

THE overture upon the conduct of public worship, brought before the Synod in the name of the Rev. Dr. Laing and others and supported by him, brings up for consideration a most important subject, one which cannot be taken up too soon because of the effect the settlement of it may have upon the whole life of our church, because of the patient and prolonged labor it must take to get it properly before the whole church and secure for it that amount of intelligent attention and consideration its importance merits. Times and manners change and the difference between the state of things existing at the time of the Reformation in Scotland and that which now prevails in Canada is so great as not to make it wonderful but natural that with our altered tastes and circumstances we should desire something different from our forefathers in the conduct of worship, and a change wisely made should promote spiritual life, by adapting public worship to the altered tastes and times. It is evident that without the official intervention or guidance of the church, a considerable diversity in the manner of conducting the public services of the church is given up. The question simply is, shall this be allowed to go on according to individual taste, leading to an endless diversity, in many cases far from edifying, or shall the church while this process is going on and is as yet in a formative, transition state, guide, control and fashion it into something edifying and promotive of a large and beautiful spiritual life, or allow it to go unchecked, running as it will, in not a few cases, into dangerous and repulsive extravagances. It is most fortunate when a subject so important can be calmly considered on its own merits, free from all those distracting and misleading influences which gather round a trial case in any of our church courts. The time is favourable for the subject receiving such treatment. In the Synod the importance of the preaching of the word was fully acknowledged, and a high place claimed for Presbyterian preaching, but while this was the case, there was also an all but universal acknowledgment that much more might be done to make all the other parts of the service contribute to the great ends for which the public social worship of God is designed.

IT was a hopeful and gratifying feature of the Synod to notice the interest felt not only in the excellent report upon the state of religion, but in the subject itself. Everything else connected with the church is subordinate to this, and however fine, attractive, or excellent it may be in many ways, if it does not promote this great end, it will only be a delusion and a snare. This is the end to which all else is but the means. And we believe that interest in this all-important matter is growing in our church. If this is really the case, it can only proceed from the indwelling in the church and the gracious power of the Holy Spirit, and so long as we have this, we need not fear any danger arising to the church from changes in forms of worship. If His power and teaching in the church are recognized and yielded to, nothing will be sought for contrary to the word of God, and if new modes of worship are instinct and filled with the Holy Spirit, they will assuredly promote true religion in the individual soul and in the church. The Synod did wisely in agreeing to devote one whole evening at its next meeting, to conference on this most vital of all subjects, the state of religion within its bounds.

ONE of the recommendations in the report on temperance caused not a little discussion because of its being suspected, rightly or wrongly, of having a political bias. It is unfortunate that while temperance is not in itself a political question, that yet owing to the force of circumstances it is scarcely possible to divorce it from party politics. It is not unnatural, it must be confessed, nay, it is most natural as things are amongst us, that politicians of either party should seek to get the benefit politically of all the credit which can possibly be secured from the position it takes with regard to temperance, and it is also natural that advanced temperance advocates, of whom we are glad that we have so many in our church, should speak well of and ally themselves with any party from which they can expect the most speedy and effectual realization of their hopes, that is, the enactment of a prohibitory liquor law.

WE gladly announce, that Rev. Dr. Cochran has received the sum of £179 11s. 2d. from the Free Church of Scotland, for Home Missions, made up as follows:—

Free St. George's, Edinburgh.	£119 4 6
Morningside Free Church, Edinburgh.	8 15 0
Kelvinside Free Church, Glasgow.	45 11 8
Professor Morry Stuart, Glasgow.	5 0 0
Mrs. Comrie, Tunbridge Wells.	1 0 0

	£179 11 2

And also from the Church of Scotland, from the Colonial Committee for Home Missions, the sum of £200, and from St. Giles Church, Edinburgh, £50, for Manitoba College, £50, and for Queen's College £50, for North-west Missions

ABJURATION OF ROMANISM.*

THE reception into the membership of the Presbyterian Church of L. J. A. Papineau, Seigneur of Montebello, Quebec, is an event in Canadian history of more than ordinary interest and significance. He was born and brought up in the Church of Rome, but his distant ancestors were Huguenots, some of whom were massacred and others exiled in the bloody times following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV. in 1685. Mr. Papineau and his progenitors possessed a spirit of manly independence which made them restive under Romish despotism. His grandfather quarrelled over a question of church discipline, with Monseigneur Lartique, first bishop of Montreal, and his father, the leader of the Canadian Rebellion of 1837, declared on the floor of Parliament that it was to Luther that the world owed its liberty of conscience and speech, and on his death-bed he declined to receive the last sacrament of the church. The present Seigneur, while being educated for the bar by the Sulpicians, manifested a similar disposition. His ecclesiastical teachers had occasion to rebuke him more than once for laughing at fabulous stories about saints whose names stand high in the Calendar of Rome. They found it impossible to crush out his natural tendency to think and investigate for himself. It goes without saying that this is a flagrant sin in the eyes of Romish, and especially Jesuit educationalists. Utter unreasoning submission to the will and dicta of the superior is the backbone of that system. To depart from this rule is a mortal offence.

