

SPECIAL MEETING OF SYNOD.

Toronto, Wednesday, 30th July, 1851.
Therese Clark, noon.

The Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in Canada, called specially met, and in the absence of Dr Taylor, the moderator, the Rev. Alexander Ritchie, the former moderator, took the chair, and constituted the Synod.

Assembly.—The Rev. Messrs. Thos. Christie, James Roy, Alexander Ritchie, Alex. Drummond, Wm. Christie, Dr. Ferrier, Wm. Fraser, John Jennings, James Dick, David Gault, Alexander Walldin, James Pringle, Wm. Aitkin, R. H. Thornton, Wm. Oimston, Wm. Barrie.

The clerk read a resolution passed at the last meeting of the last ordinary meeting of Synod, at Hamilton, on the 10th of June, of the purpose following, viz:—That in case of a communication in reference to the appointment of a Professor of Theology, being received from the Board of Missions in Scotland, either nominating a person or persons, in their judgment, fit to fill that office, or stating difficulties, in their opinion, in the present state of the reference to them insurmountable, that the moderator be instructed to call a *pro rata* meeting as soon as possible, to take the whole case into consideration.

In connection with this resolution, there was read a letter from the Rev. Andrew Somerville, Secretary of the Board of Missions in Scotland, dated 5 Queen Street, Edinburgh, 22d May, 1851, in the following terms, viz:

Office of the United Presbyterian Church,
 5, Queen Street,
 Edinb'gh, 22d May, 1851.

REV. WILLIAM FRASER,—

My dear Sir,—I duly received your letter with extract minutes of a meeting of your Synod, held at Hamilton, on 2d July, with a request that they be laid before the Home Synod, stating that "being disappointed, by death, of the services of the Rev. Wm. Froudford, the Synod had resolved to apply to "the Synod in Scotland, to look out and recommend to their choice a person or persons in their view qualified to fill the office of Professor of Theology"—that said Professor have a pastoral charge, and a salary of £250 currency, to be paid by the Synod in Canada, and asking aid from the Home Synod for the year in question. These documents were submitted to a meeting of the Committee on Foreign Missions, held on the 6th May, when it was agreed to refer them to the Synod. They were accordingly brought before the Synod on Thursday forenoon, the 15th current, and very cordially entertained. The Rev. Mr. Thomson very clearly stated the wishes and claims of the Church in Canada. Various members expressed their views as to the importance of the measure, and the strong desire felt by the Home Synod to do whatever is necessary for promoting the interests and securing the prosperity of the Mission in Canada. After considerable deliberation, it was agreed to remit the matter to the Board of Missions, carefully to consider it, and with full powers to look out for a suitable person, and to adopt such measures as shall seem best fitted to meet the wishes of your Synod. A meeting of the Board was called and held on the 20th, specially to consider this subject, and in order that a communication might be sent to you, so as to be in time for the meeting of your Synod in June, advising you of what has been done. After long and anxious discussion, the following points were agreed upon as the basis of judgment of the Board calculated, should your Synod assent to them both, to prepare the way for getting the services of a duly qualified person, and for answering the ends of his appointment:—

In the first place, it is their opinion that the salary should be £250 sterling. A man of talents and high standing, such as the Board would wish to procure, can scarcely be expected to leave this country and to come out to Canada on a smaller allowance. But as the Board are aware that your Synod have offered as much as their present resources put it in their power to pay, the Board beg to state, that they are willing, for a reasonable period, to assist you in giving the above salary. It is hoped that your Synod will regard this offer of the Board as a proof, on their part, of sincere desire to aid a man of energy and high standing.

