

there may be friends and others in this country who would like to have an opportunity of testifying their grateful remembrance of the Principal's qualities and services, have agreed to make known their readiness to receive subscriptions from this Province. We understand that some of our ministers have been authorised to co-operate with the Committee in this matter. We do not know the names of all who have been written to, but we are in a position to mention those of the Rev. Dr. Mathieson and the Rev. W. Snodgrass of Montreal, from whom circulars and subscription-lists may be had, and who will forward to the Committee any contributions with which they may be intrusted.

THE MEETING OF SYNOD.

The time for this annual gathering of the office-bearers of our Church is drawing near. We are aware that important business will be transacted. We hope and pray that all the members, imbued with much of the wisdom which cometh down from above, will be enabled conscientiously and judiciously, and with a single eye to God's glory, to discharge the duties incumbent upon them: We are very ambitious to see our Church Courts, by the character and fruits of their proceedings, command the sincere respect of the people at large, and to see the people manifesting that interest which is the most reliable and most beautiful indication of an enlightened attachment to principle and a real enjoyment of Christian fellowship. We are aware that there are some who do not need to be reminded of the duty of remembering, especially at such a season, the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, but we would suggest that there be an abounding-in-prayer to Almighty God for the outpouring of the Spirit of all wisdom, grace and love upon the rulers of the Church that they may be directed to right determinations and measures in all things.

We hope there will be a large attendance of members. We direct attention to an article on this subject in another part of this number. We sometimes hear very unsatisfactory reasons given by absentees. "I can't afford the expense" is a very common one. This is a poor excuse for those who, when entering upon office, solemnly vowed and engaged to uphold and defend our system of church government, if they are receiving the amount of support promised, for it is to be presumed they knew then the nature and extent of their obligations; if they are not receiving what was promised, we have simply to say we have not words to characterize the sin of a people vowing so much of their worldly substance unto the Lord for the maintenance of one of his servants and partially or irregularly paying. It is a wrong as horrible as it is sad! We are of opinion that it would be a great step in the right direction, as it would effectually take away

all ground for such an excuse, to make the expenses of ministers and elders a charge upon the session funds. The sole expense is that of travelling, and that now is not nearly so much as it used to be. "I am going to take an excursion for two or three weeks and I cannot afford to do that and travel to the Synod also" is another. A minister or elder with his heart in the right place will promptly determine whether the Synod or the excursion should have the preference. "The time and place of meeting are most inconvenient" is a third. The meeting of Synod is fixed annually and it just needs all members to be present to arrange by a majority of votes the time and place most suitable. "I have no interest in the proceedings of Church Courts" is yet another and a most lamentable excuse—whatever the causes, the sooner the man who urges it changes his views, or ceases to be an office-bearer in the Presbyterian Church, the better.

In fine, we think it is due to the individual responsibilities of members, to the respect and submission which they owe to the Supreme Court, and to the claims of the public duties of the Church, that those who are necessarily prevented from attending should send letters of apology, and that the Synod should insist upon such letters being sent.

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTERS AND REPRESENTATIVE.—ELDERS AT MEETINGS OF CHURCH COURTS.

The remarks we are about to make are written in view of the approaching meeting of Synod. While we shall endeavour to make them on that account seasonable, we hope at the same time to render them applicable to the more frequent meetings of Presbyteries.

The subject is pressed upon us by its importance. A due, conscientious, practical attention to it is essential to success in carrying out our Presbyterian polity, and therefore to the best interests of our Church.

As a matter of right, entitling all settled Ministers and as many Ruling Elders to meet together for the purpose of freely discussing the local and general affairs of the Church, and of taking mutual counsel thereupon, according to the Holy Scriptures and the standards of the Church, and with a view to the glory of God, it should be highly prized and jealously preserved. What office-bearer, truly alive to the position and privileges it secures, to the influence which, when judiciously exercised, it enables him to exert even by his silent vote, and to the benefit he may derive, under the blessing of God, from his own faithfulness in the sphere of duty peculiar to it and through the channel of official Christian intercourse, would like to be deprived of it? In theory, no true Presbyterian will submit to the smallest curtailment of his freedom to enjoy it: in practice, the right is depreciated and virtually given

up on every occasion of causeless absence. The best indication that rights are properly valued, as well as the surest means of preserving them, is the faithful discharge of the duties imposed by their possession. To shirk in any way the responsibility of being a ruler in God's Church is a heinous offence against the clearest light and the holiest obligations. Empty seats in Presbytery and Synod are sad witnesses of the miserable account taken of this matter by all such as are needlessly absent—and it surely requires a great deal to constitute a tenable apology for non-attendance at those meetings, where they that bear rule are particularly called upon to use their right and to exercise their wisdom and authority; it requires, in short, an excuse that will sustain the conduct of one who fails to do a very important part of the duty which he has been solemnly ordained in the name of Jesus Christ to discharge.

As a matter of duty, very much more than we have space for at present might be relevantly said upon it. In our ecclesiastical Courts measures are devised and procedure arranged for the maintaining and extending of our Church organization; the working of local and general schemes is inquired into; the state of religion, particularly as regards an adequate provision of the means of grace, is considered; advice is given to brethren, congregations, and subordinate judicatories in difficult circumstances; disputes are settled; discipline is exercised; justice is administered; and in every living and faithful Church much time is devoted to the institution and direction of missionary operations. This or something like this, it will be admitted, is the work—the honorable and important work—of the Church in her ruling capacity, judicial and legislative. Now this ruling capacity as a whole is, under God, neither more nor less than the combined wisdom, ability and piety of the office-bearers who constitute the Church courts. All therefore to whom by right and duty it belongs to attend these courts, but who do not attend them, are chargeable not only with the neglect of personal responsibilities in regard to every public act, order, or judgment of the Church, but also with the sin of diminishing in point of fact the Church's capacity as brought to bear upon any matter, cause or measure whatsoever. It is true, the absence of even a very considerable number of members does not invalidate the procedure of the Church—those who are absent are indeed bound, as they ought rigorously to be, by the deliverance of those who are present, the presumption being that all should attend meetings regularly convened. But it is also true that the kind of work to be done involves and imposes the most serious personal responsibilities, that in its earliest forms it has claims upon the conscientious consideration of every member, and that in its whole progress its efficiency and suc-