

remote period were one. Should this take place, there will then be but one General Assembly, some ten or twelve Synods, and probably fifty or sixty Presbyteries. Small existing Presbyteries will be increased by a fusion of two into one; while large existing presbyteries will be reorganized to suit convenience and efficiency. The framework or composition of congregations can undergo no change; but courts of appeal will be upon a larger scale; all contributions will be made into larger general funds; missions will be more easily supported, and church authority over members of church courts will be strengthened. The foreign missions of the maritime provinces will immediately receive the support of six hundred additional congregations, and can thus be extended indefinitely. An efficient hall in Halifax is rendered more practicable by an increase in contributing congregations. In short, the effect would be a Presbyterian Church from the Atlantic to the Pacific—one in government, discipline, ministry and resources.

There are very few persons who will not say that such an alliance would not be desirable. People are generally ashamed to say that it is not desirable; for to say otherwise is to take credit for an amount of rancour and animosity that only a few of peculiar temperament possess. But it must be allowed that many say that it is desirable who don't desire it. These generally allege that it is impracticable. If by impracticable is meant that there are difficulties in law, form or constitution which really cannot be got over, then the term conveys a just idea, and receives, in this case, a just application. A union between a presbyterian and episcopalian church would be impracticable. If our church in this country were a part of the Church of Scotland, or the other bodies were parts of the U. P. and Free Churches in Scotland, then the proposed union would be impracticable, though it is to be hoped that more serious difficulties than these may be got over in some brighter and better time. The objection of impracticability applied to proposed unions, when such objections do not exist, is met by the fact of seven consummated unions in recent years between parties of similar origin and

character in Britain, Canada and Australia. Where the term is used to indicate that the obstacle is one of feeling, its use is surely improper. For if a man means by it that, all real obstacles having been removed, he does not wish for it—he does not feel desirous of it, or his feelings are such that he cannot control them sufficiently so as to consummate it, then the objection is of a peculiar nature—very cogent in its way, but very peculiar—very powerful, but not very respectable. It amounts to this: "I ought to respect you, I ought to love you, but I cannot." In view of innumerable parts of scripture which speak of believers as one happy and blessed family possessed of great spiritual and eternal unities, such antipathy is melancholy. Seemingly at least incompatible with Christianity itself, it is on a par with the resistance of the wicked heart to the gospel itself, which says: we *ought*, but we *cannot*.

Such a state of sentiment in extensive prevalence would be a fatal bar to union: for it could not rest upon a Christian foundation, and consequently *cordiality* ought to be viewed as a condition of the proposed union which takes precedence of every other. This alliance should be genuine. This reunion should be reconciliation. Here lies the chief difficulty; for it touches the deeper principles of the human breast, and strikes corruptions that the healing influences of divine grace can alone restrain or subdue. The four bodies constitute two great parties—one in alliance with the Church of Scotland, and the other separated from her communion. The one party has prided itself on the separation, and the other has resented it. It is humiliating for one party to think that its Shibboleth was but a name, and its glory a false and a foolish boasting; and it is difficult for the other to bury the remembrance of unfilial conduct and insulting language. The one party has much to forget, and the other much to forgive. The one party has to surrender a difference, and the other a distinction. The one has a duty to perform hard for pride, and the other hard for resentment. It is very dangerous for people in religion to rely upon their differences from their neighbours for moral character, and it remains to be