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## Contributors & Correspondents.

### NEW BRUNSWICK.

The Union Question in the Maritime Provinces—Coolness in Certain Quarters.

(From our own Correspondent.)

The question of Union, owing chiefly to the protracted discussion on the Marriage Affinity question, was crushed back to very near the close of the Synod's proceedings. It was at the evening sederunt of Wednesday of the second week that the Report on that question was presented. There was very little discussion, indeed there was very little room for any on it. There was no fault found with the basis, no expression of dissent as to any of the proceedings that have been taken so far. There is a feeling that all that we have to do for the present is to wait until the Churches in the Upper Provinces have settled the differences that have manifested themselves there, and when they are ready to advance we are. It is not to be concealed, however, that the zeal for Union has cooled down somewhat in some quarters. A member of the Union Committee grumbled a good deal about the want of courtesy, as he thought, shown by the representatives of the Upper Province Churches during the last year's negotiations, in the first place in refusing to come down here to a meeting of the Joint-Committee, and in the second place in the coldness shown to the Maritime Provinces and their interests in the said negotiations, when said Committee did meet in Montreal. There was also complaint made that no official information had been sent as to the action of the Assembly which met in Hamilton in that matter, though there was ample time to communicate, it was alleged. He concluded from these tokens that there was not so much cordiality on the part of either of the churches as will secure a satisfactory blending of interests in case an incorporation be carried out very soon. The other members of the Committee took quite a different view of most of the aspects presented. Several of them protested that they saw no want of courtesy on the part of the representatives of the other Churches and no lack of interest in the Churches of the Maritime Provinces. And they pointed to the returns made by Presbyteries and Sessions with reference to the basis proposed and the desirability of Union on that basis as evidence of the cordiality of our own Church in the project. Some other members of Synod, however, sympathized somewhat with the grumbings which were expressed by the brother above referred to, and it was stated that convictions are growing on the minds of some that the members of the Kirk Synod down here, or at all events some of them, are not hearty and honest in seeking incorporation. The grounds of dissatisfaction are not of such a kind as to be stated in a definite manner, but they are such as to create suspicion and cool the zeal that once was felt in the question. The Report, however, was unanimously approved, the Committee re-appointed and instructed to continue the negotiations during the year as in their wisdom they may think best.

The action of the Kirk Synod which met at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, on the question I take from the Island Presbyterian. It may be vouched as a semi-official report.

"Well on in the evening the report of the Union Committee was called for and read. Being a subject of too grave importance to be closed that evening, after some conversation, the final deliverance was postponed till next day. The desire for Union on equal terms was expressed, by every one who spoke, and the resolution maintained, that, if by any mischance, the negotiations should not arrive at a favorable issue, the obstacles and blame, should not consciously lie at the door of this Church Court. But let us pray that He who seemed so manifestly when the matter was initiated, to have begun the good work may now perform it. The obstacles are not such as may not be cleared away, if there is on the part of both parties a willing mind. As we have never failed to believe that, this union would, under the divine blessing, be for the good of men and the glory of the great King and Head of the Church, so we still do not despair. Nay, we think amid discussion and trial, that we are, even by such means coming to the successful end." Then further on I read:—"The Union question was resumed, and progress reported. The Com-

tee was re-appointed and the instructions they had previously received them, continued. From another report that I read it appears that one of the speakers referred with considerable warmth to the action of the General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church, in demanding some understanding about the Headship of Christ. He averred with great energy, that if any attempt were made to have that which is distinctively Free Church in its bearing, inserted in the Basis, that no union would ever take place. Why, he asked, should the doctrine of the Headship be emphasised any more than other doctrines, which are of equal, if not greater importance. I presume the phrase as it appears in the above extract, about the desire for union on "equal terms," bears on the point referred to by this speaker.

From the account I have here given your readers will observe that the Churches down here, though comparatively smaller than their sisters further west, are not a whit less resolute in asserting their individuality in the negotiations. Perhaps the smaller a body is, the more sturdy it will be in not being ignored, or being thrown into the shade.

St. John, 16th July, 1872.

