

1853.

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MINUTES OF SYNOD, KINGSTON, TUESDAY, JULY 19, 1853.

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The Address of the Synod to Her Majesty the Queen was signed by the Moderator in presence of the Synod, and is as follows:—

UNTO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

May it Please Your Majesty,—

We, the Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, now in Synod assembled, embrace the opportunity, thus afforded us, of again most heartily testifying our warm attachment to your Majesty's person, and to the government of that Empire on the throne of which an All-wise Providence has placed you.

It is to us no small pleasure that we can again congratulate your Majesty on the birth of another prince. This auspicious event, while it must add to your Majesty's domestic felicity, is hailed by us with peculiar satisfaction, as furnishing an additional security for the perpetuation of a family under whose sway the British Empire has enjoyed a larger portion of liberty and prosperity than has fallen to the lot of any other people.

In approaching the Throne at this time it would have afforded us the highest gratification, had it been in our power to have uttered nothing but the language of esteem, loyalty, gratitude, and hope. But, painful as it must be to your Majesty as well as to us, we cannot, as the ardent friends of civil and religious liberty, forbear adverting to certain unhappy occurrences which have lately taken place in two of the principal cities of this Province. Peaceable Christian people, lawfully assembled in Protestant places of worship, have been assailed by infuriated mobs. While no government is to be held responsible for a sudden burst of popular folly or malice, yet in these cases there has been manifested indeed openly acknowledged an alarming inability on the part of the public authorities either to restrain violence or sustain the power of the law. Had this weakness or want of inclination to restrain violence and vindicate the majesty of the law been manifested on a violent conflict arising out of merely secular matters we should nevertheless have felt much uneasiness and grief: but, when we remember that these deplorable events, which have brought disgrace upon the Province and filled many bosoms with poignant sorrow, can be clearly traced to the avowed determination of a great number of persons to put down freedom of speech in our very churches, and by consequence to deprive us and our fellow Protestants of liberty of conscience, we cannot but feel extreme alarm. The British constitution secures many precious blessings to those who live under it, but none so valuable as entire liberty of conscience. Indeed, if this should ever be lost little would then remain in that constitution to which the enlightened friends of liberty could look with veneration, or which they would care to defend. The religion which we profess, the doctrines in which we have been nurtured, as well as the whole history of our Church so entirely identified as it is with the struggles and triumphs of liberty of conscience, render it impossible for us to contemplate that principle in peril with any other feeling than that of intense anxiety. As Presbyterian Protestants, we hold this principle to be sacred, and we shall by all lawful means calmly but firmly defend it. Our forefathers have left us no more precious inheritance. We are determined to transmit it to our children. Nor can we for a moment doubt that our Most Gra-