

France.

The Synod of the Reformed Church has held its meeting. It consisted of eighty delegates, about one half of whom were pastors. The following account is taken from *Evangelical Christendom* :—

"The majority of the Synod, if for the sake of convenience they are designated by some common name, may be denominated **RATIONALISTS**. Many shades of sentiment, however, are included under this general appellation. The Arian, Socinian, Pelagian, Neologian, and advocates of other forms of latitudinarianism, are there. They are, however, distinguished rather by their opposition to Evangelical doctrine than by any distinctly avowed formal principles. A small, we fear a very small, minority consists of men thoroughly **EVANGELICAL**;—evangelical in theoretic sentiment, and evangelical in all their sympathies. It is enough to characterize them as the warm friends of a spiritual and active evangelism, to observe that the chief ornaments of their party are the Rev. Frederic Monod and Count Agenor de Gasparin, men of whom we will here say no more than that any church in Christendom might covet to enrol them among its members. Between these two extremes there is a third party, professing to be orthodox in doctrine, and being for the most part, we believe, really so, but exceedingly desirous to ward off the adoption of any measure by the Synod which would necessitate an ecclesiastical separation between them and the Rationalists. They would make large concessions to the latter, rather than render their position in the church untenable; and, on the other hand, they would themselves submit up to the utmost point of endurance, rather than quit their own. If a pastor has liberty to preach the truth in his own pulpit, they think his conscience should be easy on other matters, and especially that he should not be greatly disturbed, though the Church, as such, can give no testimony to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and confers its orders on men who, there is too much reason to fear, hold semi-infidel principles, "denying the Lord that bought them."

The Synod assembled on Monday, the 11th of September, and was principally occupied during that day in verifying the powers of its members. The election of officers took place on Tuesday, when M. Buisson, of Lyons (Rationalist party), was chosen President; M. de Clausonne (Rationalist party), and M. Adolphe Monod, Vice-Presidents; and Paul de Rouville (layman), M. Blanc, M. Laurent, and M. Montandon (Rationalist party), Secretaries. A report was then brought up from the Commission appointed last May, detailing the

steps taken by them to convene the present Synod. A congratulatory address was also read from the Free Church of the Canton de Vaud. Various preliminary matters engaged the Synod the next day, relating to the regulations under which the public, or any other parties, should be allowed to be present at the debates, the publicity which should be given to their proceedings through the press, and the kind of communication which it was desirable that the assembly should have with the Government. These matters disposed of, the Synod came, on the morning of the 14th, to the important question, whether the Church should adopt a Confession of Faith. Five days were given to the discussion of this subject. In the course of the debate the question was thrown into various forms, and several propositions were submitted. At length a resolution was adopted, to the effect, that the doctrine of the Church should be left untouched;—the Synod, that is, adopts no existing Confession, nor deems it necessary to frame a new one. This resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority, there being not more than six or seven who voted against it. It was, at the same time, referred to a Committee to prepare an address from the Synod to the several churches (congregations) represented in it."

Count Gasparin has since withdrawn from the Church. Others will follow his example, and thus a Free Evangelical Church will be formed in France.

Switzerland.

NEUCHÂTEL appears likely soon to be the scene of a disruption like that in Scotland, or at least of secessions like those in Vaud. We learn from *La Réformation*, that the Council of State is expected to propose to the approaching Grand Council the ecclesiastical laws propounded in the new constitution; and it is a moral certainty that the State of Neuchâtel will follow the example of that of Vaud. "Now, if Erastianism," says our Swiss contemporary, "met with so much resistance on the borders of Lake Lemman, where it had existed *de facto* for three centuries, what may we not expect in a church (the church of the illustrious Farel) which, from its very origin, has enjoyed complete independence?" The peculiarity of this church is, that, at present, all power is in the hands of the clergy; and it is regarded as an impossibility that they should deliver themselves over, bound hand and foot, into the arms of the State. "The clergy," adds *La Réformation*, "will be justly jealous for their *autonomy*; but, by great good fortune, they will no longer be able to exercise it, without associating there-