### NOVA SCOTIA.

Introductory—Denominational Figures—  
"Old School Blues"—A Good Record—  
Romish Tactics—Personal.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Mr. Editor,—As you are desirous of making your journal a sort of mouth-piece for the Presbyterianism of the Dominion, it is but right that you should have a few words from this Province, in which the Presbyterian element is so large and influential. Most of your readers are already acquainted with the religious and educational features of Nova Scotia, but in commencing to furnish a few notes of the work done here, it may not be amiss to give a sort of bird's-eye view of the position. Our province has a population of about 880,000, of which one-fourth are Presbyterians. The Roman Catholics come next, forming about one-fifth. The Baptists have about one-sixth. The Episcopalians form a little more than one-eighth. The Methodists form about one-tenth. The remaining portion of the population is a mixed multitude. The inhabitants of this province are in many respects very much the same as the people of Ontario. They spring from the same stock, and to a large extent display the same features of character. The Roman Catholics, with the exception of a few French Acadians, are Irishmen of the most devoted type, ready to do anything the Church tells them, and to do anything the Church demands. The Episcopalians are, as a rule, a quiet going people, whose principal reason for being in the Church is that they were born there. During the past few years, however, the Ritualistic movement has created considerable commotion among them, driving many of their good members into other denominations, but leading the vast body of their people on towards Rome. The Methodists are zealous, earnest, accommodating; the Baptists are close communion of the closest type, while the Presbyterians are fair specimens of "Old School blues," strongly Conservative, fond of the "old paths," yet possessing great zeal and missionary enterprise. In every good work, whether it is "heading off" Romish moves for separate schools, fighting the battle of Sabbath observance, attacking King Alcohol, organizing Young Men's Associations, or Bible Societies, or contributing to any religious or benevolent enterprise, Presbyterians are ever in the first rank. The time was when the expression "cold dead Presbyterianism" used to be hurled at us by other denominations; but the time for that sort of thing has gone by, for the zeal and earnestness, as well as her liberality in supporting Mission work at home and among the heathen, compel even her enemies to confess, that whatever else she may be, our Church is neither cold nor dead. Great harmony exists among the various branches of the evangelical Church here. Each seems determined to provoke the other into love and good works, instead of wasting time in bitter controversy on points of minor importance. For this happy state of things the Young Men's Christian Associations deserve great praise, for they have been largely influential in producing it. During the past few years we have been kept in continual

watchfulness by the attempts of the Romanists to strangle our free school system, or to seize it as an engine for carrying on their own work. They have managed our politicians with wonderful tact. Sitting continually "on the fence," they have been ever ready to vault into the ranks of Liberal, or Conservative, Unionist, or Anti, just as the one or the other would bid highest for them. They generally manage to turn upon the winning side, and were it not that the great body of our people are sound on educational matters, we fear our school system would not long stand the attacks made upon it. But I must draw this to a close. Perhaps at a future time I may enlarge on some of the points now touched, as they may require.

There is not much stirring among us at this season. Still there are always changes which should be noticed. We are in great straits for laborers now, and are not above making a raid on our neighbours at times. You Western men come down to the sea in the summer, and some of our congregations attempt to persuade them that it would be better to stay by it all the time. The congregation of Antigonish seems to have convinced the Rev. P. Goodfellow of this, and he is to be inducted at an early day. He enters upon a most interesting and promising field of labor. The Rev. C. B. Pithado, formerly minister of Gloucester, has been inducted into the pastoral charge of Chalmers Church, Halifax. He is one of our most talented preachers, and enters on the work in this city with most encouraging prospects. Rev. Mr. Smith, of Galt, Ont., is at present in Halifax, enjoying the sea bathing and fresh air, and paying us in return with eloquent and earnest discourses. What a pity some men can only enjoy the sea air for one month in the twelve.

N. S.

Halifax, July 16, 1872.

