# THE AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1867.

added soon be glad to come in, and we would be id to accept thein. (Applause.) Rev. Dr. Bentty offered a plan of Union, from we take the third article:

In further and more precise definition of the wo declare that we heartily receive and the Confession of Faith of the Westminster alopt the a logit the westminster a call of the westminster Assembly, with the accompanying Catechisms, as attining the systems of doctrine taught in the tole S reptures, accepting the same in their plain al lowing meaning, and in the listoric sense given them by the fathers in the churches which we re-

 $\frac{1}{P_{ov}}$  Mr. Mchaffy, (O. S.) advocated the adoption the course recommended in Dr. Davidson's paper. This Convention had no power to form an organic union, but Dr. Davidson's paper looked beyond, to a mercace upon the terms of union between those who were empowered to make a union.

Roy, Geo. Murshall, (O.S.) of Pennsylvania, conlevel the paper of Dr. Davidson as the best which al been presented.

Rev. Dr. McIlvaine, (O.S.) of Princeton College. New Jersey, advocated the reference of the document some time Convention to the Committee on a Basis [ Linton. Although this Convention had no authe great and widely felt. If our desire for union is grong enough, a union is practicable. Our Saviour. throug the night preceding his agony, prayed for the anity of his Church. The salvation of the world is endancered by the want of unity. We have not the actustomed to pray for, this unity in our pulits: but the speaker rejoiced to see that there was aw a decided movement towards union. The early Caristians " believed in the Holy Catholic Church" the universal Church, which included God's people; and to that in the end this movement looked. But what was more natural and expedient than for us to mite now with those with whom there is no good reason why we should not be united?

Both papers were then unanimously referred to the Committee which was sitting in the lecture-room of the church. At the suggestion of the President, the Convention spent two minutes in silent prayer, inhing Divine blessing upon the deliberations of the maintree during its session, after which the Rev. Dr. Booth, of New York, offered a fervent and im-

pressive prayer. Ray, Mr. McCune, (O.S.) of Ohio, read a paper upon the necessity of a union, which was referred to a committee consisting of one minister and one elder from each branch, with instructions to report an adliess upon the subject.

The chair announced the following gentlemen as that Committee :- Rev. Dr. Davidson and ruling elder William Getty, of the United Presbyterian ; Rev. Dr. Musgrave and ruling elder Charles D. Drake, of the Old School; Rev. Dr. Booth and ruling elder Elward Miller, of the New School; Rev. Mr. Bratton and ruling elder Thomas Smith, of the Reformed; Rev. J. H. Suydam and ruling elder James Pe-ters, of the Dutch Reformed Church; Rev. Dr. Mil er and ruling elder Robert Carr, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Blake, of Indianapolis, Indiana, then offered a praver in behalf of the labours of this important lomnitice.

Advarred with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Crawford, of Pinladelphia.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.-SECOND DAY.

After singing, Rev. Dr. Suydam, of the Reformed Datch Church, led in prayer.

A communication was read from the Episcopal Convention in session at the Church of the Epiphany stating that they would send a delegation to this lady to-morrow.

Rev. Dr. Smith, of New York, Chairman of the Committee to wait upon the Episcopal Convention held in the Church of the Epiphany, reported that they had extended salutations to them. They were received with much cordiality and fraternal feeling by the venerable Bishop Mcllvaine, of Ohio, Chairmun of the meeting, who wished their proposed union God speed

Prof. Smith said he wished the members of this boly could have heard the warm terms in which that bishop spoke of the doctrine and order of the Predevierian Church. At the close of the formal re-

they shall submit to the churches for their consideration and adoption. It being understood that this is not designed to interfere with the existing arrangements for re-union between two of the larger bodies represented in this convention.

2. As there is so much agreement among all the churches here represented in all essential matters of faith, discipline, and order, it is recommended that friendly and fraternal intercourse be cultivated, by interchange of pulpits, by fellowship with one an-other in social religious meetings, and by communion with each other at the Lord's table, subject to the

regulations of each particular branch of the church. 3. In case the above paper should be adopted, that a committee be appointed to lay this action of the Convention before the highest judicatories of the various branches of the Church here represented.

4. That the members of this Convention who may vote for the foregoing basis of union to be laid before the churches shall not thereby be regarded as being committed to advocate its adoption when laid before the branches of the Church respectively, but shall be free to act, according to the indication of Providence at the time.

