

NEWS OF THE CHURCH.

We have kept back our present No. for the purpose of including an account of the Union of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia and the Free Church of Nova Scotia. In our present account we shall avail ourselves in part of the report of the *Witness*.

MEETING OF SYNOD.

The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia met in Prince Street Church, Pictou, on Wednesday 3rd October, and was opened by sermon from the Rev. John L. Murdoch, late moderator, from Zech. iv. 6, "Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." In the introduction he described the circumstances in which these words were spoken. The Jews were then engaged in rebuilding the temple and the city Jerusalem. For 70 years they had lain in ruins. But it had been predicted that her desolations should cease. This was now fulfilled. But when the Jews had begun to build, their success stirred up the spirit of their adversaries. They at first insidiously proposed to unite with them in the work. When this proposal was rejected, they next hired counselors against them, through whose misrepresentations a decree of King Artaxerxes was obtained stopping the work. For a time their adversaries triumphed. At length Nehemiah obtained permission to build, and orders to the officers of Government to supply all materials necessary. Their success again excited the jealousy of their adversaries. But when God's time comes to work, he can render all the schemes of his adversaries the very means of advancing his cause. King Darius issued a decree ordering that necessary supplies should be furnished out of the King's revenue, and that if any man should alter this decree his house should be pulled down, and timber taken therefrom, and he hanged thereon. From this time opposition ceased. At this time Zechariah prophesied and was authorized to predict the speedy termination of the work. What though their adversaries might be mighty and powerful, yet their opposition would be fruitless. "Who art thou, O Great mountain, before Zerubbabel thou shalt

become a plain." &c. The text supplies the reason for their triumph. The work was God's, and would be carried on by his power.

Applying this to the Church of Christ, the text taught us, I. On what the existence, continuance and prosperity of the church was *not* dependant, and, II. On what it is dependant.

On the first general head the speaker remarked,

1. *The Church does not exist by human sufferance or permission.* It can and will exist in spite of every opposition from man. It has withstood every effort of the most powerful of mankind. The enemies of the Church have sometimes imagined that they were likely to be successful in overthrowing her; but He that sits in heaven has laughed, the Lord held them in derision. The church has been cast into the furnace, but it has been that she might come out purified. The bush burns but is not consumed.

2. *The church does not depend on the patronage of civil Governments.* Human institutions may depend for their existence upon human governments, but divine institutions court not the smiles of the great. It is the duty of all in high places to exercise their power in a consistent way for the cause of truth. But it is a glorious truth that when they are faithless to their obligations the church can exist and prosper without them. An idea has been sometimes prevalent with some, that without the patronage of the state, the church could not maintain its existence. Some ideas of this kind was on the minds of many Protestants at the time of the Reformation, a similar idea prevailed with many at the time of the Secession, and even at the time of the disruption such a glorious career as that of the Free Church without the patronage of the state, was not anticipated either friend or foe.

Statesmen have indeed professed to take the church under their care, but has commonly only been to bring it under bondage to their schemes of worldly policy. Can it be really religion that induces statesmen to support with eagerness, Presbytery or Episcopacy, Protestantism, or Popery—and a