### MODERATE DRINKING IN THE CHURCH.

The moderate use of intoxicating liquors by the professed followers of Jesus Christ, we think, ought to be looked upon as at least a "weight" that should be laid aside. The excessive use of such liquors is a sin; and therefore it excludes any man chargeable therewith from the kingdom of heaven. The moderate use of beverages that intoxicate impedes the progress of the Christian Zionward, though it may not necessarily bar the door of heaven against him when he arrives at the Celestial City. Moderate drinking on the part of the Christian, is a weight that ought to be laid aside, inasmuch as it so frequently, fearfully, and fatally tends towards immoderate drinking. It is an undoubted fact, that Christian people, throughout the various denominations of the church of God, do use, in moderation, intoxicating beverages. The custom is more prevalent in the Churches of Great Britain, than in the churches here. Many there are who oppose this custom, wherever found, both by precept and example. The number of such opponents, we rejoice to know, is being annually augmented. We do believe that the custom is bad, injurious, in its tendencies. By it the young are encouraged to look upon the wine, red in the cup, and to partake thereof; and afterwards, to their sorrow, disgrace, and ruin, they find that it "biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." The young begin in moderation; but do they all end there! The thousands that yearly go down to drunkards graves give the answer. Nor are the skirts of the church altogether free from stains in the matter. The Church of God is the light of the world and the salt of the earth; and as such she should arise in her glory and strength, and frown upon a custom, that may and does lead so many on to death and perdition. The Apostle Paul said "If meat make my brother to offend, I will not eat meat while the world standeth." The whole church of the redeemed on earth should say in the same spirit, "If the moderate use of a beverage that intoxicates, lead the young into so dangerous and often ruinous a pathway, we will not partake of such beverages while the world endures." Such would be a noble position to assume; even though there should be a difference of opinion as to whether it could properly be called self-denial or not. The Free Church of Scotland support two hundred labourers in the mission field in India. Let that church add to such benevolence her unbroken testimony against even the moderate use of alcohol, and she would stand much higher in true goodness before the world. Two years ago the American Presbyterian Church raised seven

and a half millions of dollars as a thank-offering to the Lord in remembrance of the "re-union" that had been so happily consummated. But were she to say today, by the unanimous consent of her members, that she ceases for ever the moderate use of the cup that may intoxicate, and put forth her united influence for the abolition of the evil, she would be doing a deed productive of as great good to men, as in raising so large a thank-offering.

The question of total abstinence, on the part of church-members, is receiving more consideration in the supreme courts of the various denominations of the church than hitherto it has obtained. Some church courts propose going so far as to constitute total abstinence a term of communion. Then when a man comes forward to unite with the church he must pledge himself not to use intoxicating liquors as a beverage. We think that the church should enact no such law. However desirable it may be that every church-member should be a total abstainer, we think it unwise on the part of any church to declare such abstinence a test of membership. If the church make that a test, there are many duties incumbent on the Christian that she may raise to the same relationship. When the church begins to create tests of membership, she scarcely knows where she will stop. Then she will soon have attendance at prayer meetings and missionary contributions, &c., terms of communion. Let the church enforce the performance of such duties with all the moral power she has; but the moment she attempts to use more than moral power, and enacts stringent laws, she becomes weak. Let the church ask her members to be total abstainers, let her plead with them, so as to reach this end; but if wise she will enact no law on the matter. It would be a happy sight to see Presbyterians and Prelatists, Calvinists and Armenians, Pædo-baptists and Immersionists, lay aside their badges, and drop their shibboleths, and present an unbroken front to the common enemy.

AMCS.

### A SUGGESTIVE QUESTION.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN:

Sir,—There is a question that I should like to see ventilated in your paper. As far as I am aware it has not received the attention that Christian zeal and insight in these days demand. I am not very sure that I have the ability to place it before your readers in the clearest and most exact language. Let us try the following. Believing that pride and selfishness are fundamental sins by man—believing that Christ came into the world to destroy selfishness—does the common conscience of worldly men and depraved apprehend the general mode of action on the part of Christians, especially of ministers, as unselfish.

Let us take the following illustration. A poor lad is moved in spirit to devote himself to the Christian Ministry. His career is somewhat as follows: His talents and laudable ambition carry him through his preparatory course with respectability, yea, high approbation. He is called by a country church; he works hard, becomes a popular, rising young man. After a few years he is called to a town congregation. After a few years in this new large charge, he is called to fill one of the highest positions of the Church. He is, in short, a highly successful man—a deservedly esteemed brother.

My question is, have we anything in the life of this man by which the world can judge that he was anything else than a polished diamond of intense, highly wise selfishness? He is not selfish. The widow and the orphan bless him. The world does not know this, for the simple reason that he not a Pharisee.