The Convention then spent some minutes in silent prayer, at the request of the Moderator, and audible prayer was afterwards offered by Rev. Dr. Musgrave. The members of the Committee were called on to express their views on the report, Dr. Eagleson, the Chairman; opening the discussion

#### EVENING SESSION .- SECOND DAY.

After the introductory religious exercises, Rev. Dr. S. W. Fisher, of Utica, a member of the "Committee to prepare and Report a bond of Union," addressed the Convention.

#### ADDRESS OF REV. DR. FISHER.

Mr. Chairman, I would say that the foregoing report was hastily prepared, and in its style, perhaps, is not such a paper as this Convention should send forth. Perhaps, it may be well after we have discussed its principles, to have it re-committed and somewhat recast in reference to style, the same prin ciples being preserved. I have only heard of two points, or two sugges

tions amendatory to the Report, which I wish here to mention. To the statement in the first article (that the Scriptures are the word of God,) should be added these words: "the only infallible rule of faith and practice.".....

The second suggestion has been that in the terms of subscription, the Catechisms of the Church, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms should be added. I would state that the Committee took this ground in reference to the matter : that the ministers and elders of our churches, at least of two of the larger branches of the Church, are required simply to assent to the first article. We have, therefore, inserted subscription to the Confession of Faith, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and thought that might have been sufficient as a basis of union.

Now, in reference to this whole matter of union, as contained in this report and basis, there are two points especially on which we are all anxious. Presbyterianism rests on two pillars, so far as form is concerned; the first doctrine; the second its order. In the subscription to the Confession of Faith lies the doctrinal basis of the Presbyterian Church; for I may say, the faith of the Presbyterian Church everywhere, with few exceptions, not only in this country, but in Scotland, in Ireland, in Holland, and among the Reformed churches, is preserved and represented in it. I hold that there is a family likeness running all through these Presbyterian churches; and that likeness is produced by the Spirit of God, in connection with the great doctrines which Calvin enunciated, as did Augustine partially before him, and which we have since thrown into this special form.

I ought, perhaps, to go a little further, and state that any other basis of union will. I think, be re-jected very heartily by a large majority of the Pres-byterian churches everywhere. I do not believe hat, if any set of men attempt to put any of their philosophical definitions and explanations into any confession of faith, the people will assent to it or the ministry at large. If a man is willing honestly to say that he subscribes to the Confession of Faith, as containing the system of doctrine, taught in the Better the brethren crowded around them and took Holy Scriptures, according to the plain meaning of Holy Scriptures, according to the plain meaning of those terms answerable to his God, no man has a right beyond that to question him, except indeed his own Presbytery, to see whether he does believe it. If he holds the Confession as a term of subscription, that is sufficient. Of course we all believe in this body, that each Presbytery, when it licences or ordains a minister, it must examine him personally, in regard to his knowledge of these doctrines. I have heard it whispered, that it is necessary, in order to guard against the influences of the doctrines of Pelagianism and Armenianism, and those of a similar tendency, that you should erect additional barriers, in order to keep out those influences. You may erect the barriers, but you cannot keep them out. If men are insincere and wicked enough to subscribe to that declaration in terms, they will be insincere and wicked enough to subscribe to anything you may put before them. But, as to our basis of union, we are in this respect catholic, and mean to be. The Presbyterian Church is a church not of narrowness, but of liberty We believe in diversity of doctrine; in unity in the great fundamentals. And this diversity of doctrine produces stalwart men, strong men. Who wants to see the professors in Auburn, Newburg, the Union Seminary and Princeton, all cast exactly in the same mold, like men having every feature of countenance exactly the same? I would rather see one man with a Roman nose, and another a Grecian nose; they are men, and they will be good looking men too. I would rather in our Church, the Presbyterian Church, that one man should look at doctrine from one position; he may magnify it in that position another man takes it from another point of view, and these views combined constitute the grand whole No man is capable of looking all around these great truths, and of giving every one just their appropriate representation No man has ever had a mind great mough to do it in this world, uninspired of Godhim self Nor did Christ anywhere present them thus in their totality. Christ says, in one case, "Ye will not come to me that you may have life." In another, Ye cannot come except the Fatherdraw you. And thus these terms balance, and all harmonizes together. This Westminister Confession of Faith, we uppose, will be acceptable to all the branches of the Presbyterian Church, who are willing to come into the union; and thus we maintain the great doctrinal position of Presbyterianism, the great Calvinistic doctrines as distinct from all others. Then, as regards the form of union, we accept the form of government in the Presbyterian Chnrch; the government of the Chutch by Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assembly, the equality of the ministry, ÅС. Let me say that this Report is not a finality. We want to get at principles, looking to each other for assistance, and see whether on these general princi-ples fairly accepted we cannot agree. There are difficulties in the way. I will tell you the grand diffi-culty with the two largest churches it just this, nothing else, and that is the assurance that both parties are heartily sincere, and have periest confidence in each other. That is the grand difficulty, in my view. In accomplishing a union like this, there are sacrifices to be made; and let me tell you they are not all on one side. There are things which we are willing to forget and forgive. They exist in history; and there they are, difficulties in the and place agreed on, and proceed with all convenient despatch in an attempt to form a basis of union, ac-tor ling to the principles of this report, which basis

