

## [ VI. ]

## REPORT ON PRESBYTERIAL VISITATIONS.

The Presbytery of Toronto having been appointed by the last Synod, to prepare a scheme of Presbyterial Visitation, beg leave respectfully to submit the following to the consideration of the Synod, as the scheme which the Presbytery has unanimously approved of.

Besides visitations that may be made on emergent occasions, the whole of the congregations are to be visited in order.

When a visitation is appointed for a particular congregation, the minister of that congregation is to intimate it from the pulpit, at least two calendar months previously to its taking place, and is to cite the elders and all the members of the church in full communion to attend, that they may acquaint the Presbytery with the state of the congregation in every point, and that if any of them have certain knowledge of any thing amiss in their minister and elders they do then also acquaint the Presbytery therewith; provided always that in the event of personal offences, real or supposed, the party offended shall have first attempted a reconciliation according to our Lord's injunction in Matth. xviii., and failed in obtaining it. And that in the event of public offences or matters of complaint, the session shall have been notified of the same at least two weeks before the visitation.

When the Presbytery have met they shall confer with the minister and elders in private to inquire into the state of the congregation and ascertain what matters are likely to be brought out in the course of the visitation. After sermon by one of the Presbytery, the records of the session shall be examined. A committee shall confer with the minister in a brotherly way, concerning his culture of personal religion and his ministerial work—as to his preparation for it—his occupation in it—and the fruits of it. The elders too shall be faithfully and affectionately counselled and admonished in regard to personal and domestic religion and as to their conduct before the church and the world. They are then to be interrogated;

*First.*—Concerning the personal deportment of the minister before his people and the world, and the nature and kind of his intercourse with them.

*Secondly.*—Concerning his ministry of the word, as to its faithfulness, soundness, plainness and adaptation to the people.

*Thirdly.*—Concerning his private labors—such as the stated visitation of the flock, and the visitation of the sick.

*Fourthly.*—Concerning his administration of the sacramental ordinances—the measures adopted towards those who live in the neglect of them—and his method of training catechumens.

*Fifthly.*—Concerning the number of elders—the frequency of the meetings of session—whether they are held for prayer—and if so, how often. The faithfulness and diligence with which discipline is exercised—the extent of co-operation in this, between minister and elders—the instrumentality employed for promoting the cause of Christ in the neighborhood or throughout the world—by Sabbath schools, bible classes, prayer-meetings, and contributions for missionary and other kindred objects.

The Presbytery shall first call in the members of the church who are in full communion, and interrogate them concerning the minister and elders—allowing them to