

The Presbyterian Witness

Halifax, N. S., June 23, 1855.

Synods.—The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, and of the Free Church will meet next week in this City—the former on Wednesday, the latter on Thursday. Our readers need scarcely be reminded of the duty of unceasing prayer on behalf of these bodies. The Heaver of Prayer can alone enable them to perform all their solemn and important duties aright; and He alone can so dispose of all events that they may work together for His glory, and for the well-being of the creatures of His hand. He alone can give wisdom and fortitude, christian charity and religious zeal.

FREE PRESBYTERY OF PICTOU.—We have much pleasure in giving insertion to the minutes of the last meeting of this Court, and we would respectfully solicit the attention of all the members of the Synod of which this Presbytery forms so important a part, to the three overtures. The decision of the Synod in regard to each of these three overtures, will be of vital importance to the Free Church in this province. Indeed the question of Home Missions is one of success, or of total failure, of advancement, or of sad retrogression, of life, or of a lingering inglorious death! For much that is valuable in connection with these subjects, we beg to refer to the Letters of "a Free Churchman" which appeared in our columns some weeks ago.

HOME MISSION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA.—At the last meeting of the Committee of this Mission, twelve members were present. Applications were received from eight Presbyteries for the services of Students, licentiates, and probationers. The Presbytery of Montreal, could employ 10—applied for 5. The Presbytery of Perth, could employ 5—applied for 3. The Presbytery of Toronto, could employ 10—applied for 7. The Presbytery of Hamilton, could employ 12—applied for 6. The Presbytery of London, could employ 25—applied for 5. The Committee could not meet much more than half the applications. The organization of the Canada Home Mission, is very thorough, and in the above we see some indication of its success.

It would delight us exceedingly if the two Synods, that are to meet here next week, should join in holding one or more Prayer Meetings. It might be called a United Prayer meeting; or a meeting for united prayer. We can see nothing but what would be highly commendable in such a movement as this. It would not compromise the feelings or the principles of either party in the slightest degree; and it would show that the spirit of unity and love, can exist, and even flourish and bring forth fruit under the form of denominational variety. We earnestly hope that some God-fearing, public-spirited men in each Synod, will be ready to take the initiative in this matter—and verify this shall have their reward. One such meeting, might be held in Chalmers' Church, and another in the Poplar Grove Church. The man would be hardy that would seriously object to what is here suggested.

LOUIS AGASSIZ.—We have before us the Prospects of a great original work by this eminent naturalist. The work is to be termed "Contributions to the Natural History of the United States," and it will consist of ten quarto volumes—to be published yearly at the price of £3 per vol. The whole work will just cost £30. Each volume will be complete in itself and independent of its successors or predecessors. The entire work is intended to contain the results of Agassiz's embryological investigations, embracing about sixty monographs, from all the classes of animals especially selected among these best known as characteristics of this continent; also descriptions of a great number of new genera and species, accompanied with accurate figures, and such anatomical details as may contribute to illustrate their natural affinities and their external structure.

M. Agassiz has been in the neighbouring Republic now for upwards of 8 years; and we believe he intends to make America his life-long home. He is now about 54 years of age, hale and hearty. He is rather fatter than the generality of savans. He is a fine writer, and the highest living authority in matters connected with fossil ichthyology, and embryology. He differs from the greater number of ethnologists, (and we think him decidedly in error) in maintaining that the human race has not descended from one pair.

IN OUR NEXT we shall give a detailed account of the proceedings of the Assembly of the Established Church of Scotland. Want of space compels us to omit it this week.

THE "FOREIGN LEGION" at Melville Island numbers now about 250, and is receiving accessions weekly.

"MOREDUN; a Tale by Walter Scott," is only a wretched forgery. Nobody of correct appreciation that ever read a page of Sir Walter, could be imposed upon by "Moredun."

REV. ROBERT MACNAIR, who a few years since labored in this Province and P. E. Island, has gone out a Chaplain to the Hospital at Scutari.

General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.

We have already given the first day's proceedings of this body: this week's mail brings us to the close of the Assembly. The attendance of members was large.

