages should they commit an informality. Is not this tantamount to saying that the Church courts shall henceforth be rendered incapable of any disciplinary proceedings whatever. For there is no man who is libelled before a Church court and sentenced for crime proven against him, who may not show that thereby he sustains civil loss; and if he can, with the help of good legal glasses, find a flaw in the proceedings, he will have, without doubt, a legitimate ground of action against the Church court which has dared to exercise discipline upon him.

Will the Synod of the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland affirm that on principle they will be ready to accord with the interference of the civil magistrate thus far? I cannot think that, on maturer reflection, they will, and I do not think that upon the principles of the case

we have been considering, there would be such a wide difference of opinion between the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland and the Church of New Brunswick, in relation to the interference of the civil magistrate, as Dr. Donald in the Synod of Fredericton supposed.

Whatever difference of opinion their might be regarding the nullification of the sentence of the Church court by order of the law courts, there would hardly be any difference of opinion regarding the monstrous injustice of holding the Church courts liable for damages. If we are not agreed about the principle involved, we are at least, I suspect, about the pecuniary consideration. The Synod of Fredericton *might* care little for the rescision of any sentence it might pronounce, but it would hardly preserve its equanimity if held liable for some hundreds or thousands of pounds damages, to be paid to some of its offending brethren, who had been by it justly, yet in some untechnical manner, condemned.

I have supposed that the brethren of the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland *might* agree to eye with equanimity the nullification of its sentences by the decision of the legal courts. I am, however, far from saying that they *would* do so. Looking to the declaration of Dr. Donald, I am justified in supposing the possibility of such a thing: Still I do think that if the Synod of which Dr. Donald is a worthy member were by the law courts of New Brunswick to have its sentences of deposition set aside, on the ground of some informality in its proceedings, it would not be ready, even for the purpose of avoiding further actions for damages, to restore to the office of the ministry persons who by it had been on moral grounds adjudged unworthy to exercise it. True the Synod might be coerced, by the terrors of pecuniary penalties, to do even this, but they would surely do so reclaiming and protesting; they would join with the members of the Free Church in the outcry against such unwarrantable proceedings, and I have no doubt would unite with us, if not in one Church, yet in common appeal to the beneficent Legislature of New Brunswick to set aside by enactment principles of law so outrageously violating the rights and privileges of the Church of Christ.

The second action which Mr. M'Millan raises, on the ground chiefly that his application to the civil court was no offence or crime for which he should be deposed, being one which need not at any time affect the Churches of this Province, we are not required to consider. As I desire no

farther to defend the Free Church than as her case is also ours, and as probably it might not be held by the Church in this Province that it is in itself a crime to apply to the civil courts for redress against every injustice, we shall not likely ever be called practically to deal with the question. Several prominent members of the Free Church have held that a *primâ facie* case of malice would justify an application to the civil courts for redress. So far I individually agree with them. I think there may arise cases in which such interference would subserve the ends of justice, but that the civil magistrate should interfere to regulate the technical procedure of Church courts, review all their proceedings, and nullify their sentences on such grounds, I hold to be monstrous iniquity, and utterly subversive of the object for which the Church of Christ was founded on the earth.

In your next paper, Mr. Editor, I hope to be permitted to make some strictures on the *status* of ministers in this Province.

JAMES BENNET.

LETTER IV.

SIR—My last letter was principally devoted to a review of the Cardross case—to a consideration of the way in which the Churches throughout the British Empire may be affected by the ultimate declaration of the Judges and the House of Lords relative to it—and to the different views which may be taken by the Churches in this Province of an assumption of power by the civil magistrate to review and quash the proceedings of the Church courts. The general conclusion to which this view led us was, that even the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland would be very unwilling to be held liable for damages on account of any informality in their proceedings, and that they could hardly do otherwise than reclaim and protest with the Free Church against any such assumption as that which the Lords of Session seem to make in Scotland being exercised here. For whatever be the nature and value of what is denominated the *status* of ministers of the Church of Scotland, it will most certainly have no force to prevent the Judges of New Brunswick treating the decisions of Presbyterian Courts, with Church of Scotland connexion, in a different way from the decisions of any other Presbyterian Church, or indeed of any church whatever. Whatever theoretical

difference of opinion, therefore, there might be on the doctrine of the power of the civil magistrate between the two great branches of the Presbyterian Church in this Province, little practical difference would be likely to arise relative to this question; so that we must hold that the fears expressed in the Synod at Fredericton on this point have little or no foundation. Indeed were it not that there is a kind of unholy joy excited in the minds of partizans of the Church of Scotland, in view of the troubles in which the Cardross case has involved the Free Church, and from which they had hoped to have forever escaped, we could not understand how the application of the principles laid down by the Lords of Session could excite anything but alarm. It has been said that we can view with equanimity the misfortunes of our best friends, and much more so the misfortunes of our enemies; but if we are likely to become common participators in these misfortunes, our sympathies will be readily excited. Since neither "status" nor anything else may shield our brethren of the Synod lately assembled in Fredericton from any danger to which we are exposed, we hope, when the day of trial comes, to find them united in one common sentiment with ourselves, though we should still constitute different bodies with different interests, standing on different planes of dignity—our statical elevation being of different altitudes.

