

J. C. Macdonald
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THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND MISSIONARY RECORD.



FOR THE
Presbyterian Church of Canada.

"Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and the strength of salvation."

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Notices.

MEETING OF PRESBYTERY.

The Presbytery of Toronto, will meet in the Divinity Hall, Knox's College, on the first Wednesday of September, at 12 o'clock, noon.

P. GRAY, Pres. Clerk.

COMMISSION OF SYNOD.

The Commission of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, will meet in the Divinity Hall of Knox's College, Toronto, on the third Wednesday of October, at 7 o'clock, P. M.

W. RINTOUL, Synod Clerk.

SYNOD'S HOME MISSION COMMITTEE.

The Synod's Home Mission Committee will meet in the Library of Knox's College, Toronto, on the third Wednesday of Oct., at 8 o'clock, P. M., when the Missionaries at their disposal will be allocated to the different Presbyteries for the winter half year. Presbytery Clerks are requested to send applications for Missionaries, to the Convener, at least a week previous to the meeting.

RALPH ROSS, Convener

THE MINUTES OF SYNOD, 1849, are for sale by D. McLellan, Bookseller, Hamilton; Mr. James Stewart, Kingston; J. R. Orr, Esq., Montreal, and at the Agency Office of the Synod, Toronto, —price 5s. per doz., or 6d. each.

REPORT OF COLLEGE COMMITTEE, 1849.

The Committee will endeavour in this Report to present to the Synod, a distinct account of their procedure, in fulfilling the general duties devolved upon them, and in carrying into effect the special instructions of the Synod; subjoining such remarks, as, along with the relative documents may enable the Synod to form a just estimate of the condition and working of their Institution, and to determine what measures may be necessary to secure, and extend its efficiency.

The Committee met immediately after the meetings of the Synod were brought to a close,—and having chosen Mr. Rintoul, and Mr. Gale, as their Chairman and Secretary, respectively,—they appointed a sub-committee, to draft some interim regulations, respecting the admission of students, and the competition for Bursaries, at the commencement of the then ensuing session of the College. Both these are matters of consequence; the former, indeed, manifestly involving some of the highest interests of the Institution; and the latter having an important bearing, not only on the immediate object of the competition—the development of the comparative attainments of the students, and the inciting of them to steady, ardent and well-directed efforts in the various departments of learning—but also on the success of the winter session, which should, as far as possible, be kept free from the interruption of its proper work, necessarily occasioned both to professors and students; by the introduction of the competition in the midst of it.

The next meeting of the Committee was held on the 18th October, at the commencement of the winter session. This meeting was continued by adjournments until the 4th November—the Committee being principally engaged at several successive sittings in the examination and admission of students. In conducting these examinations, the Committee adopted such rules and methods, as the experience of former cases had suggested, which, although no specific legislation has hitherto taken place on the subject, had been brought under the view of the Synod, in the previous reports, and had met with a general approval in that Court. The object mainly kept in view by the Committee in this work were, first, to satisfy themselves, as to the personal religion of the applicant, and the motives by which he had been prompted to the proposed dedication of himself to the Gospel ministry—secondly, to form a judgment as to his gifts and talents being such as to justify his entering on a course of study, with a view to the sacred office—thirdly, to ascertain his actual state as to mental culture, and his pro-

gress in Education. It is to be observed, that this process of examination was not confined to those who were applicants for admission into the Institution for the first time. In the case of entrants the examination was of course more full and minute—but all the students, whatever their standing and progress, were individually dealt with—and when the number is considered that came under this review, it will be obvious on a moment's reflection, that this department of duty, as it is a most important and delicate one, is also attended with great labour, and necessarily occupies much time. Fifty students in all were admitted during last session, to which number there ought to be added three who have been in attendance during former sessions, and who are believed to retain their purpose of continuing the course on which they have entered, and who have only been prevented from attending the classes during the past session, by providential hindrances which it may be expected will be removed by the commencement of the ensuing one. The result of these examinations, as to the most objects of them, was on the whole highly satisfactory—the members of Committee, engaged in conducting these, finding some tokens of the grace of God abiding and increasing in very many of the students, and in all that they admitted, such evidence of godliness as, when coupled with the earnest desire exhibited of giving themselves to the work of the Lord, and with the measure of talents and attainments proposed, justified a reasonable, and in the great majority of cases, a confident hope of spiritual growth, and of ultimate usefulness in the Lord's vineyard. In regard to the principles on which these examinations were conducted, to immediate decision in each case, it may be well to observe, that the examination proceeded on the clear understanding, that no one should be admitted for the first time to the benefits of the Institution, nor even afterwards, at any stage, permitted to continue to enjoy them, unless he seem to them to exhibit reasonable promise of future usefulness in the ministry. At the same time they are deliberately of opinion, and it is an opinion has been strikingly confirmed by instances that must already have come under the observation of the Committee among the Students, that hasty final judgments, as to spiritual character, are very unsafe, especially when they are founded, as in this case they must be in a great measure, on the mere impressions derived from one or two brief interviews; and they are fully satisfied that the only wise course, in present circumstances at least, is to make the decision in regard to the fitness of applicants for the service of the sanctuary, to depend in a considerable degree on the full and unequivocal evidence, both as to piety and talents, which will be obtained by inter-