

"A good part of the evening was occupied in reading the Minutes of the Joint Committees for 1858-9, together with Minutes of both Synods on this subject, and in general conference on topics suggested by the reading of the minutes.

"On Thursday the meetings were continued in the basement of the same church, from 11 o'clock, A. M., to 10 o'clock, P. M., (adjournment for meals excepted,) Rev. J. Bayne in the chair. The Conveners of the respective Committees laid before the meeting the Reports of Presbyteries and Sessions as forwarded to them by Clerks of Presbyteries, from which it appeared that all the Sessions of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia which had reported, (and in some Presbyteries every Session had done so) were favourable. The Sessions of the Free Church have very generally forwarded reports; nearly all favourable, and with few exceptions, unanimous. We have not been furnished with the details, which of course will be fully laid before the Synods in June, but the Committees felt that they were called to record their gratification at finding the expression of opinion so favourable, and in most cases entirely unanimous.

"Some time was occupied by the Resolution of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, passed at their last meeting, declaring it to be 'the right and duty of Sessions to exclude from Church fellowship, after faithful dealing, those who persist in the ordinary traffic in intoxicating drinks,' as being, in the opinion of some, the introduction of a new term of communion, since the commencement of negotiations, and therefore involving a difficulty in the way of a harmonious consummation. Mutual explanations ensued, when it appeared that the understanding of the Committees was, that nothing was to be considered 'ing on the United Body but the Basis of Union and the relative documents, as these have been agreed to by Presbyteries and Sessions.

"A Committee was appointed to procure Legislative provision, if necessary, for the security of congregational and Church property; and the Professors of the Seminaries were requested to prepare a statement of the course of study to be pursued in the secular department of the Seminary to be conducted, probably in Toronto, with suggestions as to the division of labour among the Professors, to report to the Joint Committees in time to enable them to hold a meeting before the assembling of Synod.

"Can the Committees recommend that the Union be consummated this year? If so will they recommend that the time shall be at the Synod Meetings in June? This was felt to be the great question. All the members concurred in the opinion that on a subject of such great importance to the interests of religion, and of Presbyterianism, while all unnecessary delay should be avoided, undue precipitancy should be shunned with equal care. The Committees, however, agreed unanimously to record their conviction that the state of the negotiations and the reports from Sessions are such, that they are of opinion that the Synods, at their approaching meetings in June, will be in a position to make arrangements for having the Union consummated at a special session, convened for that purpose, in the autumn

or fall of 1860, and agree to recommend accordingly.

"We have heard and now record this intelligence with great satisfaction, and in this joyful feeling we know that our readers generally will participate.—We will live in the expectation of seeing the consummation of this Union and the celebration of the Tricentenary of the Scottish Reformation fixed for the same week, and should this expectation be realized, that week will be one long to be remembered in the religious and civil annals of Nova Scotia."

MISSIONARY CONFERENCE.

We referred in our last number to the proposal of holding a Missionary Conference in Liverpool. The conference commenced on Monday, 19th March, and closed with a public meeting on Friday evening, attended by about 3,000 people, and presided over by the Earl of Shaftesbury. A number of topics, all of an important and practical character were discussed at the various sittings. The following were the general topics, which branched out into a great many particulars. At the meeting on Tuesday morning the subject was: "EUROPEAN MISSIONARIES ABROAD," and in the evening: "HOW BEST TO STIR UP, DIRECT, AND WORK THE MISSIONARY FEELING AT HOME." On Wednesday morning the subject was, "EDUCATION," and in the afternoon an adjourned discussion from preceding afternoon, as to how the Missionary feeling at home should be stirred up, directed, and worked. On Thursday morning the subject was: "NATIVE AGENCY," and in the afternoon: "HOW BEST TO OBTAIN AND QUALIFY CANDIDATES OF THE RIGHT STAMP FOR THE MISSION WORK." On Friday morning the topic was: "NATIVE CHURCHES." The concluding meeting was held on Friday evening, on which occasion powerful and eloquent addresses, were delivered by Lord Shaftesbury the Chairman, Major Davidson of Edinburgh, an old Indian Officer, and Lieut. Col. Edwardes of the Indian Army. Lieut. Col. Edwardes referred to the Indian revolt from the scene of which he had recently come, and pointed out some of the lessons which we ought to learn from that great war.

When we read the proceedings of this conference at which not only distinguished Ministers were present, but distinguished statesmen and soldiers, we cannot but feel that there is a great change since the time when, even in Ecclesiastical Assemblies, it was necessary to make a defence or apology for missions. No one now will be found professing to have connexion with any branch of the Christian Church, who will not admit the importance of Missions. Still much remains to be done. Congregations and professing Christians do not sufficiently feel the importance of the cause. Their views re-

quire to be enlarged, their zeal warmed, and their interest deepened. One of the most important topics discussed at the late conference, was as to the best means of awakening the interest of the church in missions. We believe we cannot better promote this object than by giving the following extract from an address by the Rev James Lewis of Leith, earnestly commending to the consideration of our readers, and especially of ministers and preachers, the suggestions which he gives.

"The time is past when the friends of missions should be satisfied with the results of the occasional impulsive movements of the pulpit or the platform, or be content that their cause should live upon the stimuli of eloquent advocacy. Till they can live and thrive upon common fare their health is precarious. We think we estimate at their proper value the magnificent mission demonstrations that have been made over England and Scotland, by such men as Williams and Knill, and Duff, and Livingstone, and that are annually being made by the deputations sent forth by our Missionary Societies. We do not object to the provincial echoes of Exeter Hall, or to the occasional roar of a great African or Indian lion, as it starts across our ordinary quiet-going, working-day life. Yet there is loss in their gain, if they be allowed to supersede regular mission organizations. There are three conditions to which we would subject these spasmodic agencies,—three conditions at least, that are necessary to preserve the waste of their powers:—(1) We would use them for extraordinary appeals—when a special fund has to be raised, when an emergency has to be got over. Their quickening addresses admirably serve the temporary purpose of shaking out a contribution that is to be once for all. (2) We would use them in preparation for setting up a regular district mission agency. By all means let the angel descend and trouble the pool, around which have lain in time past the maimed, the halt, and the withered. Or (3) We would use them in reconstructing such agencies where they had fallen into disrepair. Experience shows that, from the languor that steals over all human arrangements, or from the shifting of the residence of agents, the most completely organized visiting agency gets out of full working trim in four or five years. A district loses its agent, or an agent becomes forgetful of his district. The machinery becomes shaky. We would therefore suggest, as a great advance upon the practical productive work of deputations, that, instead of simply delivering themselves of their speeches, they should be charged with an inquiry into the organizations of the districts to which they are commissioned, with setting up new, or repairing, where needful, old organizations. Their speeches would then be condensed, as a steam force, in the mission agencies they constructed anew or perfected, and would remain a working power long after the sound of their voices had died away. In speaking of the impulsive, and therefore transient power of pulpit or platform demonstrations, unless linked with a permanent agency, we do not include the pulpit in its ordinary ministrations. We have no hesitation in placing amongst the foremost means of quickened