The chief, if not the only objection against union of the two bodies being, then, not doctrinal differences, at least such doctrinal differences as would become of practical moment—but this matter of status—it is of importance that it also should be clearly comprehended. Possibly, our brethren may be the victims of some hallucination on this point. They may think there is some value in it which there is not, or they may foolishly suppose that a union which would elevate it would only degrade it. However this may be, it can be no harm to look at it, to measure its proportions, and test its quality. Seeing, however, that it is such a precious article in the eyes of our brethren, we must handle it with all such gentleness and care as are consistent with a thorough analysis in the alembic of criticism. If it should turn out to be a worthless ore, instead of the gold which maketh rich, they will not be angry, we trust, that we have exposed the delusion.

Considering the general unity of idea and sentiment which pervaded the minds of the members of the Synod at Fredericton, it is wonderful that there should have been such difference of opinion regarding the amount of value to be laid on

the article "status." Two gentlemen were willing to renounce it for certain advantages; but in the eyes of two others it was invaluable. Dr. Donald would give it up on no condition. Like the truth, it was to be purchased at any price, and sold at none. Dr. Brooke also appears to coincide with his learned brother, and is with him surprised that any one could think of giving up a connexion which conferred such privileges. Many people, outside of the Synod of Fredericton, are, however unable to see that there is any advantage derivable from the status at all, save of a pecuniary kind, and which might therefore be valued at so many hundred dollars per annum, in the shape of ministerial salaries—a very important consideration, I admit, but still one which might be overcome, if not by a little self-sacrificing principle on the part of ministers, at least by a little more liberality on the part of the people. For my own part, I do not think that the money element is involved in it at all; for notwithstanding the fears expressed in the Synod of Fredericton that the salaries would certainly be lost if the union contemplated were effected, I think all such fears perfectly groundless. The idea of the Church of Scotland cutting them off because of their forming a union upon the basis of standards which the parent Church recognises as her own—the thing is preposterous! Do not the learned Doctors see that to suppose the Church of Scotland would cut them off for forming a union on proper principles, is to suppose her actuated by unprincipled caprice? If these learned Doctors of the Synod of Fredericton had shown that the basis of union proposed to them contravened any principle held by them, or by the Church of Scotland, they would have had some ground for their fears and vaticinations; but as they have never attempted such a thing, I cannot understand why they can fear such irrational and unworthy conduct from the eminently rational and moderate Church from which they derive their lineage and worth. I solemnly believe that were a union accomplished on such a basis as that proposed, the Church of Scotland would neither cut off a farthing of the allowance which she now gives, nor reduce the dignity of the status of any minister in her connexion by a single hair-breadth. I have a better opinion of her than that. The Synod of Fredericton, if honest in supposing such a thing, was the victim of its own illusory fears. But, supposing the Church of Scotland to act the very silly, ridiculous and unprincipled part which the monetary and dignified sensitiveness of the Synod of Fredericton assigned to her, what would the loss amount

to? With the money loss I am not at present concerned. However great that might be, it would no doubt be made up in some other way. But what would be the loss in the matter of "status?" This loss may be viewed in various ways. *Intrinsically*, would members of the Synod of Fredericton descend in the scale of ministerial or personal dignity by a declaration of the Church of Scotland to the effect that she had cast them off, for the fault of forming a union with another Presbyterian body of good standing on righteous principles? Would Drs. Donald and Brooke be less respectable or less respected than they now are? Would their sermons have less unction, their opinions possess inferior weight, or would their influence be less commanding? Of what real glory would they be shorn? They would still be as eloquent, as learned, as talented, as able, as worthy ministers of Christ, as they now are. I do not believe there is a man, woman or child in this Province who would look upon them as having sacrificed a hair-breadth of dignity. What gives these gentlemen their status is their position as ministers of large and influential congregations, holding the truths of the Gospel—not their connexion with the Church of Scotland. If they were under any terror of losing their positions as ministers of their respective Churches, their fears for loss of status would have just foundation. But no such prospect is before them. If I mistake not, the great body of their people are anxious to see the union formed which they deprecate, even while they pray for it. A party may be formed by ministers opposed to union, to support their views; but there would be no party so opposed if the ministers were heartily for it. Every one would agree to sustain them in all the dignity which they now possess; and as far as the intrinsic worth of their status is concerned, it would just be the same in the Province of New Brunswick after they had lost status as members of the Church of Scotland as before.

But it may be affirmed by persons ignorant of the facts of the case, that there is some political or civil dignity belonging to Presbyterian ministers in connexion with the Church of Scotland, which other Presbyterian ministers, of similar social standing, do not possess. Of those who hold such an opinion I would ask, What is it? Dr. Donald said in the Synod of Fredericton, "At present they (the members of Synod) enjoyed certain privileges; they held the same status as the clergymen of the Church of England." I would like to know from Dr. Donald what these privileges are; and in common with what clergymen

of the Church of England does he and his co-presbyters hold the same status?