On Friday the Clerk read the Report of the Committee on Collections for the schemes of the Church. The number of collections, that should have been made is 4548. The number made is 4411—leaving a deficiency of only 137. This is a striking proof of the remarkably thorough organization of this Church.

Dr David Brown read the report of the committee on the conversion of the Jews. The financial position of the committee is good, the balance in their favour being fully £1600 at this date. The collection, however, for this year fell £500 short of previous annual collections; and the favourable balance is due to legacies and donations,—sources which, of course, are too precarious to warrant the extension of operations. Details were given of the remarkable prosperity of the school at Pesth, conducted by the venerable Dr Saphir and his daughter. As many as 370 pupils have been attending it. The ordinary attendance at Jewish schools is not more than 70. The Report commented on the vast results to Turkey likely to ensue from the enormous influx of strangers into Constantinople, and from the intercourse with the West occasioned by the war. But though the present train of events was full of promise for the future of Turkey, the immediate effort has been to disturb and impede the operations of the agents, especially at Galata. The inducements to add to the Church's educational machinery at Constantinople are very strong at present, if an increase of the means at the Committee's disposal should render it possible. The Report gave a very spirited and interesting account of the operations in Amsterdam. In Breslaw, on account of the shattered health of Mr. Edwards, the work has been grievously interrupted; but the missionary is now again at work, as far as his strength permits; and a fellow-labourer has recently been sent out to join him. In concluding an outline of the last year's work, the Report gave a forcible representation of the necessity of throwing more liberality and energy into the work among the Jews.

Dr. Cunningham introduced the deputation from Holland, Messrs Schwartz and Da Costa.

Mr. Schwartz addressed the Assembly.—He gave a variety of information regarding the contemporary theological literature of Germany and Holland. He believed that the eyes of good men on the Continent were fixed on the Free Church, and that all the measures adopted by her were regarded with the deepest interest by all the friends of religious liberty abroad. He made some remarks on the peculiarity of the position of the Jewish Missionaries in Amsterdam and elsewhere. He illustrated the importance of the Free Church seminary in Amsterdam, to which he ascribed much of the influence which the Mission has acquired. He represented the importance of prosecuting the Jewish Mission in Holland, on account of the perfect freedom enjoyed there, while the large Jewish population of Austria and Russia are unapproachable. The Jews in Holland are peculiar as compared with other Jews, in consequence of the liberal and tolerant treatment which they have received in that kingdom from a very remote period. He gave some interesting and graphic anecdotes of missionary work, and the trials of the converts in Amsterdam; and concluded by urging the Church to go on and occupy the ground yet to be possessed in Holland. He spoke English well, and his address showed that in his own language he must possess very considerable eloquence.

The learned and distinguished Mr. Da Costa next addressed the Assembly. His accent is much more foreign than that of Mr. Schwartz. As a Dutchman by nation, and a Jew by race, he dwelt on the points of resemblance between this country and Holland, and returned thanks for the mission with which this Church had favoured his country. He referred with the most affectionate regard and respect to his two fellow-labourers, Mr. Smith Mr. Schwartz, and the deep happiness he enjoys in connection with them. The mission in Amsterdam is a blessing not only to the Jews, but the Christians, as being fitted to exercise a most salutary influence on the slumbering Dutch Church, and on the heterodoxy of the Universities. He gave details of the mode of conducting the institution in Amsterdam; and concluded with an eloquent appeal on behalf of Israel, which was listened to with the deepest interest.

Dr. Grierson read a draft of a loyal and dutiful address to Her Majesty, which was cordially approved of. He also introduced a deputation from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, consisting of Rev. D. Hamilton, Rev. W. Richey, and Saml. Greer, Esq.

