

# THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND MISSIONARY RECORD,

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## THE RECORD.

ONE of the principal objects contemplated in the establishment of this paper is the explanation and defence of those principles, for the full, unequivocal and unrestricted maintenance of which the minority of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connexion with the Scottish Establishment, felt themselves constrained to withdraw from that body, and institute according to Scriptural, Presbyterian order, a separate and independent Presbyterian Church in Canada. In prosecuting this part of our work, it shall be our aim rather to place our own views and motives in a clear light before the community, than to scrutinize and pass judgment on those of the parties who differ from us—to free ourselves from the misrepresentation and obloquy to which we have already been subjected in no small measure, without having recourse under any circumstances to the use of such weapons in retaliation. The *argumentum ad hominem* may sometimes be necessary and lawful, as it is very often efficient for the silencing of an opponent, but we greatly doubt its efficacy for producing conviction, or rather for leading an opponent to the adoption of sound views and a right course of action, and therefore we love it not. Personal hits, however palpable, and the insinuation of unworthy motives, however adroitly managed, cannot materially serve any good cause, and are only likely to break the bond of charity, to cause unseemly and unholy irritation and strife, to rouse "the wrath of man, which worketh not the righteousness of God." Our cause is too good to require the use of such means in its defence, and our full and honest consciousness of its goodness, will prove, we trust, a sufficient counterpoise to any provocation we may meet with, or other incitement to have recourse to them. We feel ourselves indeed in the place and circumstances where conscience and the best interests of the Church of Christ demand of us to speak the truth, and "the truth we will speak, impugn it whose list." Nevertheless, we would speak it in love and with all candour and moderation. It is with unfeigned regret that we see a tendency towards a very different course, manifested on the part of the brethren from whom we have separated. We refer to the draft of their answer to the Protest of the brethren who left the Synod in connexion with the Church of Scotland. To this document we shall perhaps have occasion to refer again more fully. Here we would only say that while it scarcely touches the actual ground of difference, but seems studiously designed to divert attention from it, its chief object, in almost every paragraph, evidently is either to deal a personal hit at one or other of the parties whom it professes to answer, or to institute comparisons, of course to their disadvantage, intellectually and morally, between them and those they have left, or to insinuate insincerity, unworthy motives and external influences, as having produced or characterized their proceedings, or to detect and hold up to contempt and scorn pretended inconsistencies in their actings, or to invoke public indignation on what is represented without proof as their causeless and reckless schism: concluding most incongruously with a lamentation over the separation of so many so well beloved. This unworthy and very mischievous work, not less at variance with the proprieties of an Ecclesiastical document

of that kind than with charity, is prosecuted with a degree of keenness, animosity and apparent hearty good will to the occupation that will square much better with the old national motto, "Nemo me impune lacessit," than with anything to be found in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians. We again say that we deeply regret to observe a tendency to such a course, and we trust we shall be enabled to look at it rather as a beacon than as a model. We have differed—widely differed from these brethren. We do not expect that this difference can continue to exist without discussion, nor do we wish it should do so. But surely there is a "more excellent way" of conducting the discussion than what is exemplified in the document in question, and in the tone of some of the Ecclesiastical actings, which have more recently occurred on the same side. Surely, if there ever was any real christian esteem and brotherly love between us, enough at least ought still to remain to restrain the detestable natural propensity to bite and devour.— Surely in a cause about the goodness of which one has no conscientious qualms or misgivings, there can be no use for other armour, either defensive or offensive, than what sound logic, firmness, candour, meekness and forbearance may furnish or sanction.