As probably Dr. Donald may not hold himself free to reply to these enquiries, I shall endeavor to furnish information concerning the foundation on which it is pretended that these superior privileges rest, and in what way it is further affirmed that ministers in connection with the Church of Scotland hold the same status as those of the Church of England. This I am enabled to do through the kindness of the Hon. John Robertson, who during the excitement caused by the Prince of Wales' visit, transmitted to me a copy of the opinion of the Judges on certain questions propounded to them relative to the Clergy Reserves of Canada. The question in which the present interest of this case is involved was—

“Whether the words a Protestant clergy (31 G. III., c. 31), include any other than clergy of the Church of England and Protestant bishops and priests and deacons, who had received Episcopal ordination? and if any, what others?”

In answer to this question, the Judges say that the words “a Protestant Clergy” (referring to the statute) “are large enough to include other clergy than those of the Church of England and Protestant Bishops who have received Episcopal ordination.”

Their Lordships then give their reasons for this decision, and proceed to reply to the second part of the enquiry—what other clergy are included? “It appears” they say, “to us that the clergy of the Established Church of Scotland are *one instance* of such other Protestant clergy.”

After giving their reasons for such opinion, they add—

“And although in answering your Lordship's question, we specify no other Church than the Protestant Church of Scotland, *we do not thereby intend that besides that Church the ministers of other Churches may not be included under the term Protestant clergy.*”

They further state as a reason why they cannot include other Protestant Churches, that they do not find any others mentioned on the statute book, and that as they were not furnished by their Lordships “with any information as to the doctrine and discipline of any other denominations of Protestants to which the statute 31 Geo. III., c. 31, can by possibility apply, we are unable to specify any other to your Lordships as falling within the statute.”

It has been held—is held I have no doubt—by Dr. Donald that this decision of the Judges in the case of the Canada Clergy Reserves, also by implication places the ministers of

the Church of Scotland in the same position as the clergy of the Episcopal Church in every respect, as to status, &c. The decision, however, has no reference to any such matter, but solely to the due interpretation of the words "Protestant clergy," in a special Act relative to property allocated by the Crown for clerical purposes. The question was, had the Church of Scotland in Canada a right to any of these Reserves? The Judges said she had; while they refused to say, had proper information been furnished, that other Protestant Churches had not also a right to a portion of the same Reserves.

I have reason to believe that it is solely on this decision that Dr. Donald founds his claim to peculiar Colonial privileges and status. The readers of the *Colonial Presbyterian* can judge for themselves how far such a claim is valid.

Far be it from me to say that the status of Dr. Donald is inferior to that of a minister of the Episcopal Church, however high his rank. I cordially agree with a "Self-reliant Layman" in scouting the supposition that Presbyterian clergy are lower in the scale of status than those of the Episcopal Church. I hold that Dr. Donald is as good a Bishop as the Bishop of Fredericton; but I hold with equal tenacity that I am as scriptural a Bishop as either of these dignitaries. What consideration they may have in the eye of the law I do not much care, saving as far as I am interested in the preservation of that equality which, in this free country, all sects are supposed alike to possess. A Bishop of the Episcopal Church being a *primus inter pares*, a chief among his equals, may be held to occupy a position equivalent to that of the Moderator of a Presbyterian Synod. If he be superior in learning, ability, urbanity of manners, or piety, he may be accorded the chief place, and will hold it in public opinion and in reality; but if he do not possess these qualities, no legislation, I believe, has given it to him, and most certainly no future legislation in this Province will be permitted to do so. At any rate, whatever old statute may be uprooted from the decaying legislation of past centuries, giving superiority of status to Bishops of the Church of England, it would be difficult to discover among the petrified forms of statutory enactment, any law which places a Presbyterian minister of the Church of Scotland in any foremost place among other Presbyterian ministers of the Province. Dr. Donald's "privileges" and superior "status" are mere "figments of the brain," as far as these are derivable from connexion

with the Church of Scotland, Any minister of the Church of New Brunswick, of equal talent, piety, and suavity of manners, if any such there be, has just as high privileges and as high status as that in which Dr. Donald glories. There is so far no valid objection in the learned doctor's argument against union with the Church of New Brunswick.

I find, Mr. Editor, I must devote another letter to the full explanation of status. I trust, therefore, to address you still further on this subject next week.

Yours,

JAMES BENNET.

LETTER V.

SIR—My last letter was chiefly devoted to the consideration of how far the status of the ministers of the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland would be affected by a union with the Church of New Brunswick, and the conclusions arrived at were, 1st, That it was most improbable that the Church of Scotland would diminish the stature of the status of any ministers who now stand in connexion with her; 2d, That if she did declare them to have forfeited any status derivable from such connexion, yet would their status be as high, as important, in the eyes of the people of New Brunswick, as though said declaration were not made; and, 3d, That the real dignity of the ministers so tremblingly alive to the importance of their position, was dependent, so far as any extrinsic circumstances could give dignity, solely on their position as ministers of large and respectable congregations. There is evidently another view of status yet to be taken, viz., from that side of it which has respect to original ability, to learning, and to moral and spiritual character. In regard to the first of these, we may assume that it would probably be difficult to appreciate and to judge of original talent and ability; but at any rate we may conclude that to whichever Church the greater amount of such qualities belongs, no essential deterioration could occur to it on account of union with the one to which a less amount of ability might be attributed,—rather would the union tend to set off and illustrate the superior excellence of the Church gifted with the larger number of superior spirits. In regard, also, to the superiority derivable from moral and spiritual worth, I do not wish to say anything, inasmuch