everything but the real truth of God to it. I take sion. To the second article, on the doctrinal basis, this ground-I speak for myself in this matter-that Dr. Henry B. Smith offered an amendment, designed where churches conform to each other in doctrine, as an explicit statement of the sense in which the in discipline, in order, in the main, then to be separated is solism; because there is nothing that keeps them apart but either the want of confidence, or else the ambition of individuals.

I have said there were difficulties, and they are on both sides. Now, I am perfectly willing for one, and I think my brethren are, to believe that our Old School brethren are pretty nearly orthodox,— pretty nearly. (Laughter) If I wanted to insist upon it rigidly, I would want to bring them up to a point they have not reached yet. In regard to cer-tain great moral questions, we would like to know if they are right in that. One of these God has removed out of the way; and we will pass that by. It looks to me at this final moment that the provi dence of God has brought the two larger branches of the Church gradually together. He has eliminated from the branch of the Church with which I am personally connected, certain elements which were discordant elements, which unquestionably gave us trouble, and which gave our brethren of the other branch great occasion for censure. I feel that.

know it to be so. In reference to that, God has taken them out of the way. In regard to our mode of conducting our general ecclesiastical matters, God

has brought us to a union in that matter. And now, accepting the same basis of faith and the same communion, what keeps us separate but a want of confidence, and the old prejudices away back; and those prejudices the grace of God will remove Why, God's grace can teach a man, and enable him to do almost anything in this world, in the way of the removal of prejudice.

Let me say a word in regard to what it is, has made us come together. I look back to the great revival in 1857 and 1858. That was God's work, beginning first of all in that union meeting in Fulton street, New York; and it went on from town to town, from church to church. We filled our largest churches not only with men of one, but of all denominations. I sat in the First Church in Cincinnati, when that large church was crowded, and we had gathered together Methodists, Presbyterians of both schools Episcopalians and Baptists. I remember when General Mitchell had the chair, and made a noble address to that congregation, and Bishop McIlvaine followed n a noble prayer. And this spirit, morally speaking, has infected us. No; not infected us. I will not use such a term. It has been breathed into the hearts of Christian men ; and thus, God, through the men of God, the working material in our churches, has worked. I believe the providence of God by his Spirit, will carry it on, though all the theologians in the world combine their speculations against it. (Cheers.) Think how the Young Men's Christian Associations in this land further this great object. Think how, in the late war, God brought us together, whether we would or not. Maybe some of our good friends, who only love to sing the old paims of David, down on the battle-fields beside a dying soldier, who asked to have sung for him, "Rock of Ages cleft for me," have learned to sing that sweet

iymn, and felt it to be as good as a psalm. I feel that the cause of Christ is involved here. believe this work is the cause of Christ; and let me tell you, my friends, if there was ever a time when union was needed, it is now. The theological controversies of this country spread over one hundred years; they culminated when I was a boy. I was the son of a minister, heard these discussions, and probably read more of the controversy in ten years, than men now will read in a thousand, unless times change. Then congregations were assembled to hear men discuss fine points of doctrine, like the point of a needle. Can you get up such discussions now? No. The men who suppose they can do it are living far back; that time is past, We have stopped considering those points, at least for our generation; and all those discussions, if kept up from this time to the Millenium, I do not think will throw much ight on the doctrines, or on the problems of philoso