## THE DISRUPTION.

In the pain which this event has doubtless inflicted on many minds, we deeply sympathize. Some of its more immediate and obvious consequences are such as every right hearted man must deplore: We do deplore them, and as we honestly, earnestly, and perseveringly sought to avert the catastrophe in which they originate, so should we joyfully lend a hand in helping forward any effort to repair the breach, which should not involve the sacrifice of the principles for which we feel more than ever bound and inclined to maintain an unequivocal testimony. We can therefore easily understand and appreciate the expressions of regret which we hear from all parties in connexion with the Disruption of the Synod. We can sympathize also, and exercise great forbearance with those who, not much accustomed to appreciate the value of great principles, and scarcely able to look beyond or above the more immediate and prominent results, and the mere local interests affected by them, can discern little or nothing in the way of compensation in the case, and regard the event in question as an unmingled evil. As to those who broadly avow the opinion that it is right and expedient that the civil power should exercise authority in spiritual things, and that the doctrine of Sir James Graham, and the majority of the Court of Session on the subject, is sound and good, we can at least understand them, and do not much wonder at the reprobation with which they regard the conduct of the Protestors. We can even comprehend that small, but very intellectual and dignified class—of which we fall in now and then with a specimen, who declares with a most imposing air, and an emphasis which no one can mistake, that it is impossible that he could think of remaining connected with any Church that was not established, and whose religious and ecclesiastical principles are so simple, so enlarged, and at the same time so firmly fixed, that they at once indicate the course which the holder of them would pursue at Rome or even Constantinople. But we do not well understand those amongst us who profess to hold the principles for which we are testifying, and yet are continually

asking—what occasion was there for disruption here? and what had we to do with the Church of Scotland? The careful, intelligent and candid reader of the Pastoral Address of the Protestant Synod, will, we doubt not, find full satisfaction on these points, and we would earnestly commend that document to the attention of all who are concerned, to think and act correctly in this crisis of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. We feel that we can add nothing as an argument at once so simple, so clear, and so urgent. But in regard to the parties last referred to, and the questions under which they press their objection to the course of the Protestors, we can not help wondering at the new light which seems to have broken in upon them so recently. In 1811, '12, and even '13, no one holding the principles and cherishing the sympathies which they lay claim to, ever thought of doubting that we had something to do with the Church of Scotland—they did so simply felt that we had very much to do with her, that we were in fact, and in universal estimation, her representative in Canada, and the idea of our remaining indifferent and neutral in the great contest in which she was engaged, and the two great parties immediately involved in it, was never heard of. We held the principles in question, we regarded them as of vital importance—we admired the men who were so nobly contending for them—we looked upon them as the true representatives of Scotland and her Church—we felt, and did not stop to ascertain with cool calculating precision, the amount of our direct interest in their contending, and we honestly avowed our opinions and our sympathies—leaving no room for doubt as to which party we held to be right, and feeling that it would be utterly unworthy to do so. How comes it then that any of us can now ask, what have we to do with the Church of Scotland, or how can any one censure the conduct of those, whose simple and only wish has been to utter and act out their honest convictions of duty without variation or equivocation—who only desire that the virtual condemnation which they expressed regarding the Erastian party in the Church of Scotland, in 1811, '12, '13, shall not be displaced by virtual approbation in 1841—not their deliberate approbation and cordial professions of esteem and admiration in regard to the non-intrusionists of 1811, '12, '13, succeeded by virtual disapprobation or cold neutrality in 1841. This is all that the Protestors have sought for or aimed at. Is this intermeddling in the affairs of the Church of Scotland beyond what is necessary, or was there no cause for disruption, where equivocation and inconsistency in matters of so much moment constituted the only alternative. The matter in a word, stands just thus, to our view. We have often in the most deliberate and solemn manner declared our adherence to the principles of the spiritual independence of the Church, and the non-intrusion of Ministers on reclaiming congregations, as scriptural, fundamental, and essential to the well being of the Church, and we have professed to regard the Free Church of Scotland as the faithful advocate and maintainer of these principles while the Establishment has practically cast them away and trampled on them. How could we under any circumstances—and especially after what we had previously said and done—turn the cold shoulder to the former and the warm one to the latter, or even act as if we were neutral between them; and yet this is precisely what the Synod, in connexion with the Scottish Establishment is doing, and what we would in effect have done had we remain-