Mr Hamilton, in addressing the House, cautioned them against believing that the wound which the Irish famine of 1846 had given to Popery is either so deep or so fatal as some have supposed. Never at any time did Popery put forth more vigour and energy than at the present moment. He referred to the great danger of large and rapidly increasing cities which have outgrown the means of grace. He described the Belfast Home Mission, which employs eleven preachers of the gospel, and by means of which they have established four new congregations in Belfast within the last year or two. He told how deeply they felt in Ireland the evils arising from defective ministerial support, and what encouraging success has attended an effort they have been making to abate these evils. He referred to the signal train of judgments and mercies which have passed over these lands within the last few years, and pressed with much force the lessons of duty which the Church of Christ ought to derive from them.

The Rev. Mr. Richey and Mr. Greer also addressed the House.

It appeared that the overture on the Aberdeen College curriculum had been approved by a majority of 48 Presbyteries to 24. This is the question which occasioned such keen discussion between Drs. Cunningham and Candlish.

From the Report of the Church Building Committee it appears that with the total sum of £2,000, the value of £9,000 has, during the year, been either gained or secured. Arrangements have been made for the lodgment of all the tide-deeds of Free Church property

in a fireproof charter room connected with the New College.

Mr. Wilson, of Dundee, read the Report of the Home Mission Committee.

The Report commenced with a most just and discriminating tribute to the late Convener, Mr. Sym. Returns which have been obtained from fifty-four of the stations show that this proportion of the seventy-two bring evangelistic labours to bear on a population of 82,746 souls. Connected with the Scheme there are 29 day schools, attended by 1724 pupils, 61 Sabbath Schools, 33 churches, and 10 school-houses, built. The Report also gave an account of the operations of the Committee on the territorial plan. The particulars from these interesting "clearings" were of the most pleasing character. The system carried out for open-air preaching last summer was defeated. So much encouragement was given to these operations last year, that the Committee will carry them on with increased vigour this year. The subject of the distribution of probationers, and the difficulty of effecting it in a satisfactory manner, were adverted to. A step towards it has been enloured in the way of establishing a register of such probationers as were willing to be employed in missionary work, but had proved a complete failure, from the small number who inscribed their names.

The total amount of the Sustentation Fund for the year ending May 15th is £108,554, being an increase of £8,374 over last year, and yielding a dividend of £132 to each minister; and owing to a will made by the late Mr. Macfie, no minister this year receives a less sum than £142.

The Trustees of the Church this year received £10,000. The whole amount in their hands is £34,910, variously invested for religious and educational purposes.

Rev. Mr. Sachs, a converted Jew and once a disciple of the philosopher Hegel, was appointed Professor of Hebrew and Exegetical Theology in the College of Aberdeen. He came to Scotland 15 years ago, an unbeliever; but being led to attend the ministry of Dr. John Brown, he became convinced of the truth of Christianity, and felt deep concern for his soul's salvation. His qualifications for his present situation are of the highest order. At the evening sederunt of 29th May, the Deputies from the Continental Churches were introduced to the Assembly.

The Rev. Mr. DUDAS, a Hungarian Minister labouring in Constantinople, addressed the Assembly. He stated that he was born of Roman Catholic parents; was ordained a priest in 1836, and acted in that capacity for 15 years. He was connected, as chaplain to a regiment, with the events of the Hungarian struggle of 1848. In the midst of these dangers, the true light began to show upon his mind. Subsequently to that period he embraced Protestantism, and resolved to devote his life to the advocacy of the doctrines which had brought relief and peace to his own mind. He gave an account of his work among his expatriated countrymen in Constantinople, and pled for some assistance towards forming a place of worship and school. He spoke English like one familiar with it in books, but little accustomed to converse in it. At the close of his address, apparently finding his English cumbersome, he dropped it, and spoke Latin with the greatest fluency.

Mr. SALZBERY, a Syrian, from mount Lebanon, was introduced to the House in Syrian costume,—loose-flowing, dark red robe, grille of coloured silk with ink horn stuck in it, and white figured vest. He described how, three years ago, he had come on a visit to this country with an English gentleman; had missed a little money, and on his return home, built a school for the poor, and he had returned to his country to see what could be done. He had held many meetings in the south and west of Scotland, and Glasgow had helped him liberally. He had visited many places on the Clyde, and had then come to Edinburgh, where he had been received with great kindness. He mentioned that he has built one school and opened four in his native land. He described the teaching in these schools. Lately they had 120 people who had left the Greek Church in one day. There are about 400 scholars in his schools.—He sought help for these schools. For himself, he accepted no remuneration for his labours. He expressed, with profound feeling, his sense of the obligation upon him to do what he could to spread the truth which God had made to shine in his own mind; and thanked, with a most engaging warmth and fervour, the House, and many not in the House, for the kindness he had received at their hands. He spoke of English remarkably well; and there was a freedom and manliness about his manner which completely won the favour of the Assembly.

