

chiefly refer to the labors of the Rev. W. C. Burns. Although Mr. Burns is not a Missionary on the roll of this Committee, he has visited country settlements whenever his numerous engagements in Montreal would permit. In February he paid a visit to La Chute, St. Andrews, and to several stations in Glengary, and during the month of March and April last, he was principally engaged in French Canadian Districts, preaching in their own language to the French Canadians, and seeking out not a few protestant settlers who have been drawn from the observation of the church, by the surrounding masses of the professed adherents of the Papacy. Since his return from the districts, he has been engaged preaching the Gospel in Montreal both in the open air, and in the stated places of worship. The visit of the Rev. Mr. Donar of Larbert, to Melbourne, in the Eastern Townships about the 4th of May, has given, it is hoped, a new impulse to the exertions of the adherents to our Synod in that quarter, but they stand much in need of the services of a settled pastor.

Having thus gone over generally the efforts which have been made in this section of the Church to preach the Gospel to those who seldom hear its glad sound—it remains, in the second place, to number up briefly what vacant stations now depend on the Church, through this Committee, for the preaching of the word—and the Committee would here again beg to state that they cannot give an adequate view of the wants of the very wide field which the bounds of this Presbytery embrace,—much of it is as yet unexplored—the means of information, and the number of missionaries have been very limited, and they can but name a few stations which have come under their notice, and to supply which, if Mr. Leishman goes to Huntingdon, they have no missionary at their disposal—1st. St. Eustache and Grand Freniere—two most interesting stations—the adherents there have stood firm to their principles—some of them for years, and claim special care at the hands of the Church—they have been liberal contributors to the Missionary Fund of this Committee. 2d. Vancleave Hill—the only station in Glengary with which the members of Committee are much acquainted, a call has been sent to the Free Church for a minister who can preach Gaelic and English, and a salary guaranteed of £120 per annum. 3d. Vaudreuil—a mission station about 40 miles from Montreal—very much isolated and very destitute. The Committee have been able to give but one Sabbath's service at that place. 4th. Chateauguay Basin—a mission station about 20 miles from Montreal, where a good congregation can be collected, but where the Committee have been able to give supply on two Sabbaths only. 5th. North and South Georgetown—stations in the Chateauguay Districts, which could be formed into a strong and united congregation. 6th. Beachridge—a very destitute station, where the settlers are mostly Gaelic Highlanders—the Committee have been able to give them but one Sabbath day's service; they have a church and manse: and the Seigneur would give £30 towards the support of a minister. 7th. Missisquoi District—a wide field, which is now completely vacant—the Rev. H. Taylor, late Missionary there, is now a clergyman of the Scottish Establishment. The Committee hope to be better acquainted with that district soon; meantime they know little more than that it is completely destitute. 8th. Lingwick, Victoria Settlement, Eastern Townships—a settlement of more than 500 Highlanders, who, since they came to Canada, have enjoyed no other privileges than the services of a pious Catechist and Teacher, who are partly supported by the Edinburgh Ladies Colonial Association, and the same active body have promised their assistance in procuring for these poor but interesting settlers a Gaelic minister as soon as practicable. 9th. Melbourne. An important and central point for the whole Eastern Townships, and one where a Free Church Minister would be willingly heard, and have a large congregation. Both the Gaelic and English lan-

guages would be requisite for a minister settled in Melbourne. 10th. Rawdon, L'Assomption, &c., are at present temporarily supplied by Mr. Gray, but in November next, they will also require Missionary supply.

Around Quebec there are numerous stations, such as Inverness, Leede, Valcartier, &c., which are at present vacant, but the members of this Committee are not sufficiently acquainted with these stations to report more fully with respect to them. Around Montreal there are numerous preaching stations, as also in the suburbs of that city itself, which would fully occupy an active missionary, and these numerous duties no settled minister in Montreal, however zealous and laborious, can possibly undertake, if unaided.

Such is a cursory view of the mission stations in this Presbytery, which are connected with the Committee; and in conclusion the members of it would draw attention to one peculiar feature of the field in which they labour, and that is the immense extent of country which that field embraces. The consequence of this is to render it much more difficult with a limited number of missionaries to give any thing like a regular supply to the several stations, than probably in any other section of the church. The poverty of the people in many places, and their apathy in others, arising from the length of time during which they have been neglected by their more favoured brethren in the towns and left wholly without religious instruction, prevent the missionary fund from being so large as it otherwise would be.

