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## THE RECORD.

## THE LATE MEETING OF SYNOD.

We shall, in an early number, publish the Minutes of Synod. In the meantime, the following summary of its proceedings will be acceptable to our readers: The Synod met according to appointment on Monday evening, the 9th inst., and was opened with an appropriate and interesting discourse by the moderator, the Rev. Mark Y. Stark, minister of Dundas and Ancaster, from *Deut. IV. 7-9*. After public worship, the Synod was constituted by the moderator, the Roll was made up, and the minutes of the last session were read. The report of the committee appointed by the Commission to arrange the order of business, was then received, and with some alterations, adopted; and this first diet was closed with the appointment of committees on bills and overtures, Synod fund, the revision of the records of the Commission and Presbyteries, &c. A vote of thanks to the moderator for his discourse was also unanimously and cordially passed—with a request that he would furnish a copy of it for publication in an extra number of the Record. To this he acceded; and we hope soon to be able to place the sound and judicious views and very seasonable counsels, which the discourse contains, before the Church generally. We may here remark, in passing, that the arrangements for business to which we have already referred, and which were fully specified in last month's Record, were found highly satisfactory and advantageous. The morning meeting, from 10 a. m. to 1 p. m., was private throughout the Session: save during the devotional exercises with which it was regularly opened; and it was found to afford peculiar facilities for the preparation and maturing of the more important measures which were contemplated, either in special committees or in committees of the whole members, through the more full and unrestrained interchange of views and opinions which was thus encouraged, and the more full and minute investigation and enquiry brought to bear on the several matters under consideration. It was very pleasing to observe the regular and punctual attendance which was given by all the members throughout the Session; and the patient, brotherly, and mutually desiring spirit, in which the discussions were conducted. The afternoon meetings were occupied in the public and regular transaction of the routine business of the Church, and the perfecting and sanctioning of measures which had been the subject of previous consultation in committee. For the evening meetings, a series of addresses on subjects of peculiar interest to the Church had been arranged by the committee, and would have doubtless proved exceedingly profitable and attractive in the hands of the speakers selected: but it was found necessary to defer them in order to make room for exercises of a different kind and of a still more interesting character: viz., the reception of deputations from several Churches, which it appeared were in attendance. It was agreed accordingly, on Wednesday evening, so far to alter the previous arrangements, as to appoint Thursday evening for the reception of the deputations from the missionary Synod of the Secession Church, and from the Presbytery of Niagara; and Friday evening for the reception of the deputation from the Free Church of Scotland. The appointment for Saturday evening was also changed so as to afford ministers an op-

portunity of giving supplies to vacant congregations on the sabbath, as extensively as possible, and it was agreed to substitute for that appointment, a special meeting on Tuesday evening.

