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THE
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For the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

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In presenting the first number of this paper to the public, we find that we must limit ourselves to a very few words, in the way of introduction;—all the space which our humble, unpretending sheet affords, being required for matter of more importance and interest, than any that could appropriately find a place in a formal prospectus. It might indeed be most becoming, under any circumstances, to allow the character of "The Record" to develop itself, in its own pages, and commend itself to the attention and confidence of the public, according to its actual merits.—Suffice it then, for the present, simply to state that "The Record," having been commenced under the sanction of the Rulers of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, is mainly intended to be a vehicle of Ecclesiastical, Missionary, and General Religious Intelligence, to the members and adherents of that Church, and to the Presbyterian community at large; and that it is the sincere desire, and will be the constant study, of those, to whose management it is committed, to furnish authentic information,—to disseminate sound principles, and to promote the interests of pure and undefiled religion. We only add, that our ordinary course of publication will be once a month,—extra numbers being issued, as circumstances may require.

UNTO THE PRESBYTERIANS, NOW OR RECENTLY IN CONNEXION WITH THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN CONNEXION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.—THE PASTORAL ADDRESS OF THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA :

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—

You have doubtless heard through the ordinary channels of information, of the disruption of our once peaceful and united Church, and of the formation by those who have separated from the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in connexion with the Church of Scotland, of another Church, under the designation of the Presbyterian Church of Canada—that Church, as the representatives of which we now address you. Some of you, we are happy to know, have expressed your approbation of what we have felt called in conscience to do, and have given in your adherence to the Presbyterian Church of Canada, and it gladdens us to learn that wherever our cause is studied and understood, the mass of the Presbyterians of Canada are coming to the same conclusion.

Others, we have reason to believe, are yet but partially informed, and unable to come to a satisfactory decision. Nor is this greatly to be wondered at. While the means of correct information are limited, misrepresentations of various kinds are circulated by our enemies,—attempts are made to show that we have acted as the blind partisans of the Free Protecting Church of Scotland, and have agitated unnecessarily and without discretion a question with which the Presbyterians of Canada

had nothing to do—and we are denounced in unmeasured terms as reckless schismatics. In these circumstances, Dearly Beloved, we feel ourselves called to lay before you, in the form of Pastoral Address, the whole merits of the cause which we are advocating, and which we consider it the duty of our Presbyterian Brethren in Canada to support—that you may be satisfied that we have acted in what we have done on good and sufficient grounds, that you may see clearly the claims which the Presbyterian Church of Canada has to your support, and that you may be stirred up to a sense of the responsibility, which by the disruption of the Church with which you have hitherto been connected, the great Head of the Church has himself devolved on you. Sure we are, that a patient and impartial attention to what we have to lay before you, is all that is necessary to induce the Presbyterians of Canada, to unite with us in supporting a cause, which can be so clearly shown to be the cause of Christ, and of the purity and liberty of the Christian Church.

The question upon which the disruption of the Synod in connexion with the Church of Scotland took place, was a question, we admit at once, not relating to any practical grievance of which as a Church that Synod had to complain—it related merely to the connexion in which we stood to the Established Church of Scotland, and to the responsibility which that connexion entailed on us. And we are well aware that in looking at the question thus generally, some may be disposed to doubt, whether on a question of this kind any cause warranting the extreme measure of disruption, could arise. It may be said, and not without an appearance of plausibility,—if you had no practical grievance, if you were in the enjoyment of all the privileges for which the Free Protecting Church of Scotland has been contending, if the State had never even shown a disposition to encroach on any of your rights or liberties, what cause could there exist to warrant or justify a disruption. But such impressions where they exist, we are fully satisfied a closer examination of the subject will most effectually remove—and remove by showing that they are based on narrow and unworthy views of the obligations and responsibilities to which Churches are subject.

We lay it down as a great principle, applicable to the conduct which one Church is bound to pursue towards another—that to support or countenance a Church which, in matters fundamental, is committing sin, is to become a partaker of her sin, and that it is as unlawful to be a member of a Church so countenancing another in sin, as it is to be a member of the Church which is directly chargeable with the sin. There are two great duties to which God has called every Church upon earth—duties similar to those to which he has called every individual believer—the first is, to be pure in principle and practice in matters relating to her own constitution, doctrines, and discipline; and the second is, to be pure in her association with other Churches—in other words, to be on terms of friendship only with those which are supporting in purity the cause of Christ, and to give no countenance or support to those by whom Christ and his cause is dishonoured or opposed. The first of these duties is of such obvious obligation, that we presume no one will hesitate to admit, that if in matters vital and fundamental it be not fulfilled—if a Church for instance deny the doctrine of Christ's Divinity, or practically

give up the assertion of the doctrine of his supreme Headship over his Church, it is the duty of all to separate from her communion. Were a man to remain in connexion with such a Church—whatever his own private creed might be—he would plainly be, before God and the world, chargeable with the support of Socinian or Erastian errors.

The second duty of Churches which we have specified, although less frequently adverted to, is not less clearly obligatory on all. Every Church, it will be admitted, is intended to be the dispenser as well as the depository of God's truth—a living and active witness for that truth among men—a branch of the army of the faithful and true witnesses sent forth to vindicate his supremacy over the world. And in fulfilling this, her high destiny, in labouring to promote Christ's cause in the world, most clearly is she bound to discriminate in her alliances, and to see to it, that in their formation and in their maintenance, her testimony shall be ever on the side of truth and of righteousness. Not only is she bound to look within, and by her own purity to illustrate and adorn the truth, but she is bound also to have respect to the character of others, and to give her countenance and support only to the pure—to witness for those who are witnessing for Christ, to witness against those by whom his truth is denied or obscured. If she fail in this duty, if her testimony be on the side of Churches maintaining error, then even her own purity must go for nothing. Can a citizen be himself an honest member of the community and yet the approver and encourager of dishonesty in others? Can a subject be loyal to his King and yet show countenance to those who are plotting to pluck the Crown from his brows? Can a private Christian be a faithful member of Christ's Kingdom and yet be on terms of Christian communion with those by whom the laws of that Kingdom are trampled under foot? No more can a Church be pure—a faithful witness for God's truth—which is countenancing, encouraging and strengthening a Church that is sinning against the truth. A Church may hold in purity the doctrine of Christ's Divinity, and she may carry fully out in her own government the doctrine of Christ's Headship over his Church, but if at the same time, she will continue on terms of amity and friendship with a Church by which these doctrines are theoretically denied or practically repudiated, then is she guilty before God and the world of supporting Socinian or Erastian error—and guilty as really as if her own doctrines or her own government embodied these errors. And just as it is the duty of individuals to withdraw from a Church impure in her own doctrines or government, so is it their duty to withdraw from a Church remaining in friendly alliance with such as are so.

We are satisfied the more this principle is examined it will be found to be correct. It might easily be illustrated by examples—and our own case which we are now to lay before you, will of itself, we are fully assured, be felt by you on examination, to be at once an illustration of its truth and a vindication of the practical application of it, which we have felt called upon to make.

Dearly Beloved Brethren, our case in a very few words is this—The Church of Scotland has sinned in matters vital and fundamental, she has practically repudiated the doctrine of the supreme Headship of Christ over his Church, and a large number of the wisest and best of her ministers and people have felt themselves compelled in consequence to with-