It seems to me that a thoroughly selfish man can do all that zealous, enterprising clergymen do. Is it not a fact that selfishness has assumed more gigantic proportions in the Church than ever it has been able to do elsewhere? He is a fine looking fellow, the devil, when he becomes an angel of light. Let us look at Catholics and Protestants in the broad eye of the vulgar, ignorant multitude. The Catholic is clothed with humility; his robes are official, not personal; his indulgences in worldly pleasures are all taken upon the sly. The Protestant blazes before the world with the force of a bull's-eye lantern—fine, superfluous gentleman,—gallant wife and daughters; free company; good times generally. Within, things are the very reverse of outward appearances. Very delightful—very Christian.

Suppose that the Church had all the dear, delightful men of God every way comfortable, would this show that the Church was about to convert the world? If it is melancholy to see men preaching the Gospel, smoking and doing other naughty things, it would certainly be funny to see Paul before you on the road, a dapper little man with stovepipe and kids. Whilst I lay aside the Romish trunk, am I to take the opposite to present to the world as the model outward Christian man? If this question is gone into, the miserable question of the genteel poverty of Protestant clergy will have to be discussed. I know of no genteel teachers of religion in the whole world, save amongst Protestants, struggling to live—after a certain style.

Yours truly,

P. Q.

DANCING.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Mr. Editor.—What do you think of promiscuous dancing? It has come to be very fashionable among certain classes in the various denominations of the Christian Church, I have heard it defended by even ministers of the Gospel. They become even philosophical on the subject, and say that dancing is but graceful motion and that therefore essentially there is nothing wrong in it. It is argued that where a few friends, especially young ones, are met to spend a few hours together there is nothing wrong, nor out of place in having a friendly dance. It is better, it is said, that those idiotic games that figure so largely on such occasions—far more becoming and far less likely to be abused. Is that so Mr. Editor? Dancing parties are becoming very common among the more prosperous Presbyterians, and the fun is often kept up till far past the small hours. Is that all right? My idea is that it is a sort of settled thing, both among saints and sinners that this tripping on the light fantastic toe is not becoming in those who profess godliness. It is frivolous and befriending to a great extent, even when it is not, as in many cases it is a great deal worse. I suppose I shall be denounced as a man-woman if I hint that people up to two or three or four o'clock in the morning at such work are little likely to be in such a frame as to pray for God's blessing on what they have been doing. If it is allowable for members of the church, is it also allowable for ministers? I know of no hint of there being one law for the pulpit and another for the pew. What is right for the occupant of the latter is right also for the occupant of the former. I wonder if some of our fashionable Presbyterians think so. How would they like to have their pastor Dr.—or Mr.—to be seen capering about like a lunatic monkey for a couple of hours at a nice party of the brethren and sisters of the church? Would it be all right? Elders I know do it. So do Sabbath School Teachers both male and female. So do deacons, and so do managers and their children. There is no reason if it is right, why they should not all indulge. The question is, Is it right?

Could you by any sketch of fancy imagine Jesus Christ waltzing? I could not. And are not His people to be in the world as He was? I do not regard myself as a sour faced canting hypocrite, or anything approaching to it, but I should like to have this subject ventilated thoroughly. My own impression is that its prevalence in the churches is at once a cause and a symptom of spiritual decay. If it is all right, however, I have some boys and girls that mean to go into it thoroughly. They won't get my consent. But at the same time it is very difficult to hold one's own against them. Why, one will say, "I went to Mrs. so and so's party, and there was any amount of dancing both before and after supper, and every body knows she is just Mr.—'s model Christian, busy with clothing societies, and this, that, and the other thing; surely she would not do what was wrong." I tell you, Mr. Editor, our ministers will have to look after this or there will be trouble of no ordinary kind from it. Whether is dancing or singing hymns worst? Let some of your clerical readers say, and oblige.

D. M. S.

Somewhere in the East there is a tree which is a non-conductor of electricity. The people know it, and when a storm comes, they flee toward it for safety. Beautiful picture of the Saviour! Beautiful emblem of the tree on Calvary! It is a non-conductor of wrath. Get underneath it, and you are safe forever.