as I do not think that the moral and spiritual character of either Church is, in present circumstances, a subject for discussion or comparison. I wish to award to the ministers of the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland, all good and excellent moral qualities; and I will not suppose that any possible insinuation was made, or intended to be made, in the Synod of Fredericton against the status of our ministers, on such grounds as the want of these. But with regard to the matter of education necessary to the qualifications of the ministers of the two Churches, I wish to make a few remarks, and I do so because, though I have no reason to suppose that this consideration entered into the views which were expressed relative to status at Fredericton, the matter has been privately talked of, and insinuations to the disadvantage of the Church of New Brunswick have been made, to the effect that the standard of ministerial education is not so high with us as it is with ministers connected with the Church of Scotland. A few facts, therefore, may be necessary to the enlightenment of the public on this point, tending to show that in this particular we are quite on a par with our brethren of the Established Kirk, and which I shall now proceed to state with all possible brevity.

A certain complexity belongs to this subject, springing from the various sources whence our ministers have derived their education. Some have been educated in Scotland; others in Ireland; and others still in Nova Scotia. With regard to those of our ministers who have received their education in Scotland, it cannot for a moment be pretended that their education is inferior to that of ministers of the Established Church of Scotland, inasmuch as it is on both sides the same. Several of our ministers from Scotland were educated prior to the Disruption, and thus have had training in all its parts identical with that of ministers of the Church of Scotland. The education of those who have studied since that period is still the same, the only change being their having attended different Theological Professors, and those who know anything of the Free Church Colleges will at least put them on a par with, if they do not affirm their decided superiority over, the divinity halls of the Establishment. Indeed, this superiority is scarcely a matter of question, since the Free Church requires now four full Sessions in Divinity, while the Established Church only requires three full and one partial Session. As far as they are concerned, therefore, there can be neither cavil nor question.

I am not inclined to rank the ministers who have received their education in Ireland as in any particular inferior to those who have received their scholarship in Scotland. The reason why undiscerning persons might rate it lower, is chiefly derivable from the fact that the College in which they have studied had not the *chartered authority* to grant degrees in Arts or Divinity. But in all the branches of education necessary to the conferment of these honors, the College of Belfast was as fully equipped as the Scotch Universities; the time required for education was as lengthened; the professors were generally as well qualified for their work; the supervision as strict; while every candidate for the ministry was not only required to produce testimonials of regular attendance on, and proficiency in, the classes at the end of each session, but, further, he was required to produce a general certificate at the end of the undergraduate course, to the Divinity Entrance Examination Committee, before he was even taken on trial for the study of Divinity. This general certificate was only given to those who passed a strict and searching examination in the whole course of previous collegiate study—an examination, written and oral, conducted before all the Professors, in Latin, Greek, Logic, Mental, Moral and Physical Science—and was to all intents and purposes equivalent to a Degree in Arts, save that it could not be called by that name, for want of the legal authority conferred by a charter. No one, to my knowledge, in my time, was admitted to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland who was not the possessor of such a certificate, or a Degree in Arts from some Scotch, English, or Irish University.

I have no hesitation in saying that the Irish Church demanded from candidates for the ministry a much higher general proficiency than the Scotch Church, either Established or Free, or indeed any Church of which I have any knowledge. The number of ministers in Scotland who have attained degrees is very small. In a late number of, I think, the *Edinburgh Review*, the proportions of those who take degrees in Arts in the Universities of Scotland, are in one of them only four per cent. of all the matriculated students, while in the others, the highest proportion is set down at six and eight per cent. As a general rule, the students of the Scotch Universities do not take Degrees, and they are not required of candidates for the ministry in Scotland. All that is necessary is, that tickets certifying attendance on the classes and general proficiency should be presented. The Presbytery to which the candidate

belongs may examine him in Scotland, as was done also in Ireland; but the grand test of proficiency--the general certificate or the A. M.--has in past days been required in Ireland alone of the candidates for the ministry.

Nor can it be said with justice that the Professors in the old Belfast College were men of inferior attainments or low intellectual stature. That College gave Dr. Reid and Dr. James Thompson to adorn the halls of Glasgow University. Dr. Young, formerly of Belfast, seems to stand equally high in the estimation of Sir Wm. Hamilton with the celebrated Scottish metaphysician, Dr. Brown. Dr. Staveland fills with honor the chair of Natural Philosophy in the Queen's College, Belfast--no greater now in a chartered University than when he filled the more lowly position of Professor in the old Royal College. The men, generally speaking, who occupied the Chairs in Belfast, were of high note and worth, chiefly from Scotland. There is, therefore, no reason whatever why those who studied in this recent seat of learning should rank lower in intellectual culture than those whose student life was spent in the Academic Halls of Glasgow, Edinburgh, St. Andrews or Aberdeen.