In name of Committee,
(Signed,) ALEX. FRASER.
Cor. Sec.

DR. McCRIE'S VINDICATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSON OF FAITH, RESPECTING THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE, IN THINGS PERTAINING TO RELIGION AND THE CHURCH.

Continued.

Another objection brought against the Confession is, that it subjects matters purely religious and ecclesiastical to the cognizance of the civil magistrate, and allows him an Erastian power in and over the church. This, if true, would be very strange, considering that the Assembly who compiled it were engaged in a dispute against this very claim with the Parliament under whose protection they sat, and that owing to their steady refusal to concede that power to the State (in which they were supported by the whole body of Presbyterians), the erection of presbyteries and synods in England was suspended. Independently of this important fact, the declarations of the Confession itself are more than sufficient to repel imputation. It declares "that there is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ." (chap. 24. § 6.; and that he, as "king and head of his church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate." To these officers the keys of the kingdom are committed." (chap. 30. § 1. 2.) Yes, the very passage appealed to in support of the objection begins with the following pointed declaration: "The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (chap. 23. § 3.) "The keys of the kingdom of heaven" include all the power exercised in the church, under Christ, its sole king; not only that which is ordinarily exercised in the government of particular congregations and in censuring offenders, (chap. 30.) but also the power "ministerially to determine controversies of faith, and cases of conscience, to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and government of his church, to receive complaints in cases of mal-administration, and authoritatively to determine the same." (chap. 31. § 3.)

The Confession teaches that magistrates cannot warrantably assume to themselves the power of doing these things, and what it adds must be understood in a consistency with this declaration. It is true, that it allots to the magistrate a care of religion, and asserts that "he hath authority, and it is his duty to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the church." &c. But is there no order which he can take for having these things done by the persons and in the way by and in which they ought to be done, without taking the doing of them into his hand, and thus assuming what does not belong to him? The Confession asserts that there is and proceeds to say: "For the better effecting whereof" he hath power to call synods." And is there any good reason for absolutely denying him this power? When "the unity and peace of the church" are broken and endangered in any country, "the truth of God" is depraved, "blasphemies and heresies" of almost every kind are spreading, "corruptions and abuses in worship" are abounding, and when, the church being disorganized, there is no general authority of an ecclesiastical kind to use means for remedying these evils, may not the civil government of that country warrantably call a synod for that purpose? When the state of the nation, as well as of the church, may be convulsed, and its convulsions may be in a great degree owing to religious disorders, is it not a high duty incumbent on him to take such a step, provided he finds it practicable and advisable? Was not this the state of matters in England when the Westminster Assembly met? Was not the state of matters similar in many respects at the Revolution in Scotland? And may not a crisis of the same kind yet recur? Was there any rational ground to think, at the period of the Westminster Assembly, that such a synod would have met, or, supposing it somehow to have been collected, that it could have continued together until it had finished its business, if it had not been convoked, maintained, and protected by the Parliament of England? Do many of those who deny the power in question reflect, that they owe those books which they still, in one degree or another, own as the subordinate standards of their ecclesiastical communion, to a synod which was thus convoked? Do they reflect, that by means of them the interests of religion have been promoted to an incalculable degree, "unity and peace preserved in the church, &c. from the period of their compilation down to the present day, in Scotland, in England, in Ireland, and in America? Or, recollecting these things, are they prepared to take the pen and insert their absolute veto—"The civil magistrate—for the better effecting thereof, hath" not "power to call synods?" At the same time it may be observed here, as on the former objection, that it is not asserted, that the magistrate may exercise this power on all occasions and in all circumstances, or whenever there are any evils of a religious kind to correct. It is sufficient that there may be times and circumstances in which he may warrantably exert this power. It is true that the Confession, in another place, (chap. 31. § 2.) is not sufficiently full and explicit in declaring the intrinsic right of the church to convocate synods. But this defect was supplied by the Act of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland receiving and approving of the Confession; and in the Formula used in the Secession from the beginning an approbation of the Confession is required "as received" by that Act of Assembly.

After stating that the magistrate has power to call synods, it is added, "to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them, be according to the mind of God." Not to insist here, that these words ought, in fair construction, to be understood of such synods as have been convoked by the magistrate, what reasonable objection can be made to his being present? May he not claim a right to be present at any public meeting within his dominions? May he not be present in a synod to witness their proceedings, to preserve their external peace, to redress their