

Rev. J. H. McLARDY (ordained Missionary) would not speak at length on the subject; it was one that required the deepest consideration. It was no doubt a desirable thing that all professing Christians should draw together; they were all of one mind as to the desirability of union, and were all agreed, as far as the abstract principle was concerned—but there were great difficulties in the way. He could see no likelihood that all the members of Christ's body would ever be formed into one Church. There had always been diversities of opinion; there had been branches separated from the parent Church from the beginning, and there always would be such diversities and such separations. But he believed that there might be a union of spirit among the Churches, and this he conceived was the thought of the Saviour in the text so often quoted in the argument for union. The meaning of that text was, that all believers should be one in spirit; evidently not that all should be one body; it was a spiritual, not an outward, union that was here shown forth. With that interpretation of the word of the Saviour, he could conceive how there might be a union of spirit and sentiment in separate bodies. There were particular difficulties, moreover, in the way of an external union, through which he could not "see his way straight," and the first was with regard to the recognition by the Church at home of such a union. That Church had not yet decided what would be her conduct to the united bodies of Presbyterians in Victoria. It was true she had not censured them, but it was equally true she had not praised them. They should therefore wait the decision of the Mother Church with regard to her bearing towards those bodies, before they commenced a similar action of such serious importance. Besides, it appeared to him, if a union took place immediately it could not be permanent: there were so many differences between the two bodies, not in things of the highest importance, but in such as would require a great deal of consideration to adjust. A perfect union could only take place when they were all agreed in thought; and he believed there were such differences of thought and feeling between themselves and the body that sought to be incorporated with them, that a permanent union would be impossible. No doubt several advantages would be derived from such a union as was proposed; some small struggling congregations would thereby be rendered self-supporting: but would we not be withdrawing labour from the great vineyard, by thus helping to strengthen a few congregations? He would not enter into the question