

THE PRESBYTERIAN

OCTOBER, 1871.

RESOLUTIONS were passed at last Synod to support the Mission to British Columbia by contributing to the amount granted by the Church of Scotland for operations there, and the Committee, chosen almost altogether from the Presbytery of Toronto, was recommended to obtain, if possible, the services of a missionary for Manitoba. The selection of the members of Committee from the western part of the Synod's bounds was judiciously made, as the north-west territory has been regarded with more lively interest by the mass of the population there than in other portions of the Provinces. We cannot think, however, that these Missions can very appropriately be classed under the head of the Foreign Mission Scheme. British Columbia and the North-West Territories are part of the Dominion of Canada—bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh—and possess, as a consequence, claims on our people which it is impossible to overlook, and which cannot be ignored.

Into Manitoba already emigrants are finding their way, and spreading far beyond the narrow limits of that small Province, which has been carved out of territories whose extent, fertility, and resources can scarcely be calculated. A field for labour is opening up here, to whose importance we cannot shut our eyes, and to neglect which would argue a criminal negligence on our part. It was given as a reason for inaction, by one of the speakers at the last Synod of our Church, that there was a prospect of a union taking place with those branches of the Presbyterian Church which had seceded some years ago, and who had sent a missionary to the field already. Such an expression of sentiment seemed to account to some extent for the nerveless, heartless, and unenergetic manner in which too many of the operations of our Church had

been conducted, as if there was so strong a desire on the part of some to hand over our Church to those who had so causelessly left it, that they would refuse to stretch forth their hands to strengthen her, and then make use of the plea of the weakness they themselves had caused to urge a junction with the other bodies. But the desirableness of union, or the disadvantages that may be expected from it, we have no intention of discussing at present, and have alluded to the matter now to meet a possible objection of some who might share the same views with the speaker to whom we have referred. Until it shall be accomplished, if it is accomplished, we, as a Church, must do our work without reference to others, and this is especially true of the North-West. There are enormous tracts there to be filled up; railway operations cannot long be delayed; thousands will flock in with the iron road and far in advance of it; are we to leave our countrymen destitute of religious ordinances; to grow up exposed to the evil influences of a pioneer life, from which the Gospel is excluded; and all this on the chance that others will be more alive to their duty than we appear to be? Have we so far degenerated from the virtues of our fathers that we will try to evade our own responsibilities and to throw them on others? Suppose these Union negotiations prove abortive. What position are we in? Are we prepared to acknowledge that we are unable for the task laid upon us; that we have discouraged students from entering our Divinity Halls; have warned off many who were prepared to join us; and had now abandoned a territory offering the most abundant opportunities for usefulness, because we depended on others to do our work? These are questions we must be prepared to answer in event of a failure. But suppose the Union to be