

Luther and Melancthon, the great German Reformers, have no less decidedly expressed their conviction, that Presbyterianism was the Scriptural and primitive system,—although they had no insuperable objections to submit, for the sake of peace, to a modified Episcopacy. And as for Luther, although he was but a Presbyter, he exercised, for thirty years, the power of granting ordination; and, on one occasion, at the request of the Elector of Saxony, he consecrated the bishop of a diocese,—which would have been gross inconsistency and presumption, had he held such a prelate to be, by divine right, an ecclesiastic of superior order to himself.

"The same views of Presbyterianism as sanctioned by apostolic practice, were entertained by Zuinglius, Beza, Bullinger, Musculus, Calvin, Knox and other great Reformers. And these views were adopted and carried into effect in the various reformed churches which were founded on their principles, in France, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, Holland, and Scotland. The Lutheran churches did, indeed, consent, from motives of supposed necessity or expediency, to adopt a modified form of Prelacy. They did so, however, with the full and distinct admission, that it was a departure from the practice of the primitive churches,—holding themselves not bound, in matters of mere form and government, to adhere, in all respects, to the apostolic model. The same may be said of the fathers of the Church of England, who, while consenting to the establishment of Prelacy, did not profess to claim for it any divine authority. Archbishop Cranmer, Archbishop Usher, Bishop Jewel, and others of the like note among the fathers of the Church of England, expressly declare, that in the times of the apostles there was no distinction between bishops and presbyters. And Burnet, in his History of the Reformation, has preserved a document, bearing the signatures of Cranmer, and of twelve other prelates of the Reformed Church of England in the reign of Henry VIII., in which it is stated, that the New Testament makes no mention of any degrees, or distinctions of orders, except *two*,—that of Deacons, and that of Presbyters or Bishops."

We heartily commend this little work to our readers. While we would have our people abound in charity towards all, and certainly not the least towards those sister churches who came with us through the fiery conflicts of the Reformation, and who have ever since been the guardians of true religion in the several nations of Europe—at the same time we would have them thoroughly grounded in the Scriptural authority of their own church.

### Presbytery of Miramichi.

At a meeting of the Presbytery of Miramichi, Province of New Brunswick, held in Chatham, on the 22nd of November last, the Rev. Robert Stevenson, lately arrived from Scotland, appeared and laid on the Table of the Presbytery an extract of a Minute of the Acting Committee of the General Assembly's Committee on Colonial Churches, appointing him a Missionary under the superintendence of the Presbytery of Miramichi, and agreeing to allow to Mr. Stevenson for three years such a sum, as with the allowance of one hundred pounds currency, agreed to be given by the Presbytery of Miramichi, would make a Salary of £150 Sterling. He also

produced an extract of his License from the Presbytery of Irvine, dated the 2nd of August 1853.

The Presbytery received the Rev. Mr. Stevenson, as a Missionary within their bounds; but regarding it as essential to Mr. Stevenson's full usefulness as a Missionary, that he should be able to perform all the duties of the Ministerial office, they resolved to proceed to his ordination with all convenient speed.

The Presbytery, therefore, according to the practice of the Church of Scotland, prescribed to Mr. Stevenson subjects for an Exegesis, a Homily, an Exercise and Additions, a Popular Sermon, and a Lecture. and appointed their next meeting to be held in Newcastle on Wednesday, the 20th of December, for the purpose of hearing these and the other preliminary trials; and, in case these be satisfactory, they appointed his ordination to take place in St. James's Church, Newcastle, on Thursday the 21st of December, the Rev. Mr. Henderson to preach and preside.

The Presbytery met again on the 20th December in Newcastle, and was constituted with prayer. The Rev. Mr. Stevenson delivered the various exercises prescribed at their last meeting, with which the Presbytery being highly satisfied, they next heard Mr. Stevenson read, translate, and prove a portion of the Hebrew Old Testament, and Greek New Testament, and being thereby satisfied that he possessed a sufficient knowledge of the original languages of the Word of God, they then examined him on Church History and Divinity, and having taken a conjunct view of his whole trials, and finding them highly creditable to him, they agreed to proceed with his ordination, and for this purpose adjourned to meet next day in St. James's Church, at half past ten o'clock.

The Presbytery met again in St. James's Church on Thursday, 21st December, and was constituted with Prayer. After the preliminary business was gone through, the Rev. William Henderson, according to the appointment of the Presbytery, proceeded to the pulpit, and after preaching a sermon from 2 Tim. II. 3, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," he put to Mr. Stevenson the questions appointed by the General Assembly to be put before Ordination, and having received satisfactory answers, he proceeded by solemn prayer and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, to set him apart to the work of the Ministry as a Missionary within the bounds of this Presbytery. After which he briefly addressed the Rev. Mr. Stevenson, and the congregation assembled. After the dismissal of the congregation, the Rev. Mr. Stevenson received the right hand of fellowship, and signed the formula. A collection was made on the occasion for Missionary purposes, amounting to £5 7 0.

WILLIAM HENDERSON,  
Clerk of the Presbytery of Miramichi.

We have much pleasure in noticing a collection of £2 15 from the children attending St. Andrew's Sabbath School, Pictou, in aid of the Orphan Refuge, Calcutta.

### Ninth Report of the St. Matthew's District Society.

The Committee of St. Matthew's District Society, regret that they have been prevented from rendering their annual

Report as early as on former years; but they trust that through the kind consideration of the public this delay, which has been caused by an afflictive dispensation of Divine Providence, may not operate against the future welfare of the Society.

During the past year the Society has adhered as closely as possible to the principle upon which it was founded,—of affording relief to the poor, by furnishing them with employment and thus helping them to help themselves. Besides considerable sums given in direct charity, more than 2,000 garments have been made up under its superintendence; and thus work has been made for many women and children, who would otherwise have been tempted to live in idleness and mendicancy.

Although it is impossible to estimate the precise amount of good done, the Committee feel persuaded—and they are anxious to press their convictions upon the public—that the operations of this society, by training up the young in habits of industry and independence, exert an important influence on the formation of character;—and that in the end small sums laid out in this way, go further towards diminishing poverty than large sums given in indiscriminate charity.

They regard this and similar institutions as making up to some extent for the want of the female industrial schools which hold so important a place among the charities of older countries, and which have proved so beneficial in their results.

While the Committee plead for a deeper interest in the Society on the part of the public, they have reason to bless God for the measure of prosperity which has attended their efforts,—and they look back with thankfulness upon the number of families that have been relieved,—upon the industrial education that has been given to the young, and upon the good moral influence which has flowed from their intercourse with the poor.

In again appealing to St. Matthew's congregation and to the public, they rely on the goodness of their cause,—and hope that they may be encouraged by an increased liberality. The more money they have at their disposal, the more good they are able to accomplish.

To Him who has said: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor," they commend their cause, with humble supplication, that he may put it into the hearts of his people to give of their abundance to their less favored brethren,—and that he may accompany with his blessing the efforts of this Society.

### DISTRICTS.

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| No. 1. | Visitors—Mrs. O'Brien, and Mrs. Lithgow.         |
| No. 2. | Visitors—Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Lithgow.          |
| No. 3. | Visitor—Miss Thompson.                           |
| No. 4. | Visitor—Mrs. John Hosterman.                     |
| No. 5. | Visitor—Miss McNab.                              |
| No. 7. | Visitors—Mrs. G. P. Mitchell and Miss Hosterman. |
| No. 8. | Visitor—Miss Wells.                              |