

ministerial function, agreeable to the scriptures and the dictates of their own consciences; that they made regular application to the ministers of their own denomination in Philadelphia, who could give them no encouragement, as they were unable to obtain a sufficient supply for their own vacancies. And that as their *dermier resort*, they have fixed their eyes upon one among themselves, viz., Mr Bruin Romeas Comingo (commonly called by the name of Brown.)

"Accordingly upwards of sixty families have petitioned us to set apart the said Mr Brown to the office of the ministry among them. But lest religion should be injured by such a procedure, we have used all that precaution, which was possible for us in so important an affair. An enquiry has been made into his moral character; and we find from gentlemen of undoubted veracity, that it stands fair and unblemished. We have moreover proceeded to enquire into his qualifications for so sacred an employment, viz., his knowledge of speculative and practical religion; his ability in rightly dividing the word of truth; the articles of his faith, &c. And we can assure this audience (and others) that he has given us ample satisfaction in all these particulars; and if we are judges of those matters, his knowledge of the scriptures makes that commonly received maxim amongst the schools true concerning him: *Bonus textuarius est bonus theologus*. And consequently he cannot be stigmatized with the name of a novice.

"We have been made aware of some objections, which have been made against the candidates' admission into this sacred office.

"First, That he has not had a liberal education, and is unacquainted with the languages.

"To this we reply, that we only follow the example of the Reformed Churches. The Assembly of Scotland in the year 1708 (the records of which we have had before us) appointed the Presbytery of Skye to ordain one in the parish of St Kilda on the account of his particular gifts, who had not a liberal education, nor even the knowledge of the Latin tongue. In an abstract of the proceedings of the Society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, A. D. 1763 mention is made of the Rev Philip Quaque (a negro) as a minister to the negroes of the Gold Coast of Africa; whose annual salary is fifty pounds sterling. And we find that both in former and later periods in cases of necessity (which appears to be the state of Lunenburg) the same has been practised. We have moreover instances on this continent of persons who were not endowed with a liberal education, who have been regularly admitted into holy orders, and have in the judgment of charity been

instrumental in turning many to righteousness." *

"Secondly, That this is only supporting a faction.

"We have also enquired into this particular, and on due examination find the charge groundless. They have in their native land been brought up in the Calvinistic Presbyterian religion, and do still, as we are well informed, continue in the same sentiments. As the Legislature then of this colony had wisely enacted, "That such shall have free liberty of conscience, shall have liberty to meet and build meeting houses or places of public worship, and serve God in that manner which appears to them congruous to his will." We from this and the foregoing considerations, together with the information we have had, that some of them, who have always been useful inhabitants, would leave the Province unless this matter could be accomplished, have concluded to set the candidate apart to the holy ministry.

"Having therefore judged Mr Comingo qualified to be pastor of the congregation at Lunenburg, who have petitioned us to set him apart to that office: We do hereby give notice to all present, that if they have anything to object, why he should not be admitted pastor of the above mentioned congregation, that they now make a declaration of the same.

"As no objection is offered we shall proceed without further delay.

"The following questions, publicly propounded to the under named persons were answered in the affirmative.

"Quest, Mr Kaulback and Mr Shuply, do you as Commissioners from the congregation of Calvinists at Lunenburg, renew in their behalf your call to Mr Bruin Romeas Comingo?

"Do you, Mr Bruin Romeas Comingae, accept of the said call and invitation to be their pastor?

A formula of questions was then put to Mr C., similar to those used in the Scottish Presbyterian churches, the principal variation being in the 2nd question, which is as follows:—

"Do you own, and will you adhere to, the Confession of Faith, which you have made us: The Heidelberg and Assemblies Catechism, and the doctrines therein contained, as being founded on and consonant to the Holy Scriptures?

* N. B. We do not mean that our procedure in this affair should be made a precedent of, or brought into usage in this infant colony, unless in cases of absolute necessity.