

able commodities furnished would undergo a great amount of, and that the Indians, who are virtually in a state of slavery, might, as they gained a knowledge of their rights, claim that freedom which is the inalienable attribute of every human being.

The natural productions of the country are furs, silver, copper, lead, tallow, hides, wool, wood, corn, &c., all articles of immense utility, and the encouragement of the export of which, by the preservation of the native population, and their instruction in the arts of civilised life, would lead to the consumption of a quantity of our manufactures. It is true that the Hudson's Bay Company have scantily supplied a very few of the barest necessities of life at rates which only a most extortionate and unfeeling avarice could sanction; and of which we append, in a tabular form, a few of the main articles which are absolutely required by the Indians.

The table which follows is very minute, describing the cost of various articles to the Company, and the price in skins of various kinds charged to the poor Indians.

The following are a few specimens:—

- 1 Gun, prime cost 22s. 6d., is sold for 20 beaver skins, valued at £32 10s.
- 6 Clay tobacco pipes, cost 1d., are sold for 1 beaver skin, valued at £1 12 6.
- 1 Pint rum, (watered) cost 1d., is sold for the same price!!!

Alas, poor Indians! Who should not pray—hasten, Lord, the reign of thy dear Son, for “he shall judge the poor of the people—he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor!”

SYNOD.

The approaching Meeting of Synod is to be held, as our readers will have noticed in our advertisement, as well as in the printed Minutes of last Synod, in Toronto, on Wednesday, the 21st day of June. Much important business will come before the assembled office-bearers of the Church. As the time of many who attend our Church Courts is very limited, it is of importance that arrangements be made in such way that the largest amount of business may be despatched in the shortest time—not with haste and precipitation, but without unnecessary delay.

The writer, an humble layman, might not presume to offer counsel of his own to the Reverend fathers and brethren who will compose the Synod, but hopes that the following hints and suggestions, appropriate to the occasion, will be well received by all whom they concern. They are culled, in part, from the April number of the “English Presbyterian Messenger.”

It is of importance that members be in attendance at the opening. That, as far as practicable, arrangements be made for the accommodation of those who come from a distance. That the order of business be carefully prepared. That in appointing Committees care be had to apportion the work and divide the labour, having on each, as far as practicable, different men; retaining the services of those who have been useful, as well as drawing out those who are inexperienced, but likely to become useful to the Church. The work and powers of Committees to be distinctly defined. As much time as possible left for devotional exercises, committees, and conference. That there be less speaking, and more deliberation and action. The less time there is for public business, the more work is usually got through. It would be well that an

abstract of the Minutes be printed and circulated immediately after the rising of Synod. If published in proper time, a sufficient number could be sold, at a small price, to defray the expenses. The Minutes of last Synod had lost much of their interest before our people received them.

It is highly desirable that ruling Elders be punctual in attending Church Courts. There is something instructive in the history of the Church of Scotland, in regard to the Eldership, and the manner in which the important duties of that office were performed. The decline in the Eldership seems to have progressed with equal pace with the decline of vital religion. In some parishes, where moderation reigned triumphant, there were no elders. In others, men were appointed on account of their political influence, without regard to their qualifications in a more important point of view. Thus the Eldership fell in many cases into desuetude or disrepute. Although we read of Church Courts in which no ruling Elders sat for a period of eight years, yet, we find, “that so essential a part was the Eldership of the Presbyterian Church accounted, and so deeply was it engrained in the affections of the Scottish people, that, though inconsistent with the genius of Episcopacy, persecuting prelates were not able to destroy it. The moment that the pressure of persecution was removed, and religion revived, that moment did the Eldership regain its character, numbers and strength.” The remark holds good in regard to other Churches, as well as that of Scotland. An eminent writer, speaking of the Continental Churches, says,—“With the decline of religion on the Continent, the Eldership in the Presbyterian Church declined, till, in some cases, it seems to have been almost obliterated. With the revival of evangelical religion, the office is reviving.” We need not go to Scotland or Continental Europe for illustration. Let us mark the state of things in our own Church. Are not those congregations in the most promising state, in which the pastor is supported by a good staff of Elders? Believing that there is Scripture warrant for our Church Courts, and that ruling Elders may sit and vote in them, it is right that they avail themselves of the privilege; and that each session send a Ruling Elder to the different courts. It would be a very trifling tax upon a congregation to collect a sufficient sum for defraying the expenses necessarily incurred by their office-bearers in attending Presbyteries and Synods.

In the April number of the *Record*, reference is made to some of the leading matters that will engage the Synod, viz.,—Union with the United Presbyterian Church—The Home Mission—The College, and the support of the Ministry. In reference to the last, it has now become necessary to take some decisive action. The Sustentation scheme of the Synod must be abandoned altogether, unless it can be put upon some footing that will cause it to be generally adopted by the church. Experience shows that something of the kind is required for a Church dependent wholly upon voluntary contribution for the support of the Ministry. So sensibly alive are non-established Churches to the necessity of having a central fund, that steps are being taken for introducing the system. In the last number of the “*Presbyterian Messenger*,” a respectable periodical, the organ of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in England, we find an article on the subject, much in harmony with our

own views as expressed in a circular drawn up by direction of the Sustentation Board, and printed in the December number of this paper. There is little doubt but the English Synod will adopt either our own or a similar scheme. We know there are some of our ministers and people that are so thoroughly convinced of the excellence of our scheme, as compared with the old system, that they would prefer continuing it as it is, to abandoning a central fund altogether. And there are ministers who would prefer receiving their stipend through that channel, even although the amount received should not be affected by it; and are therefore desirous that the present arrangements be maintained as they are, unless something more acceptable to the church be devised to supersede them.

The Ministers Widows' and Orphans' Fund is another subject claiming attention. It must be self-evident to all who consider the matter, that, with a very few exceptions, our Ministers do not receive more than is absolutely necessary for the present support of their families, and are thus altogether unable to make any provision for their widows or orphans, in the event of being removed by death. The subject is one that concerns every member of the church, and we hope will be taken up by the Synod with a spirit and in a manner suited to its importance.

There are other matters also requiring prompt and decisive action, and upon which it would ill befit that Court to give an uncertain sound. May the spirit of wisdom preside in the assembly!

GAELIC PERIODICAL.

An catechised correspondent—a Missionary—has repeatedly addressed us on the importance of having a Gaelic paper, like our *Record*, for our Celtic brethren. We would, for their sakes, hail such a publication, if we saw any reasonable prospect of its finding adequate support. This, however, we do not see; for as the number of Highlanders in Canada, who cannot understand English when it is spoken, is not very great, the number of those who can read Gaelic, and cannot read English, must be still smaller; and it is for this last class chiefly, that a Gaelic periodical would be most useful. No doubt zeal, in a good cause, will overcome many difficulties; and we do not say that for informing even the small number of our Highland population, who cannot read English, but read Gaelic, respecting the progress of Christ's kingdom in the world, a sacrifice should not be made for supporting a Gaelic periodical among them.—Next to having such a publication among ourselves, will be the promoting the circulation of the *Free Church GAELIC WITNESS*. We had lately sent us a copy of what we understood to be the first number, of a new series, of that publication, and handed it to one of our Gaelic students, for a short account of its contents, with a view of giving it to our readers. However, we have not yet received it from him.

We copy the following notice from the “*Free Church Missionary Record*” for February:—

GAELIC WITNESS.

We have much pleasure in announcing that the Board of Missions and Education have resolved on resuming the publication of this important work. It will, as formerly, be under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. McKay, of Dunoon, and will be