Now, then, God is pressing us up to the work. In the first place, he has made our land the land of lib-erty, to gather in here millions upon millions of every land. We have got to meet them; and it is the great question which presses upon the minds of every one in God's Church, How they shall be saved. Millions of Romanists; millions of infidel rational-ists; four millions of blacks enfranchised; millions in our large cities throng our streets, and pressing to destruction; it is to save them that the Church of God must unite and labor. Think, is this the time for the Church to be tithing the little mint and anise, and cummin; is it now that upon minor points it should stand aloof and say, I am holier than thou, and know more about the Scriptures than thou? Is this the time for work like this? No. It is time for every Christian man and woman to carry on God's work. It is time for ministers not to harp on minor points of doctrine, but to preach the great doctrine of Christ crucified to the hearts of men, that will issue in their salvation, while philosophy alone would be entirely without good effect. In this scheme for union, we seek the good of the Presbyterian Church. I speak of us altogether feeling the pulse of Christian unity running through this entire Convention. I have rejoiced to meet with brethren whom some would call narrow-minded, who have hearts as large as ever labored in Christ's cause. The Presbyterian Church in these United States occupies the position for active labor and use-fulness, if she will devote her energies to it, superior to that of any other denomination of Christians whatever. She has the best order; she has, we be-lieve, the most perfectly expressed system of doctrine; she has piety; she has freedom; she has the intellect in her ministry and a cultivated intellect in her laity; and the real power, if she has the mind to put it forth. equal, if not superior, to any other Church in the land. But if we are to stand aloof, and spend half of our energies in planting a Church there, and another, differing a little, near by, and another, and another, making three or four churches, differing on minor points—saying, there is the Old School; there is the New School; there he Reformed; there the United; there the Dutch Reformed, we try to occupy the energies of five men, where one can do the work. I believe we are guilty before God, and He will call us to answer for Union is strength. We need this unity for influ-ence, East and West. I trust God will bring it about in His own good time. I do not feel that man can do it, it will come in time, if not just now. When it does come then we can stand up among our united brethren of the Methodists, the Baptists, the Episcopalians, and say to them, "We are not divided upon these little matters; we are united as you are." We are strong in faith; strong in discipline; strong to work for the Master; and when the hour comes, I trust it will be found that this Church in which I was born and reared, and where I have spent my life, will be filled with the Spirit of God and crowned with glory. We may say of our country, in reference to her future prospects, when

New School body received the Confession of Faith, and in response to recent aspersions upon the or thodoxy and sincerity of its subscription. By this amendment there was added to the word historical "that is the Reformed or Calvinistic sense."

This was discussed with great animation, the opposition coming mainly from the Old School ranks. most of them protesting that they wanted nothing but the Confession as a basis.

On Friday morning, the delegates from the Episcopal Convention were received with enthusiastic demonstrations, and nearly the entire morning session was spent in hearing addresses from Bishops Mcllvaine and Lee, and Rev. S. H. Tyng, Jr., with responses from Drs. Hodge and Stearns, inter mingled with the recitation of the Apostles' Creed the Lord's Prayer, singing the Doxology and prayer by Rev. John Hall, D.D., late of Dublin.

Friday afternoon was spent in discussing the plan of union. Dr. Musgrave favored Dr. Smith's amendment, and Dr. Hodge made a conciliatory address in which he said that the Confession of Faith and not a philosophical view of the meaning should be regarded as a sufficient doctrinal basis.

The amendment was agreed to, and the section as amended passed, by a vote of four in favor to one against, as follows:-For the amendment. New School, Old School, United Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed. Against it, Reformed Presbyterian. A proposal to include the Larger and Shorter Catechism as a part of the basis was negatived, the New School voting Aye, and the Old School No. Section three was then adopted without amendent

Section four was amended and adopted. Section five, alter various ineffectual attempts to mend, was stricken out. It was as follows:

That the sessions of each church have the right to determine who shall join in communion in the particular church committed to their care. The resolutions recommended by the Committee

vere then considered and the first was adopted. From the second, the recommendation to practise intercommunion as a preparation for Reunion was stricken out.

The remaining resolutions were adopted. [See first page for an ended Basis of Union.] Also, reso-lutions providing for a day of humiliation and prayer, in view of the divisions in our body, (first l'hursday in May next,) and for the holding of District Conferences for the promotion of the union spirit in various cities. An address to the different branches of the Presbyterian Church, urging the importance and necessity of union was read and approved.

After passing the usual votes of thanks, the Convention adjourned with devotional exercises at 11 P. M., to meet again in November of the coming year at Xenia, Ö.

