

## MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

THE Rev. Dr. Robb, of Galway, Ireland, desires with thanks to acknowledge the receipt of thirty-five barrels of flour and oatmeal, contributed by friends in Toronto, Canada, in relief of Irish distress, and forwarded by Alderman John Hallam; also the sum of two pounds eleven shillings and five pence sterling, forwarded by Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, B.D., balance of funds in his hands for similar purposes. These benefactions have proved suitable and seasonable.

ON Monday, August 23rd, a committee representing the congregation of the Presbyterian church of Petrolea, waited upon their pastor, the Rev. J. McRobie, and presented him with a handsome morocco purse, containing the sum of \$100, as a mark of the esteem in which he is personally held and as evidence of their appreciation of his abilities as a preacher of the Word. The address was read by Mrs. Alex. McDonald on behalf of the committee and congregation, and was as follows: "To the Rev. John McRobie. Rev. Dear Sir, - We have the honour of appearing before you, as a committee, from a congregational meeting held on the 17th inst. Such was the solicitude of your people, as it became known that your health was failing, that a meeting of the congregation was held, and a resolution passed, asking you to avail yourself of your undoubted right, and to take an annual holiday, and as a fitting accompaniment to this resolution, it was agreed that an opportunity should be given the congregation of contributing to a fund to be presented to you, to enable you comfortably to take such a change of air as might be the means of restoring you to your wonted health. We would therefore respectfully ask you to accept this expression of good-will from your people, and have only to add the often expressed wish of your congregation, that you may return much benefited by your rest. Signed on behalf of the congregation. M. McDonald, M. McLean, J. McMillan, N. Scott, W. Taylor, W. Clark." For some little time the Rev. gentleman has shewn evident signs of weariness, and his appreciative congregation, unwilling that he should sacrifice his health in their spiritual interest, without reward, organized this pleasing scheme to allow him an opportunity to recuperate his exhausted energies. We understand he purposes spending a few days at Niagara Falls and from there will proceed to the Pan-Presbyterian Council at Philadelphia, which convenes early in the incoming month. We wish the Rev. gentleman an enjoyable holiday, and a speedy return of his old-time healthful vigour.

THE Rev. Dr. Blaikie, Edinburgh, editor of the "Catholic Presbyterian," occupied the pulpit of Cooke's Church, Toronto, on Sabbath morning last, and preached to a crowded congregation from 1 Sam. ii. 27-30. In the course of his sermon the Dr. spoke of the honour and obedience that is due to God. If you view God as the head of an army you will be like soldiers in this sense, by obedience you will rise in the ranks and be promoted to the highest honour; and if you view Him as the head of a court, by obedience you will be raised to the highest office. God is the same God to-day as in ages past. The law of heaven is more stable than the law of the Medes and Persians. You should honour God and obey His will, for the men that honoured God, He honoured them. Some light may be thrown on the real meaning of the words "honouring God" by deeply considering the words of the text. God reproved Eli, the priest, for the sins of his sons, who dishonoured God. They kept back to themselves a portion of the offerings of the people, and made offerings to God of the fragments. To honour God is to pay what is due to Him out of the property which may come into our hands. We should pay honour to God with what God claims as His share out of the substance we possess. It should be given cheerfully and with a profound feeling that it was due to God. He does not want us to pay to Him all the property we have. God deals with us in a frank spirit, and it is left to our own conscience to know what we owe Him for the benefits and goodness He has bestowed on us. God expects that His children will remember Him and His claim in the disposition of what property comes into their hands. You honour God when you give to Him that which He claims cheerfully and thankfully, and not grudgingly or of necessity. That is only part of what is meant by honouring God. To honour God is to render to Him respect, to obey the will of God with unqualified