At the suggestion of Mr. Bonar, Mr. Lumsden of Barry, not being a Member of Assembly, was requested to give some account of the state of matters in Sweden, in order to introduce Mr. Lumsden, a minister from that country. Mr. Lumsden accordingly entered into a statement regarding the revival of evangelical religion which is going on in Sweden, and the persecution which is being endured.

Mr. Lumsden said that, from his ignorance of English, he was very reluctant to occupy the attention of the House. He could not express the joy with which he had entered this Assembly that Church which had so boldly avowed the King of the crown of thorns to be her only Head and King. He entreated for himself and his country to be remembered by the brethren he addressed before a throne of grace. He hoped that, through the prayers of Christians in this and other countries for them, the present state of oppression in his native land would soon be made to cease.

Mr. Bonar introduced the Rev. Mr. FISCH of Lyons. Mr. Fisch described the efforts in which he had been engaged for some years in the work of evangelization in Lyons. He brought out two thousand people from Popery. He gave an animated and interesting description of a station in a turbulent suburb of Lyons, which had been begun at first some years ago under the fostering care of the Free Church, and which he asked the Assembly to take again under its charge. Such persecutions as occur in France are due to the local authorities, instigated by the Jesuits. The Emperor wills that they should have religious liberty. But much depended on his life. Their churches might soon be shut, and their labours suppressed. Now was the time for pressing their work. He begged them to accede to his request regarding the station in Lyons, and concluded by expressing his hope that as many

as possible of the members of Assembly would endeavour to be present at the great conference to be held in Paris on the 22d August next.

Mr. Bonar gave in the Report of the Colonial Committee. The Report sketched the origin and progress of the Colonial Scheme, which has now gained such magnificent dimensions. All over the field of the colonies there was a remarkable extension of Presbyterian organization. It was evident also, that the tendency of the Colonial Churches to lean on the mother Church was rapidly diminishing. Of the enterprise and liberality of colonial congregations many cheering instances were given. The Church in Canada have at this moment a committee engaged in looking out for a proper person to be sent out, as the commencement of a foreign mission of their own. As to the resources of the Colonial Scheme, the Committee has this year paid off £1,700 of its debt, and they have £1,000 in hand, to send out more ministers as fast as they can be procured. Neither had their operations been contracted in order to put them into this position. Particulars of the labours of the committee during the past year were entered into. Notice was taken of the provision made for the spiritual wants of Presbyterian soldiers in the Crimea. The Report referred to that department of the Committee's operations which refers to the Continent of Europe, thus completing the *vidimus* of a system of efforts whose extent, success, and promise, may well inspire energy, thankfulness, and hope. The Convener finally pressed upon the House the remarkable fact, that Spain is now open for the gospel, and that the French alliance affords a special opportunity for seeking the good of that great country.

The Assembly spent much time in discussions relating to the Sustentation Fund.—Strenuous exertion is to be put forth to raise the Dividend to a minimum of £150.

The morning of June 1st, was set apart to solemn devotional exercises. On motion of Dr. Candlish the following deliverance was come to:

"The General Assembly, acknowledging the love which God in His providence is addressing to the nations and Churches of Christendom, to humble themselves under His mighty hand, and deeply feeling that this Church has in many ways grieved His Holy Spirit and provoked His righteous displeasure, earnestly exhort all the people of this Church to give themselves much to prayer and humiliation in connection with the judgments of God which are so manifestly abroad in the earth, and the sins, both national and personal, which have caused, and are causing, His hand to be stretched out still; and further the General Assembly regard with much satisfaction the attempts made by many godly men in this land to awaken a spirit of prayer in connection with the Lord's providential dealings among the nations and Churches of Christendom; and in particular, the General Assembly earnestly commend to the attention of the ministers and members of this Church an appeal on this subject, recently issued under the title of a Proposal for United Prayer, being an address prepared by a respected brother of this Church. And the Assembly express an earnest hope that this appeal may meet with very general acceptance among the families and in the closets of the people of God in the land."