When eighteen years old, Papineau, along with his father, was exiled on account of their part in the revolt of 1837. He took refuge in the State of New York and was there received most cordially into a godly Presbyterian family, where he first learned to think that salvation could be found outside of the Church of Rome. The example and lessons of that Christian home made a deep and lasting impression upon him. No longer terrorized by ecclesiastical dictation and penalties, he began to reason freely upon religious matters. He wrestled bravely with difficulties and doubts until one conviction became gradually stronger, and finally dominant, viz., that the Pope, the Cardinals and Bishops are not the representatives of Christ and His apostles. Accordingly at the age of twenty-five he ceased to practice the Roman Catholic religion. After fuller and more careful study he reached the conclusion that the Word of God is the true source of Christianity, and that all religious questions must be determined by its sole authority. He saw clearly that in barbarous ages the clergy had corrupted the Church with pagan beliefs, superstitions and ceremonies, until her primitive apostolic features had almost disappeared. She had become proud, avaricious, tyrannical; and things were not getting better but worse. Recently the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary was invented, and the Pope was made spiritual Czar by being pronounced infallible by the Vatican Council. The right of private judgment and liberty of conscience under his rule were extinct. As Mr. Papineau continued his study of ecclesiastical history and of the Bible he became fully persuaded that the most evangelical Church is the best, and finally decided to cast in his lot with Presbyterians as, in his judgment, keeping nearest to the Gospel. This was in substance the statement which he made in the face of a dense congregation of French Roman Catholics and Protestants, as he was received into the membership of St. John's Church, Montreal, on the 10th of February last. The consequences of his public confession will be felt in all parts of Canada and extend into the distant future.

For the present it is satisfactory to know that Mr. Papineau's large circle of friends have not been alienated from him. They continue to treat him with the same distinguished consideration and honour as heretofore. This is a pleasing tribute to his

* This is the title of an article which appeared in the last number of the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, from the pen of the Rev. Dr. MacVicar, of Montreal, and of which we here gladly present the substance.—Ed.

personal worth, and an indication of the growth of the spirit of toleration among the people.

The action of Mr. Papineau is very significant in many respects. It is fitted to inspire with courage the many thousands, if not hundred of thousands, of his compatriots who have lost confidence in Romanism and are groaning under its oppression. They are deterred from following him through cruel persecutions instituted by the clergy, through family ties, through social and business considerations, and through the dominant influence of the priests with their wives and daughters. Happily Mr. Papineau was free from the last-named influence. His wife was a devout Presbyterian, an American lady of ability and culture, and his daughter is and has been an active and useful Sabbath-school worker.

History repeats itself, and Mr. Papineau's example and the utterances of the French and English press in connection with it, will cause the repetition to go on with greater rapidity than heretofore. He is a man of high standing and unblemished reputation, and his wide influence among his countrymen and in the growing liberal party to which he belongs, is now all in one direction. His Seigneurship is the third largest in Canada, being fifty miles square, and extending this distance along the Ottawa river. By his recent action he has released himself and his estate from the grasp of ecclesiastics, and, no doubt, others will on due reflection see the wisdom of doing the same.

The public opinion brought to a head by this event and by other inspiring at the same time, is not to be set aside by those dignitaries who have so long had things their own way. Bishops, archbishops and priests are now being forcibly taught by the laity to walk circumspectly. The other day Mr. St. George, Advocate, had a priest fined one hundred dollars for slandering him from the pulpit. And the poet Freschette threatened through the press to deal with another in the same way for a similar offence.

His public step may teach bishops and priests a much-needed lesson of caution in the exercise of their unlimited power in imposing assessments for the erection, enlargement and maintenance of churches and mansions for the clergy. The people have hardly any voice in this matter, and it is high time that they were making themselves heard, for they are more oppressed than those of the papal countries of Europe.

For the last fifty years the Protestant Churches, and especially the Presbyterian Church, have been giving this people the gospel. The seed sown has all along yielded fruit, and will soon do so more abundantly. We do not underrate secular agencies. We are greatly cheered by hearing the people, the press, and members of Parliament loudly demanding better schools from which mediæval fables and trash must be banished. But we have unlimited confidence in the efficacy of the Word of God to break every yoke and set the people free. Hence we have sent out colporteurs to distribute the Word broadcast. They are the pioneers of our reformation work. Mission schools have also been established in many places—and these should be increased in number an hundredfold. The great central schools at Pointe aux-Trembles have given a Christian education to thousands of young men and women. Churches have been planted wherever openings have been found for them, and French pastors and missionaries have been trained in the Presbyterian College, Montreal, for the last twenty-five years. Not a few of these have followed their expatriated converts who have been driven by priestly persecution into the New England States, and are there actively engaged in their Master's service. Just now new life is being put into *L'Amoré*, the weekly French Protestant paper which has been published for many years. It is under the able management of Rev. C. E. Amaron, who has associated with him Revs. Dr. Conssirat, Joseph L. Morin, Theodore Lafleur and others, and its usefulness in the present crisis promises to be extensive.

These are the agencies, along with the secular press, that are destined to enlighten the minds of the people. It need hardly be added that they are naturally drawn to Presbyterianism as securing to them the liberty, fraternity, and equality they desire. They are not unmindful of the historic past. They appreciate the manner in which Protestant Britain sheltered and aided the exiled Huguenots. Those of them who, like Seigneur Papineau, study history, soon discover the attitude of the Reformers of the sixteenth century towards the Romish Hierarchy, and their souls become stirred within them to emulate the example of their great fellow-countrymen of Geneva.