



OF THE

Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia and the adjoining Provinces.

"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—PSALM 137, v. 6

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ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

Assembly Meetings of the "Church Union."

We are happy to announce that the movement in behalf of Church Union has this year arrived at a stage of working and success, from which the most important results may fairly be anticipated. What hitherto has been urged as the great objection in the way—that the movement wants definite practical aim—is now felt to be in course of being rapidly, and even in its very semblance, removed. Indeed, not the least gratifying feature of the two general meetings held in Edinburgh in last month, during the sittings of the Assembly, was the ready adherence given to the cause on the part of many, who had till then stood aloof, not only in hesitation, but, from misconception of our objects, in an attitude of disapproval, to say the least of it. Perhaps, the best way in which to present the matter interestingly to our readers, will be to give a short account of the main points brought to issue in the two meetings referred to.

These were held in the Offices of the Church on the mornings of Thursday and Friday, 26th and 27th May respectively. The attendance at both, composed of ministers and elders, was large, and the proceedings full of interest and cordiality. On both occasions, Principal Tulloch, the President of the Union, presided. On Thursday morning, after the meeting had been opened by the Rev. Mr. Leitch of Monimail with prayer, the President in a brief address, detailed the circumstances out of which the felt want for such a Union had grown, and how, accordingly, the movement had taken shape. So many vital questions, speculative and practical alike, were facing us on every side at the present day, that, as those who desired earnestly to be foremost, where a Church's place, such as ours especially ought rightly to be, in dealing with, and as far as honestly we

can, solving these, we needed to draw together into closer personal contact—to meet in free, intense, brotherly intercourse—to lay open to one another our whole hearts on subjects so deeply and mainly interesting, both to us and our Great Master's work—and, by combined sympathy and action, not only to awaken a new zeal, and greater and steadier purposes, and more effective methods of gaining these. It was absurd to suppose we, in this way, meant to create in the Church any illegitimate party influence or party tie. The platform of the Church Union was not meant, in any way, to suspend or interfere with the platform of Church courts. It was meant to be a platform on which we could approach and discuss vital aims, which, it was notorious, all that might be said of either their theory or practice notwithstanding, were in Church courts never approached or discussed. Then, on this platform of close, simple, affectionate fellowship, there was no mooted creed, either of ecclesiastical politics, or of any particular party bearing whatever. It was meant to give scope for the meeting and free expression of all honest views, the one distinctive thing being, that all came with a sincere and set desire to meet together as fellow labourers with Christ, that in His company their hearts might burn together for the more intense apprehending of His truth, and the more devoted doing of His work. And as one direction in which, with success, the efforts of the Union might be turned, the President instanced the establishing of a Church periodical, quarterly or otherwise, that might worthily represent her literature, her scholarship, her living thought, her labours, her influence, and her aims, while, under high editorship, and drawing forth a staff of the best contributors from all quarters, it should be the organ of no section, but strive to give a single-minded, truthful expression, alike to the Church's faith and life. This would be one eminent means, at least, of drawing the bonds of union amongst us closer,

and making them more deeply realised. The want of such an organ had been long felt; many proposals for projecting one had from time to time, been made, but had fallen to the ground chiefly through want of large enough combination, both as to the numbers of those supporting the project, and their plan of action. Now, however, there was a prospect that, if heartily adopted, the object might be attained, without much risk of failure, and nothing certainly would more happily inaugurate the Union in its operations, than the carrying out of a project such as this.

After remarks to this effect, which were hailed with much applause—as the frank, hearty, and most suggestive words of Principal Tulloch always ensure their being hailed—Dr. Norman McLeod of the Barony detailed some very interesting and successful proceedings of the branch of the Union in Glasgow during the past year. A succession of meetings had taken place, at which, prepared by various ministers and laymen, papers on such subjects as congregational agencies, the different branches of missionary labour, Sabbath schools, and other topics connected with ministerial and Church efficiency, had been read and discussed. These meetings had been numerous attended, and at the close of the winter, had been crowned by a gratulatory meeting of fellowship, at which Professor Hill, so highly and deservedly esteemed, had presided. Dr. McLeod described how cheering and profitable the effects of all this had been, and then, entering into the question at large, he warmly concurred in the views of the President, expressing his heart-felt rejoicing, that a movement to which he had been privileged to give the first impulse had come to such an issue as now to give promise of vigorous working and noble results.

Several other gentlemen followed, among whom two highly respected elders, Sheriff Barclay, and Mr. Milne Home of Milne Graden, expressed views of entire accordance with the objects, the Union sought to