Gentlemen in Glasgow and vicinity, have placed upwards of Sixty thousand pounds at the disposal of the Assembly, for the endowment of a College in that city. The offer was accepted and the thanks of the Assembly were conveyed to the donors for their munificent gift.

The Foreign Missions' Report shows that the Mission in India is prospering, notwithstanding that sickness and death make frequent and fatal inroads upon the Missionaries. The books most frequently read by the students of the Hindu College, are the writings of Dr. Chalmers. Within the last 12 years, a territory equal to the half of Europe, has been added to the British Crown—and so large is the population of India that on an average 500 of the inhabitants die per hour!—These circumstances are urged as laying a stupendous responsibility upon Christian Churches.

The Report on Temperance being brought up an animated conversation on that subject ensued; and the Assembly expressed thankfulness for the benefits resulting from the Public House Act, and instructed the Committee to embrace every opportunity for obtaining measures still more stringent. The Assembly also petitioned Government against the Opium trade.

On the subject of Education, the Assembly agreed to petition Parliament against Mr. Stirling's bill, and in favour of the national scheme brought forward by the Lord Advocate. This was agreed to without a vote.

The Report on the Educational Scheme shows that the number of Schools in connexion with the Church is 605—teachers 642—pupils 75,904. Last year the number of pupils was 71,000. The revenue of the Education Scheme is £13,460.

Dr. Hanna was appointed Convener of the Home Mission Committee, in room of the late lamented Mr. Sym.

Many members of the Assembly gave strong utterance to their opinions and feelings against the revolting Marriage Affinity Bill; and it was determined to petition both Houses of Parliament against it. They petition also against the Maynooth Endowment.

After some formal business, and a short and impressive address from the Moderator, the fifteenth Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland was dissolved to meet again at Edinburgh on May 22nd, 1856.

General Abstract, showing the whole sums raised for the various objects of the Free Church of Scotland, for the year from 31st March 1854 to 31st March 1855.

Table with 2 columns: Item and Amount. I. SUSTENTATION FUND £100,407 17 4. II. BUILDING FUND 34,175 12 2 1/2. III. CONGREGATIONAL FUND 85,910 1 2 1/2. IV. MISSIONS AND EDUCATION 61,737 8 8. V. MISCELLANEOUS 25,759 15 3. TOTAL £308,950 9 8.

New Books.

THE SELECT WORKS OF THE REV. THOMAS WATSON, comprising his celebrated Body of Divinity, and various Sermons and Treatises. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Halifax: A. & W. MacKinlay. 1855.

Watson wrote much on many subjects, but in this one volume we have the cream of all his writings. "The Body of Divinity" has stood the test of two centuries, and is at the present day more popular and, if possible, more highly prized than at any period since its first publication. Simple, earnest, and practical, it attracts and charms the attention, informs the judgement and persuades the will. Many of our readers may think it dry and unprofitable toil to read the theology of "two hundred years ago"; but let them at least put it on trial; and we are very much mistaken if, after reading Watson, they will not, instead of saying it is dry, call it a mine of precious and exhaustless wealth.

