

through with the matters brought before them, so that we are able to assure our readers that the prospects of an early consummation of the Union were never more promising, than at the present moment.

The Committees met in Poplar Grove Church on Wednesday evening, the 7th inst., at 8 o'clock. Present—Rev. Professor King, Rev. Dr. McLeod and Rev. Mr. McKnight on the part of the Free Church, and Rev. Professor Ross, Rev. Messrs. Murdoch, McCulloch, Bayne, Sedgewick and McGregor, and Messrs. D. McCurdy and C. Robson, Ruling Elders, of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia.

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., (adjournments 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 favorable.—The Sessions of the Free Church have very generally forwarded reports, nearly all favorable, 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 feel that they were called to record their gratification at finding the expression of opinion so favorable, 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 binding 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 Thuro, 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 Presbyterianism, while all unnecessary delay should be avoided, undue precipitancy should be shunned with equal care. The Committees, however, agreed unanimously to record their convictions 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 Tri-centenary 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.—*Witness*.