A few of our students were educated at the Free Church College, Halifax. The number of Professors at that institution, prior to the late Union, was not so large as in some of the older Colleges, both in Europe and America. The greater amount of attention, however, which the Professors in Halifax have been enabled to give to the students who attended their instructions, would appear to have amply compensated for the greater number of Professors in the older Colleges. I say this in view of the superior scholarship of some of the students who received their education in the Free Church College at Halifax, and who now may be found exercising the office of the ministry in the Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick. And now that the two large bodies of Presbyterians have united their resources in Nova Scotia, with such Professors the Churches of the Lower Provinces may certainly aim at as high a standard of education as was ever obtained even in the ancient Universities of Scotland.

I must apologize for this apparent glorification of the Church of New Brunswick, and I do so specifically on the grounds that utterly unfounded statements have been made regarding the lowness of the intellectual and literary status of the ministry in our connexion, whereas, on the contrary, it stands as high, if not higher, than that of any other Church. The greater portion of our ministers are Masters

of Arts, or hold an equivalent status. The Church of Scotland may therefore continue to require that ministers eligible to her parishes, at home or abroad, shall only be such as have studied at her Universities, or received licensure at her hands; but the Christian public of New Brunswick may henceforth know that these requirements do not indicate greater learning or imply any superior worth, beyond what is possessed by the ministers of the Church of New Brunswick.

I am yours,

JAMES BENNET,

LETTER VI.

SIR—I had hoped to concentrate the observations which I felt it necessary to make on the proposed Presbyterian union, into a much less space than that to which they have extended, but I find on looking over the report of those speeches delivered in the late Synod of Fredericton, some gems of ecclesiastical argument against union, which still require a setting of criticism to illustrate their sparkling beauty. I shall, however, only select one, on account of its apparently transcendent value in the eye, no doubt, of the Synod. The argument to which I refer, if not first discovered, has the merit at least of being first presented in its native angularity by a worthy Elder. It is an argument which, assuming the form of ignorance, is no doubt intended to present the aspect of profound wisdom. Mr. Robert Nicholson (Elder) is reported to have said, in a speech of great terseness, "that he had seen no reason why their brethren should have separated from them in the first place. If they were desirous to return back again to the fold, they were welcome to come back as members of the Church of Scotland." This argument the Rev. Dr. Brooke, towards the conclusion of the debate, takes up and presents with several flourishing rubs of oratory intended to dazzle the eyes of his admiring auditors. "If those," said the learned Doctor, "who seek union, are really desirous of it, let them return to the Parent Church. They 'went out from us.' There could be no middle ground—they could not be met half way. Let them return to their first love, and they would be received graciously." How kind! how polished! how courteous! We can well fancy the graceful wave of the hand; the dignified inclination of the rhetori-

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cian's head as he uttered these bland phrases, worthy of a master of ceremonies.

The native politeness of the Doctor, no doubt, has much to do with the courteous welcome which he is willing to give to the erring and errant New Brunswick Presbyterian Church upon the perception of her sins, and due repentance manifested by a return to what the Doctor calls, with some small spice of profanity I fear in the allusion, "her first love." The doctrine of the association of ideas, however, enables us to trace the line of the Doctor's observations to the matrimonial quarrel which he had previously figured in his mind in questionable similitude of the two horses of different breeds, as likely to take place after the union between the two Churches, though with such a bickering perspective before him, we can hardly explain his courteous welcome to a Church which was likely to kick and curvette so much, in the marital relationship, on any other ground than that of the entire good heartedness of the Doctor. All honour to the kind heart which, after such a heartless desertion by the spouse of "her first love," is willing, in view of quarrels, yet blandly to welcome the unworthy deserter of hearth and home back to the old mansion, and all the agreeable associations of other days. Hearty benedictions on the head of the kind Doctor who, having put up with such waywardness in the past, is also with great good will, ready to receive the errant one, though, no doubt, all his patience will be taxed with her follies and vagaries in all time to come.

As a piece of sentimentality, this welcome of the Doctor is, no doubt, a brilliant gem. I am sorry to spoil its beauty by showing that it is only a bit of painted glass picked up by the Elder and turned about and about before the admiring Synod by the learned Doctor, as a diamond of the first water.

In the first place, does the Doctor honestly think that there was nothing at all which should have grieved those, afterwards denominating themselves the Free Church, during the "ten years conflict" which was maintained in Scotland? Granting that the Doctor with good conscience took up with the moderate party, was there no reason for all the discussion and disputation which at last led to the final separation of the two parties? Was there not at least the appearance of right on the part of those who stood up for what they called "the headship of Christ?" And was there not a certain probability that this doctrine might be in danger by the assumptions of the civil power? Why a

great number who remained in the Church of Scotland at the time of the disruption thought that there were grounds of quarrel. I recollect having heard a description of a certain Presbytery in Scotland shortly after the disruption—"The Presbytery was composed of thirty ministers," said my informant, "and they were thus divided, there were ten Free Kirk, ten Moderates, and ten that ratted." The ten rats remained in the Kirk. They held that the Free Kirk principle was the right one, but with the true courage which characterizes the rat they ran away from the danger of asserting their principles. I know not how many—but I should suppose nearly one half of those who remained were men who thought the Free Kirk right, but who had not the courage to assert their principles in the face of the trials to which the disruption exposed them. Those who "ratted" would hardly say that there was no reason why the Free Kirk party went out from the Church of Scotland.