The "Body of Divinity" contains a very thorough exposition of the Shorter Catechism. A careful study of this work would enable a Calvinist to give a ready reason for the faith that is in him. Besides the "Body of Divinity" this volume contains seven sermons and five "treatises," each of which, after its way, merits the highest praise. For our own part we could dwell with peculiar delight on all of them, and cull precious gems of religious truth from each; but we would particularize the discourse on "The Beauty of Grace" and the "Farewell Discourse on his ejection." This latter brings vividly to our remembrance the evil and disastrous days on which Watson had fallen. A Presbyterian and a Royalist, he won neither security nor advancement whether a Charles or a Cromwell was at the head of affairs. He narrowly escaped death when Christopher Love suffered. He was ejected like so many other worthies for "non-conformity" and suffered much during the reign of both Charles II, and James II, for that was the day when rulers were the patrons of evil doers and a terror only to the good. Drunkenness, debauchery, profligacy, and every species of impiety were smiled upon by King and courtier. That was the day when fashionable religion consisted in worrying dissenters and hating "Presbyterians." Insolence, narrowest bigotry, servility, meanness and cruelty characterized alike kings and lords and bishops. No wonder that the upright, pious, and singleminded Watson fared ill at such a time! He died in peace shortly after the "glorious Revolution."

The Body of Divinity was published after his death. It has passed through many editions in England and Scotland and has been warmly commended by both Episcopalians and Presbyterians of the highest note. The volume before us is beautifully got up—and is to be had at a price that puts it within the reach of all.

PRECES PAULINE, or the Devotions of the Apostle Paul. New York: Carter & Brothers. Halifax: A. & W. Mackinlay.

Works devoted to the elucidation of the life and writings of the "Apostle of the Gentiles" occupy now a very marked niche in literature. None other of the sacred penmen has occupied so much of the attention of the Biographer and commentator—none other has called forth such an amount of erudition and research. To Christians, old and young, these writings have been a storehouse of religious truth, of consolation and eternal hope. Paley, Conybeare and Howson, Hodge, Haldane, and Chalmers have rendered invaluable service in this respect; and the book we have before us, the "Prayers of the Apostle Paul," occupies a beautiful and interesting field of its own, distinct from any other work that we have seen. The book is written in a style of charming, eloquent simplicity. We cordially commend it to the attention of our readers.

THE DEAD IN CHRIST. Their state: present and future. By John Brown D. D. New York: Carter & Brothers. Halifax: A. & W. Mackinlay.

Who has not lost a friend! Alas, all of us must mourn and be mourned for. The object of this little book is to bring comfort to such as are bereaved of Christian friends, and it is little more than an expansion of the words, "I would not have you to be ignorant concerning them that are asleep." "Comfort one another with these words." The author shows that the Christian is asleep in Jesus, absent from the frail diseased body, to be present with the Lord. What a contrast between such well grounded hopes as these and the gloomy fears that rendered thrillingly pathetic the elegies of ancient Greece and Rome, and even of Modern England! "He sleeps unhearing in the hollow earth, the long, long, endless sleep from which she never shall awake," says the Grecian. "The Lamb leads her by fountains of living waters and God wipes away all tears from her eyes," says the Christian.

Each in his narrow home forever laid, The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep, says the poet. "This mortal shall put on immortality," says the Christian. We commend the little volume before us particularly to those who "mourn departed friends." Dr. Brown, the author, holds a high place among the ornaments of the Scottish pulpit.

MR. CARTER, a Temperance lecturer, in the employ of the "National Division of the Sons of Temperance," lectured in the Division Room to a pretty large audience, on Thursday and Friday evening last. He is a fluent speaker, and we hope he may do some good.

To Presbyterians.

BRETHREN,—Two of your highest Courts are (I see by the public prints) to meet in Halifax, almost simultaneously, and it is to be hoped, and by not a few it is expected, that the occasion will be embraced to initiate a movement which will show that, amid other things to engross attention, the "mind that was in Christ" is not forgotten. That mind was thus indicated, and I earnestly hope that it may not be kept out of sight.

"I have given unto them the words that thou gavest me, and they have received them. As thou hast sent me into the world so have I also sent them. I pray that they all may be one, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."

