

## UNION THIS SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC.

Since the Joint Committee on Union last met in Montreal, there has been a very perceptible lull in all discussions on this subject. Public interest was kept in suspense, and did not wholly die until the General Assembly had met and come to a decision which has shelved the question for at least three years. The result of this resolution has been that our Synod in Canada has had no special meeting. The debates of the General Assembly served a useful purpose, in bringing out a considerable diversity of sentiment in that body on the general question. Unpreparedness for union in many questions, which was suspected but not believed, cropped up so unmistakably as to defy all doubt. It has become apparent that, though union has been pressed by influential parties on all sides, and though the members of Committee harmonised in a remarkable degree, yet throughout the General Assembly there are many still, by reason of ancient prejudices, unable to raise themselves up to a union-platform and subscribe a treaty of peace upon principles general and comprehensive enough to insure union.

The disputes concerning colleges is burdened with the responsibility of postponing union negotiations for three years; and, to some extent, this is true. That is to say, that it has come out that many members of Committee and Assembly are so taken up with colleges that they consider the wider question of inferior importance, and would sacrifice union to their interested views. The people, left to themselves, take little direct interest in such institutions. Colleges and college-men must take the blame of this postponement. The resolution of the General Assembly bears this upon its face; for it is to the effect that negotiations be delayed until both parties shall have raised certain large sums for colleges, and three years is the time named. But then the sum which the General Assembly engages to raise is \$250,000, and as they are divided upon the question, most people believe that they will never raise that sum;

in which case, as regards them, the postponement seems indefinite. The sum, again, assigned to be raised by our church in the Upper Provinces is \$100,000, and this, after they have just been compelled, principally by the policy advocated through the General Assembly in the withdrawal of denominational grants, to raise \$100,000 already; most people are of opinion that our Synod cannot or will not raise this: so that that also is an indefinite postponement of the whole matter. The resolution as regards both parties amounts to this: that it makes union to depend upon two things, which are impracticable, and forbids marriage till the marriage portion of both parties is in hand and marriage settlements have been duly made. Our Synod in the Upper Provinces had last year resolved to make over the temporalities fund to the support of the schemes of the future reunited church, which, with the college property, would represent a capital of about \$700,000; thus showing their sincerity in the matter. The General Assembly by thus starting a new, burdensome, and, as is generally thought, impracticable condition of union, has not shown an appreciative sense of the sincerity and generosity of the other church. If union is not to be entered into until \$350,000 are raised for colleges, it will take some little time. A new element has thus been imported into the negotiations. Colleges become the principal, when they ought to be a subordinate question. Upon the face of matters there would be union if neither party possessed any college, and to deal with the matter properly, colleges should not enter into the question at all. They should be left alone to work out their own salvation by their own exertions, and if they have not charters to qualify them for so doing, they should be recommended to procure them. The negotiating parties will never agree upon their colleges; for they are all to some extent rival institutions, and rally around themselves separate sets of sympathies. Thus they are watchwords of parties and nurseries of that party spirit which it is the object of union to destroy; and so