

third of Synod is seldom in attendance another third have not left their homes, while the remaining third stand outside till the devotional exercises are nearly ended. We write this with a feeling of shame, but the truth of the statement is unquestionable, and the scandal, for such it is, should be removed.

But we believe that it cannot be removed unless more time is allowed for social intercourse. The apparent indifference to prayer, is *not real*, but the result of the yearning of the heart for social intercourse. Men meet and grasp each others hands, and inquire for wives and families after a year's separation. They have no other opportunity. They must not talk in Synod. As good Presbyters they cannot absent themselves, and unintentionally the earnest conversation at the door trenches on the time allotted to devotion. Let there be a time for introductions and social fellowship, as well as times for prayer, but when these last are agreed upon, let *all* shew that they regard the sweet hour of prayer as the most precious portion of the day and of the exercises.

### THE SYNOD COLLECTION.

Is expected to meet the travelling expenses of all the members of Synod, the necessary outlay of all special Committees doing the work of Synod, pay the fees of clerks and the expenses of all Deputations. The collections usually made will not do all this, and the consequence is that the fund is in a state of chronic insolvency. The average contribution instead of being about \$20, which it might be, amounts only to half that sum. A very large number of congregations might increase their collections by one-half, and if this is not done, either bills which ought to be paid, will be left undischarged, or money will be voted when there is none in fund. As at least three-fourths of these collections are made in the month of June, the present appears to be the proper time to remind our people of the claims of the fund. Instead of voting a fragment of some other collection, let the people have the opportunity of contributing to this object, especially whatever they may feel inclined to give.

### THE CHURCHES IN THE FATHERLAND.

The battle rages in the bosom of the Church of England as freely as ever between Ritualists, Rationalists, High Church, Low Church, Puritans and Papists. It is amazing to view the comprehensiveness of the Established Church of England; and none of the sects included in it seem willing to depart. The Archbishop of Canterbury has introduced a bill into the House of Lords intended to simplify and enforce the laws of the Church, with the view of checking Ritualism, or what is called "the Counter Reformation."

The result of the late elections in England in elevating to power what is mainly the "Church Party" leads to the impression that the rights and privileges of Dissenters will not be enlarged for a few years to come. The tendency of the hour is reactionary.

In Scotland there is talk about the abolition of Patronage, and thus so far liberalizing the Established Church and removing a grievance which its people complain of. Deputations have waited on the Government to promote this object. We cannot yet speak as regards the prospect of success. It is thought that a section of the Free Church,—Dr. Begg and his immediate associates,—would see their way clear to return to the Establishment if Patronage were removed.

In the Free Church this Anti-Patronage movement is not viewed with any degree of favour. It is regarded rather as an effort to remove an apparent blot upon the character of the Establishment without touching its real blemish. The Free Church idea is well expressed by Dr. Rainy:

'It is the duty,' he said, 'of the Established Church, as of every other Church, to improve its methods and promote its efficiency, according to the best judgment it can form of the most scriptural plans for those purposes. When she does so on principles of which we can approve, we have nothing to do but to rejoice in it. But I have never been able to see that any considerable legislative action about the Church of Scotland could take place without the disendowed Churches being called into the field—that is to say, without its being right to call them, and without its being right for them to respond to that call. I don't see