I do not say that Doctor Brooke ever had any sympathy with those who "ratted" at the time of the disruption, but I am inclined to think that in his secret heart the Doctor is compelled to think sometimes, in view of the sacrifices which the disruption ministers made, that they had some good reasons why "they went out from us," and resigned their worldly all, for the uncertain prospects which in sterile and wilderness aspect lay before them.

But, in the next place, it is the Church of New Brunswick which the Doctor says went out from them, and which he would welcome back. Now did it ever enter his mind that the Church of New Brunswick, as at present constituted, never went out from them at all. True it is, certain of her ministers did, but the Church, as at present constituted, can not with any propriety be said to have gone out from them. The Church of which I am pastor never had connexion with the Church of Scotland in New Brunswick. Several Churches in the Province, now in our connexion, claim closer relationship with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland than with the Church of Scotland. I would not be surprised, if a national census being taken, it should appear that the majority of the Presbyterians in this Province would be found to trace their ecclesiastical connexion not to the Scotch but to the Irish Church. It is, therefore, a piece of sheer impertinence, polite as it seems in Dr. Brooke, to welcome back the Presbyterians of New Brunswick to a Church with which they have had at best but a distant and consanguineous connexion, as though they were a sort of prodigal wanderers from her maternal home.

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Doctor Brooke should understand that it was the Church of New Brunswick which, after being long wooed, professed a genuine willingness to unite on equal terms with the Church of Scotland in this Province. It was not the Free Church, though a Church sympathizing with her; not the Irish Church, though a Church largely made up of the natives of the Emerald Isle and their descendants; not a sectional Church, biassed by previous prejudices, and blinded by the bigotries of nationalities—not a Church composed of such elements was it which sought to quench the strifes and quarrels, engendered in past conflicts, in a union with another Church, which, though of foreign name and remote sympathies, was yet supposed to be honest in desires after a union among Presbyterians, and so chivalrous as to forget the strivings of the past, and join in the glorious undertakings of the future, by which the Presbyterian Church, based on Scriptural principles, is surely to be characterized in this Province. The pathos and point, and mock politeness of the Rev. Doctor, all evaporate, when it is understood that he has even mistaken the personage he addresses, knows not even her genealogy, and that his idea of her having lived with him formerly, and of her having left him on a quarrel, is a mere hallucination.

It need hardly be wondered at that a Scottish elder should have such a contracted view of the extent and genealogy of Presbyterianism, as to suppose that it is peculiar to Scotland, or that all Presbyterians must trace their connexion to the Kirk of that nationality, but that a Doctor of Divinity should labour under the delusion that Presbyterianism has her original and peculiar home in Scotland, as Dr. Brooke's logical position would seem to imply, is a little startling. Presbyterianism does not date from John Knox, or hail only from Scotland. At best, it was but an importation there. Holland, Germany, the United States, not to talk of Ireland, England, and France, contain Churches which confess it. It can be traced, if it be worth anything, to the Apostles and the New Testament. We cannot see that out of Scotland, if indeed in it (of which there are grave doubts), the Kirk should therefore claim to be the source of Presbyterianism, or that any monopoly of privilege should belong to her in New Brunswick.

Dr. Brooke is highly displeased that we have taken the designation "Church of New Brunswick." What right Dr. Brooke has to be offended because we, owning no pe-

cular origin save that of Scripture, and desiring to unite on equal terms, without claiming any superior status, with all classes of evangelical Presbyterians, have taken the name "Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick," we cannot tell. His Church, national and seclusive, is distinguished by the adjunct "in connexion with the Church of Scotland," and he is angry because we do not sectarize ourselves in some similarly peculiar way. Like the dog in the manger, he will neither eat the hay nor permit the cow, but keeps barking at every attempt to appropriate what he has rejected, and continues to reject. If Dr. Brooke thinks that a peculiar glory, status and privilege is invested in the name of Church "in connexion with the Church of Scotland," why does he complain of us, when, so far from contending with her for these honours and advantages, we are content with the simple name of the country which we have made our and our children's home. Would he have New Brunswick without a Presbyterian Church if not connected with Scotland? Would he deprive our people of any proper provincial ecclesiasticism? Is the time never to come when the Church in this Province is to cease to look to Scotland as the source of all ecclesiastical power, authority and dignity? When will it be possible for the Irish, American, or native Presbyterians to cherish a Provincial Church? We know not when the Rev. Dr. Brooke would permit this, but it is well that his authority is not required, and that there is already a Church in this Province, which neither hails from Scotland, nor Ireland, nor America, but which, ignoring distant nationalities, is patriotic enough to content herself with the simple name which, in all future time, will be dearer to the Presbyterian people of this country than any name, of however glorious memory—**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW BRUNSWICK.**