Compare, then, brethren, with the earnestness of a Saviour's prayer, in view of a bloody death, the separation, estrangements, and direct antagonism existing among those of His followers who have really so little about which to differ, and ask yourselves, are we the office-bearers, are we the people, whom He sent into the world, commissioned to lead it to Him, through our brotherly love, and for whom He prayed so fervently, and in view of the Cross? The want of respect cannot fail to strike your minds, as it has the minds of the ungodly world around you, and who, in your failure, find a salve to conscience, in their own unbelief. Progress is the order in the Church, as in the world, and while there are so many who would kindle unhalloved fire on God's altar, and introduce practices, novel and world-pleasing, rather than for the edification of the body of Christ, and conformed to the good old way, for you awaits the glory, and for the Church under you, the benefit, of taking your stand on assured gospel ground, and giving to the urgent, and often thoughtless desire for novelty and change, its right direction. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one toward another."

Your differences, real or supposed, neither my time nor my ability will permit me to discuss. By and among yourselves this discussion must be held, not in the spirit of fancied superiority to each other, but as honest, candid, and earnest men, entrusted with the duty of doing all in their power to promote, on a sound scriptural basis, the unity of the body of Christ. Neither must it be in the spirit which makes yielding, in non-essential or doubtful points, necessary to coalescence. If undertaken with a design to display your own glory, or magnify each other's faults, it will come to naught. What is needed is a desire to do as Christ expects you, and in the spirit which He inculcates, and that none of you call any man on earth Master, but influenced by leadership, and actuated by a pure sense of duty, each of you should think for himself, and do what is right. The cause of religion and of Christ cannot, without injury, be made subservient to the understood, or expressed wishes of any man, or set of men, whatever their standing. The character of a Church is estimated by its independence, and it has ever been the glory of Presbyterianism that, following a leader right or wrong, is not one of its faults. So far as leading men follow Christ, follow them, but no farther.

I do not, brethren, advocate a thoughtless or hasty union, nor yet union for the mere name, but sincere, hearty, christian, and prayerful. Mature plans as thoroughly as you can, state frankly, for satisfaction and not fault-finding, objections entertained, advocate your own views temperately, and with a desire for mutual understanding, but do so not to gain time or induce an impression that you are in favor of union, but that you may be enabled, through God's blessing, to come together, and do what is right. The cause of religion and of Christ cannot, without injury, be made subservient to the understood, or expressed wishes of any man, or set of men, whatever their standing. The character of a Church is estimated by its independence, and it has ever been the glory of Presbyterianism that, following a leader right or wrong, is not one of its faults. So far as leading men follow Christ, follow them, but no farther.

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Who among you, then, brethren, will be the first step? and do what is your duty, and what your people expect, and what many are praying that they may live to see? For years they have been looking anxiously to your meetings for something more than mere denominational matters, and when session after session has closed, and in reply to the inquiry, what has been done for union? the answer has uniformly been nothing, deep and painful disappointment has been felt, followed by the remark, what do our ministers mean? Do they intend to keep us always apart from our brethren in Christ, because they will not unite? And suspicion has been cast upon that personal motives, on the part of those who have disappointed their expectations, have led to these repeated failures. The ministry of Christ should be above the suspicion of influencing the Church for personal motives.

Here, then, brethren about to assemble to deliberate on the best means of securing the prosperity of Christ's cause, is a subject worthy of your deliberations, and providence seems to have thrown in your way the opportunity of your simultaneous meeting, and in the same place, that something may be done. Who is there, then, among you, ministers and elders, that feareth the Lord, who will move in this business? Is it so, that there is not one among all who are about to assemble in the name of the Lord Jesus sufficiently earnest and independent to make the attempt? I cannot believe it, and the people will be slow to credit the assertion. They believe better things of their ministers, and are willing to give them all due credit for sincere desire that for the performance of their duty, as they know that Christ has enjoined it. Shall they be disappointed? Shall their desires and prayers (and these are neither cold nor few) remain unfulfilled? Shall their faith in their spiritual guides be shaken? In all earnestness, I say, brethren, God forbid. Let not the favorable season pass away unimproved. When you open your Courts in the name of Christ, let words of unity and love mingle with your prayers; let thoughts and desires for unity pervade your discussions, and let acts leading to union be performed, and how good and pleasant to the eye of that Saviour, of whose prayer the unity of brethren was the burden, will be your meetings and your partings.