In the second place, it is their opinion, that in the present circumstances of the Church in Canada, it is necessary that the Professor have a pastoral charge. Both in the Synod and in the Board the question was put, whether it would not be advantageous that he should not have a pastoral charge. Now, there can be no doubt, that were the congregations of the Synod numerous, and fully supplied with ministers—were there a considerable band of students, and had the Professor opportunities for operating beneficially upon the whole Church, it would be better that he had no pastoral charge, and that his time should be wholly given to superintending the studies of the young men, and to such measures as seem fitted to advance the good of the whole body. But looking at the fewness of the students for some time to come at the circumstances, that without a charge he would in all probability have less influence in the community—because he would not have opportunities for making his voice heard, and would want the support which a respectable congregation gives—at the

fact, that in the present state of your ministerial supply, he would not, without a charge, be so likely to secure the sympathy and support of your congregation—and at the undoubted absence of a Professor of Theology, a man given to study, being expected and called upon during the intervals of the Sabbath to lecture among your widely scattered and poor congregations—appeared to the Board requisite that in the meantime he have a pastoral charge. In this respect they concede with the majority of your Synod.

But, in the third place, it is their very decided opinion, that the seat of his charge should be either in Hamilton or in Toronto. He should be in a central and influential position, where he may favourably represent your cause, and look by his public appearance and by his personal advances the interests and further the reputation of your body. It is quite obvious that this would not be the case, and that the important ends for which a Professor in such a country would not be gained, were he settled in a small country congregation, or in a distant and back-woods locality.—Had circumstances suit, it would be better were he located in Toronto, the capital city, that being the seat of the Hall. The Board sincerely hope to be able to prevail upon a suitable minister to accept the appointment, unless it be distinctly understood and fixed, that he is to have such a public and central charge, as Hamilton or Toronto offers; and so strongly do the Board feel on this point, as being necessary for the best interests of your Church, that they would be prepared to forego the offer to give a larger sum to support a Professor in such a central locality—will a charge would be found around him. The Board have instructed me to present these views respectfully for the consideration of your Synod, and to assure you that they have received your communication with the liveliest interest, that they look upon this appointment as a measure of very great importance, and that they will be anxious to give their personal aid, a minister duly qualified by his scholarship, sound views, active habits, and high character to promote the welfare of your Church, and to have young men to be faithful and successful preachers of the gospel. Iaving a reply from the Synod.

I am, my dear Sir,

Your most sincerely,

(Signed) ANDREW SOMERVILLE,
 Secretary.

The Clerk read also the letter of the Moderator enjoining him to summon this *pro rata* meeting.

The conduct of Dr. Taylor, the Moderator, in calling this meeting, was sustained.

It was agreed to proceed with the business for which the meeting was called.

On motion of Mr. Barrie, seconded by Mr. Thornton, it was resolved to take up the three points specified in Mr. Somerville's letter, *separatim*, and then in *canon*, and decide.

Took up the first proposition in Mr. Somerville's letter.

On motion of Mr. Thornton, seconded by Mr. Coote, it was resolved, That the Synod are gratified to find that the sentiments of the Board regarding the Professor's salary, accord generally with those of this body, and while unwilling to pledge beyond what we considered our ability in present circumstances, as formerly expressed, we yet cordially approve of the proposition as now presented by the Board, and feel bound at the same time to thank them for their generous liberality in the offer made.

Entered on the consideration of the second proposition in the letter from the Board of Missions.

On motion of Mr. Aitkin, seconded by Mr. Roy, it was resolved, That with reference to the 2d article of the communication from the Board of Missions, the Synod declare their satisfaction with the views therein expressed, as agreeing with the deliverance of former special meeting.

Took up the third proposition in Mr. Somerville's letter.

On motion of Mr. Thornton, seconded by Mr. Coote, it was unanimously resolved—That in regard to this proposition, the Synod readily admit the desirableness of a Professor occupying a "public and central position" they nevertheless deeply regret that a stand should have been taken upon this point, in such a way as to seem to them incompatible with Constitutional and Presbyterian Law—that both places referred to as the seat of a pastoral charge being filled up, they have no ability or desire to move in regard to either, and that if either had been open, they have no right to dictate to the people in their choice of a minister—feeling bound, however, to regard it as a strong way of stating the desirableness of such a location, if the way were, in Providence, open, the Synod assure the Board that there is little probability that a Professor will require to go into the "back-woods" in quest of a charge,—that not a few localities highly favorable for the object in view will be open for any reasonable constitutional, and Christian-like efforts to occupy them.

On motion of Mr. Dick, seconded by Dr. Ferrier, it was resolved—That the Synod, in accordance with the preceding resolutions, respectfully