While affirming that the Church of New Brunswick was not in any such peculiar way related to the Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland, as to justify the scornful politeness with which her overtures for union were, as a graceful finale, beckoned away in the late farce played in the Synod of Fredericton, I am far from thinking that our Presbyterian Church does not owe a mighty debt of gratitude to Scotland and to her Churches. Scotland I admire—who does not? Her heroes of the faith are enrolled among the noblest of our race. I have wandered over her most classic scenes, and felt their inspiration. I have scanned many of the places which her gigantic heroes have trod in battles of the olden time. Bannockburn is still

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associated in memory with Thermopylae and Morgarten; and Wallace and Bruce stand forth with Leonidas and William Tell in the niches of recollection. The philosophy, lyric poetry, and romance of Scotland, are alike glorious; and her martyrs of the covenant are worthy of canonization, with those who shed their blood in the times of Nero, when, as yet, apostolic virtue reigned over the lives and faith of men. The Church which Knox founded, and for which Wishart bled, will never want for admiration and tears. But that land of heroes and martyrs is far now from finding her fitting—certainly not her only or most worthy—representative in that shred of a national Church, still called in the language of the law “the Church of Scotland.” In Cammeronianism, Secessionism, and Disruption, she has been shorn of by far the major part of her glory. Many times she has had to cry Ichabod—and the last time she did so, only a few years ago, many held that her lamp had gone out. Certainly that which was most allied with martyrdom and heroism went out from her, when Welch and Chalmers and Candlish and Cunningham, and those in whose souls was not only the feeling to admire, but the courage to dare and do noble things, left her and her riches and status behind them, as things which though desirable in themselves were not worthy of possession without a good conscience. Every soul in the world that admired liberty, and unselfishness, and courage, admired these men, and either scorned or pitied the poor Church of Scotland with all her emoluments and consideration in the eye of the law. Since then she has no doubt rallied, and is producing and may yet produce noble and worthy men, but it is rather too much for those who undertake to represent her in this province, to take upon them the airs of superiority, and condescension, and status, and what not, displayed at Fredericton, considering the comparatively low estimation which she still possesses in the eye of Christendom beneath the Free Church, with which we are privileged to hold a friendly alliance.

And now, notwithstanding the deceit, which, by their own documents, I have proved to have been practised upon us; notwithstanding the falsity of the doctrine of Union as held by them; notwithstanding their allegations about conscience in submission to the Civil Magistrate, and their fears about loss of status, and their assumptions of superior status having been shown to be vain and frivolous; and notwithstanding the utter ridiculousness with which, it is plain, their mocking welcome to a church in many ways

their superior covers them, I yet desire, having placed the whole transaction in its true light before an appreciative public, to look upon and treat every minister of the Synod of Fredericton as a worthy and excellent man; and all the more worthy and excellent, after having seen their late foolish escapade in the mirror which I have held up before them. And I might say in conclusion, that I feel quite certain that, so far from this discussion having put back the Union of Presbyterians in this province, it is most likely it has greatly forwarded its consummation. Of this I have some evidence in the fact that such a beautiful and well-timed article on union should have been transmitted to you, Sir, for publication since this discussion commenced, by one of the gentlemen who argued with wit and wisdom against union in the Synod of Fredericton, and which you elevated to the rank of a leading article in your paper of September 10th. Should this discussion only have the effect of inducing the gentlemen of the Synod lately held at Fredericton to study the article so much admired by one of their number, I augur the happiest results. "The motive to attempt as far as in us lies the restoration of this glory (of unity) to his Church," will not be wanting, and "The strength to promote this union in the Church found in deep abasement and humiliation before God" will surely be given. "Private selfishness" will be incapable of preventing it. Nor will the expectation be cherished that "brother should yield to brother"—or church to church. Indeed this article is one which I take the liberty, in conclusion, of recommending to the study of all the brethren as well those who rejected as those who sought union. Its sentiments are scriptural, weighty, and worthy of all intelligent consideration.

I am yours, &c.

JAMES BENNETT.

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PRESBYTERIAN UNION.

[To the Editor of the "Colonial Presbyterian."]

SIR—From the *Colonial Presbyterian* of the 5th inst., I observe the subject of union of the Presbyterian bodies of this Province, has been recently discussed at Fredericton, at a meeting of the Synod in connection with the Church of Scotland.

I am in favor of the proposed union, as our people are scattered in small communities over the whole Province—holding in the main, similar religious views—but, hailing from different branches of the Presbyterian family, and I am persuaded that if they were consolidated into one body, having common interests, an ecclesiastical organization might be instituted and applied, so as to meet their spiritual wants, without aid from abroad.

Presbyterians in this Province, as a body, are not poor. There are doubtless, among them, persons in indigent circumstances; but there are those also, who are wealthy, and willing to contribute to assist their less fortunate brethren, provided that they have confidence in the arrangements proposed to effect that object.

In accordance with this view, the monies sent to this Province by the Colonial Committee in Scotland—say upwards of £600 currency—in aid of the Church here, is misapplied, and great responsibility certainly attaches to the parties representing such an expenditure as necessary, while the heathen world still demands so much from Christian benevolence, and when this sum would support four missionaries in the foreign field. Besides, it ought not to be overlooked, that the people in Scotland, who are induced to contribute these funds, may be, and probably are, poorer than those for whose benefit the money is sent; and all experience proves, that to contribute to the support of persons able to provide for themselves, only weakens their energies and lessens their power of self-reliance.

