

# THE HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD.

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MARCH, 1862.

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## PASTORAL LETTER.\*

THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE LOWER PROVINCES OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA, TO THE CONGREGATIONS UNDER THEIR CHARGE:

*Grace, Mercy, and Peace be unto you, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.*

BELOVED,—

OUR history as a united body is but short, and it seemed meet unto us and we trust, also to the Holy Ghost, to address you in this manner on several topics, suggested by our history, by the aspect of the times, and by the special dealings of God's providence with us as a Church. By the blessing of the Great Head of the Church, this may prove profitable alike to you and to us.

### I.

It is with deep concern that the Synod contemplate the laxity of opinion which obtains on the important subject of Marriage; and the persistent attempts, which are being made to weaken and destroy the sacred fences which the Word of God and the Standards of the Presbyterian Church have thrown around the marriage relationship; and they would most earnestly and affectionately remind all under their inspection, that the violation of the Divine precepts in reference to marriage exposes the violators to the wrath of God, and makes them liable to temporal, spiritual, and everlasting evil, as certainly as the violation of any other law in the Book of God. The law of God in regard to marriage, as contained in the Bible, is exhibited with singular clearness and precision in Chapter XXIV of the CONFESSION OF FAITH,—the diligent study of which is earnestly recommended to all, and more especially to the young, who are the hope of the Church, and on whose good conduct so much of the spiritual and social well-being of society depends. It is no small enforcement of this recommendation that the teaching of the "Confession" on this subject is in perfect harmony with the faith of the Church universal in all ages—Jewish and Christian; and that the law of the land and that of the Church are one on this point, so that any,

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\* "On motion agreed that a Pastoral Letter to the Church be prepared and published, and the following Committee was appointed for that purpose, Rev. Messrs. R. Sedgwick, J. Cameron, and William Murray. Mr. Sedgwick, Convener.—Extract from *Synod Minutes, Fifteenth Sederunt, July 3, 1861.*