On Thursday morning, the Synod, after engaging in devotional exercises for some time, proceeded to business; and was first collectively called to welcome the deputation from the Free Church of Scotland, consisting of the Rev. Mr. King, of St. Stephen's, Glasgow, and the Rev. Mr. McNaughton, of the High Church, Paisley. These gentlemen, who had arrived late the preceding evening, were introduced to the Synod by the Rev. Mr. Esson, of Montreal; and, after the reading of their commission, were cordially welcomed by the moderator, in name of the Synod: the arrangement for their more public reception was intimated to them, and they were invited to sit with the Synod. The Synod then resolved itself into a committee of bills and overtures, when various documents were received and arranged. The Synod thereafter resumed, and appointed a committee to confer with the deputation from the Presbytery of Niagara. A communication from the Synod in connexion with the Scottish Establishment was also taken up: this communication embraced two objects, viz., the difficulties arising from the disruption respecting Church property, and reunion, and intimated the appointment of committees on the part of that body, to treat with committees of the Synod of the Presbyteries on Church, for conference on these objects. In regard to the former of these matters, it was not easy to discover, from the terms employed in the document, what views and intentions were entertained by the Synod adhering to the establishment, for while the evils of litigation were deprecated, there was no reference to any other principle of adjustment than the decisions of the law, by which it indicated an implied determination to abide. As to the proposal of reunion, it was clogged with a condition not very distinctly expressed,—that in the meantime, there must be on our part a suspension of operations, which cannot be regarded in any other light than that of hostility; and a pledge given to that effect, without which, negotiation must cease,—or rather could not begin. This unseemly and absurd requirement meted, in a great measure, the satisfaction which would otherwise have arisen from such a communication, and gave an unfavourable aspect to the whole affair. It was agreed, however, to appoint committees to treat with those of the other Synod; and resolved that any arrangement in regard to the Church property, founded on Christian equity, should be concurred in, so that litigation might be prevented, and minorities of congregations, adhering to either Synod, might receive a fair compensation for their just claims on the property. With respect to reunion, a cordial disposition was manifested and expressed towards the attainment of this end: provided the brethren of the other Synod are now prepared to carry out fully and unequivocally the principles involved in their resolutions of 1811-2-3. A committee was appointed to draft a minute to the foregoing effect, and to name the necessary committees. It may be stated here most conveniently, that the report of the committee was given in due order, and adopted in open Synod, being in substance what we have above stated. At the afternoon meeting, an overture was introduced and discussed respecting the duties of elders and deacons; and especially promoting that public worship be con-

ducted by the elders, in the absence of ministers; and at missionary stations where ministers have not been settled. It was eventually passed with some modifications, and will, we trust, be productive of much benefit, bringing, as it does, distinctly into view, the proper status and duties of both these classes of office bearers; and thereby exhibiting the truly primitive and scriptural character of the constitution and order of the Presbyterian Church, which has been much obscured in this land as well as elsewhere, by the abeyance in which the deaconship has been allowed to fall, and the ineffective position which the elder has been led to occupy in too many instances, through the prevalence of a most inadequate standard both of the qualifications and the duties proper to that important office. No point seems more clear in the New Testament Scriptures and the unimpaired records of the primitive church, than the appointment in every case of a plurality of elders, to take the oversight of each particular church or congregation; and the wisdom of this arrangement, which bears on it so clearly the divine sanction, will at once commend itself to every enlightened and unprejudiced mind, seeing the proper administration of government and discipline is obviously impracticable in any other way. And even in regard to the exercise of public worship, the conducting of which, according to scriptural practice no doubt, mainly devolves on the class of the elders, who are appointed to labour in word and doctrine, it seems quite plain, from the word of God, and the dictates of reason and experience, that a matter of such vital importance to the welfare of a congregation, and the interests of religion generally, should not be left dependent exclusively on a single office bearer in the Church. We hope to see the aspect and condition of our Churches much improved under the operation of the act of Synod to which we have referred: the elder clothed with suitable qualifications for his spiritual office, assuming his right position, and diligently discharging his duties, as one who has the care of immortal souls committed to him, and of whom a solemn account of his trust will be required at the last; and the regular ordained deacon superceding the mere secular manager or trustee, devoting cheerfully the necessary time and attention to the care of those temporal things which are connected with the regular ministrations of the ordinances of the gospel, and the edification of the people of God, the neglect of which has, in so many instances, occasioned the loss of the ministry, or rendered it inefficient. During the afternoon meeting on Thursday, the report of the Presbytery of Cobourg was called for, on the financial arrangements to be adopted in the Church, for the support of objects of common interest: as the Synod fund, from which the expenses incurred in carrying on the general business of the Church, are defrayed, the home missions, and an institution for the training of candidates for the Holy ministry. The report was read and approved of; and it was remitted to the committee to frame an act on the subject, to be submitted to the Synod at a later period of the session, when the various measures requiring pecuniary contributions should have been matured.

In the evening of Thursday, the Synod met precisely at 7 o'clock, when the Church was crowded with a respectable and attentive audience. After engaging in prayer and praise, the deputation from the Missionary Synod of the Secession Church, consisting of the Rev. Messrs. Proudfoot,