MARRIED.

COBOURN-GAUNT.-At 526 Wharton Street, Nov. 11th, by the lev. J. Garland Haus er, Thomas I. Cobourn to Miss Isabella Rev. J. Garland Hausser, Tho Gaunt, both of this city.

# Special Actices.

City Evangelization.—Philadelphia Tract and Mission Society, office, 1334 Chestnut Street. The One Hundred and Eigh ty-seve th Union Meeting in behalf of this Society will be h-id in the First Moravian clutch, Franklin and W od Streets, on Sab bath evening, 17th inst., at 7½ o'clock. Several addressees will b made. Public invited. JOSEPH H. SCHREINER. nd Eigh hald io

The Presbytery of Stenben will hold its next stated needing at Corving, on Tuesday, Dec. 10th, 1867 at 4 o'clock, P. M. The churches are reminded that the assessment of 8 cents per meeting at corving, on Theshiy, bec. forn, foor at voices, trans. The churches are reminded that the assessment of 8 cents per church member is payable at this meeting of Presbytery. There will be a meeting of Ellier on Wednesday evening, to which all the Elders of all the churches are invited. W. A. NILES, Stated Clerk,

Corning, N. Y., November 8th, 1867.

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thea by the hand.

On motion of Rev. Dr. Tyng, of New York, a committee of five was appointed to wait upon the Pres-byterian Convention to extend their salutations.

Hon. C. D. Drake, one of the deputation, being cillel on by the Chair, came to the platform and stoke in a general way upon the desirableness of Re-

R.v. M. Schenck moved that the committee, who waited on the Episcopal clergy at Epiphany Church, be directed to present a written report, to be incorporated in the proceedings of the Convention, which was agreed to.

Prayer was offered by Robert Carter, elder, (O. S.) <sup>on</sup> of the deputation. I. v. Dr. Suydam, of the Reformed Dutch Church,

sul it was deemed expedient at the last session of their Synod not to be present at the Presbyterian Convention, the reasons for which were not generally unterstood. There had for a time been an effort to enjurge the word "Dutch" from the title of the Church. It was the Classis of Philadelphia that was represented in the Convention. The General Synod had not sent delegates here. The Reformed Dutch much had a continental history, and, like Presbyteanism, had opposed Romanism-the Reformed Datch in Holland, the Presbyterians in Scotland. It was proposed to strike out "Dutch," that there might be a union. The old title of "Reformed" was mechanistic enough to incorporate all Protestant distendom; but whether it could be sufficiently listinctive was what was to be considered. Who but admired the unity and wonderful strength of the man Catholic Church? Why not the disciples of "dyn unite and become one great and grand reli-gious holy? He proposed a united and general efbut in this direction, and felt confident it would suc-

#### The Basis of Union.

Rev. Dr. Eagleson, Chairman of the Committee to <sup>16</sup> Jure and report a bond of Union, to be submitted or consideration, by the various branches of the Preslyterian Church represented in the Convention, submitted the following:

1. An acknowledgment of the Scriptures of the and New Testament to be the Word of God. 2 That in the United Church the Westminster Confession of Faith shall be received and adopted, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the holy cintures.

While the committee recommend the foregoing basis of doctrine, they do not wish to be understood is mongoing the orthodoxy of the Heidelberg Cateand the canons of the Synod of Dort.

<sup>3</sup>. That the United Church shall receive and adopt the Presbyterian form of Church government.

The Book of Psalms, which is of divine inspiration, Is well adapted to the state of the Church in all ages and circumstances, and should be used in social worship; but, as various collections of psalmody are und in the different churches, a change in this re-

that shall not be required.

. That the sessions of each Church shall have the the determine who shall join in communion in the particular church committed to their care.

The committee recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

1 That we unite in requesting our respective charches in their supreme judicatories, to appoint a committee of five each, which shall constitute a joint

this union really takes place and Christ is enthroned

"Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise."

We will see our united Presbyterian Church preared to effect more for the glory of our country than all the statesmen of the earth could do.

(Cheers. Dr. Wylie, of the Reformed Church, followed in a very able detence of the report which we will give in full in our next.

We are unable to give a full report of the remain-ing proceedings in this number. Suffice it to add that the interest rose steadily during the consideration of the Basis, the church being crowded with

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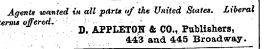
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