"Union," to use the language of the Rev. Mr. Ogg, in the discussion referred to, "would give Presbyterians more respectability and influence, and would, consequently, put them in a condition of being of greater usefulness"—yes, to say nothing of other objects that might be gained—the £600 annually now expended here, might be appropriated for the benefit of the heathen, and, in addition, a large sum might be raised by a united Church for the same grand object.

In proof of my assertion that the Presbyterian Church in this Province might be self-sustaining, and at the same time contribute in aid of Foreign Missions, I refer to what has been accomplished at an earlier period, in colonial history, under greater disadvantages, by the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia; and, that our organization in New Brunswick is now not what it ought to be—that it is sadly defective—is fully attested by the fact, that neither body is self-supporting.

The Rev. James Murray said that “there was nothing that he would desire more to see than a union between the Churches: if that union were perfect, it would strengthen their hands, advance the cause of religion, and do away with petty jealousies.” The Rev. Mr. McLardy said, “no doubt several advantages would be derived from such a union as was proposed,” and instanced the advantage in support of weak congregations.

Then, I ask, why not unite. Dr. Donald says, “that a union cannot be effected without a compromise of principle,” and refers to the interference of the civil magistrate: this, I admit, would be an insurmountable obstacle, if the laws of Scotland, as applied to the Church there, were equally binding upon the Church here, but inasmuch as there are no laws to regulate our ecclesiastical procedure in this country, but such as are made at our own request, and such as we are willing to accept, I can conceive no practical inconvenience arising from this source. The only way that this question can arise, would be by foolishly exacting from adherents of the Colonial Church an expression of their belief regarding ecclesiastical questions, involving the principle, arising in the Church of Scotland, and no man would be disposed to act so unreasonably, if the Church were independent and Colonial.

Again, another difficulty in the way of union suggested by Dr. Donald is, that he fears it is sought on “political grounds.” In this something very alarming is discovered, and, consequently, deprecated with much earnestness. I must confess, however, that I can see no cause for serious apprehension on that score. Is it nothing that when the Roman Catholics number themselves by tens of thousands, and other denominations of Christians do the same thing, and demand consideration from the Legislature and the Government, in consequence of their numbers, when a great question, such as Education, is before the public—I repeat, is it nothing, that under these circumstances, Presbyterians present themselves in an opposing attitude, neutralising their influence?

Again, the Doctor fears the loss of rank, and therefore objects.

It may be owing to the point from which a colonial mind views the subject, but I am free to confess that it fails to affect me as a matter of much importance. Indeed, I think it has abstractly very little to do with a man's true position, or success in any way, in this country. I consider a clergyman's standing and social position to depend upon his personal merits—associated with his connection with his congregation. Suppose that his people were of the humbler classes, his salary small, and his professional ability inferior—what, I ask, could status do for him? But Dr. Donald says, "at present they enjoyed certain privileges: they held the same status as the clergymen of the Church of England. It was a position that was to be highly prized." This statement I regard as rather humiliating, and not less so to himself than to his people. Whoever thought of a well educated Presbyterian clergyman and gentleman, in the same social local position, being less respectable than an English clergyman.

Much stress is laid on the necessity of "union in sentiment and feeling, and the exchange of friendly acts as individuals;" but what would be thought if a clergyman of the Church of Scotland who, being in company with clergymen of the Free Church, or of the Church of the Lower Provinces, were he politely to say—You will please remain where you are, this is your place on this plain, my position is on another and a higher, by the side of the English clergyman—and then step up. This might be done with much dignity, but would it be friendly? would it not be insulting? and, yet, it seems to be the unmistakable logic contained in the Doctor's language.

The Messrs. Murray, of Dalhousie and Tabusintac, would yield their status if good to the Church would accrue; but Dr. Donald "had been surprised to hear members of the Synod (referring to these gentlemen) say that they would be willing to give up their status under certain conditions—he would relinquish it on none." The good of the Church, the benefit of his fellow-man—nothing would induce him to yield—no, nothing. He further says, "it was as certain as anything if that union did take place, their status would be lost," and again he was "firmly of opinion that the time for union, which he believed would come, had not come." This indicates the possibility from his own statements, that in time the status would be lost. How sad the thought!

“At the close of this discussion, it being considered a serious subject, and having been seriously discussed, and the minds of members seriously impressed, it was proposed by Dr. Donald that the Moderator, the Rev. Mr. McLardy, should engage in prayer for union of the visible Church of Christ, especially for those branches between whom there is so little difference.”

Well, I don't know what others may think of this, but there is something in the animus of this discussion, and then this call for prayer in reference to it, which makes me feel that unless its spirit was principally that of confession, it was sadly out of place. It is to be regretted that it had not been printed and preserved for the benefit of the world. Perhaps his Lordship the Bishop of Fredericton would have adopted it for the use of his Church, as it was made and sanctioned by those who “hold the same status as the clergymen of the Church of England.”

A SELF-RELIANT LAYMAN.

September, 1861.