obedience forever. To surrender obedience to the will of man is far different to that of obeying the will of God. The soldier or sailor knows the will of his superior officer, and obeys it without hesitation. The society of Jesuits requires that those belonging to that order make oath that they will implicitly obey the will of man. No human being should so completely give up his soul and conscience to a fellow creature. It is robbing God when they make a fellow-creature their lord and master. It is sinful to give to a fellow-creature what is due to the Creator. He that honours God must regard God's will and render Him unhesitating obedience. We find such men in Abraham, Eli, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and the prophet Daniel and others. Readiness in doing the will of God and in obeying Him was strongly shewn in the offering made by Abraham of his son Isaac, and his departure from his father's house to sojourn in a strange land. Abraham knew that he must render to God absolute obedience. He went forth from his father's house not knowing where his feet would rest, and when commanded to offer up as a burnt offering to God, the child of promise, he obeyed. We must not think that the law which guided the ancient people has been repealed. The same obligation rests on us as it did on them, and will continue until the day of judgment. On the day of judgment it will be seen whether God approves of the principles that have guided men through this life. The Lord Jesus said, "Not every man that says unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father, which is in heaven." To honour God is to place your trust in Him. Job honoured God when he said, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Yet Job had been brought near to the edge of the precipice, and in another moment might have fallen over, he had complained against the Lord, yet he honoured God. God moves in a mysterious way His wondrous works to perform. You cannot honour God unless you in spirit follow His will. God is honoured by those who trust in Him. God has honour to give those who honour Him by giving them great spiritual prosperity, and sometimes temporal prosperity. Those who honour God will be the more prosperous men as a rule. We see how wonderfully some men do the work of God, men who are not cultivated, or highly educated as many others have been. They are men in a plain position of life, yet they successfully undertake the work of God, and God blesses them. Who are the men who have done the most for the good of the world? Luther honoured God. Many princes were against him, and the power of the Church of Rome was ready to crush him. He taught the people to trust in the Rock of Ages, which God would not allow to be removed. Then we have Wilberforce, and many others who did their work steadfastly and immovably, giving all to the glory of God. They honoured God, and sought to serve Him. God honours those who honour Him, and gives them enjoyments which the world cannot give or take away. Christ says, "He that loves Me and will keep My word, My Father will love him and honour him." Many, no doubt, have seen the Bass Rock in the Frith of Forth. There, some two hundred years ago, a number of good Covenanters were confined in a dreary dungeon. It must have been a sad, dreary life for them while held in that dreary dungeon. They could hear the noise of the waves around them, but everything else was cut off from them. God remembered them, and blessed them with spiritual consolation, and poured into their hearts a vision of faith which sustained their drooping spirits. If any of the young men or women of this congregation had not a fixed maxim to guide them let them deeply consider the words contained in the text, "Those who honour Me I will honour." That is a maxim that will stand the test of time and eternity. Let that be the rule of your lives, and the more you feel it, the more peace and happiness it will bring you, and when the judgment day comes it will be found the right one. Remember, you cannot serve two masters; God must be master. Do not shrink away from this maxim, for if you do you will shew yourself to be morally a coward. Are you prepared to say that you have not courage enough to take for yours that principle and maxim which will serve you for your whole life? Do not favour mere worldly maxims, or content yourselves with the mere rules of life which will not stand, but choose the rule which is established through all eternity—that great principle which will prevail on that day when God will judge the world. In the evening Dr. Blaikie preached in St. Andrew's Church, also to a very crowded congregation.

## FREE CHURCH COMMISSION.

THE CASE OF PROFESSOR SMITH.

The Commission of Assembly of the Free Church met at Edinburgh, on Tuesday, August 10th, when there was an unusually large attendance of members, and Rev. Thomas Main, Moderator of Assembly, presided. The principal business was the consideration of twelve memorials concerning the article on Hebrew Language and Literature, by Professor Robertson Smith. The memorials were from the Presbyteries of Aber-  
tarff, Breadalbane, Caithness, Dingwall, Inverness, Linlithgow, Lockerbie, Meigle, Nairn, Stornoway, Edinburgh, and Tongue. There was also submitted from the Presbytery of Aberdeen, the letter recently written by Professor Smith, and noticed in these columns, giving an explanation with reference to the writing and publication of the article.

Mr. Laughton, Greenock, in reply to a question by Mr. Grant, Tain, read minute of the College Committee, at which a memorial was considered from the Presbytery of Tain with reference to Professor Smith's views, and shewing that the College Committee resolved to take no action in the matter.

Dr. Wilson then proceeded to point out that a grave crisis had arisen, which warranted interference by the Commission. He differed from the exposition of the deliverance of last Assembly in Professor Smith's letter, and pointed out that since the Presbytery of Aberdeen had not seen it their duty to take up disciplinary action, it would be tyrannical to force them to do so. He moved "That the Commission, having respect to the letter of Professor Smith transmitted by the Presbytery of Aberdeen, and to the representations made to them by so many Presbyteries as to the writings of Professor Smith, to which attention has been called since last General Assembly, and considering the widespread uneasiness and alarm as to the character of these writings, resolve to appoint a committee maturely to examine them and the letter of Professor Smith, and to consider their bearing upon the accepted belief and teaching of the Church, to report their opinion and advice to an *in hunc effectum* meeting of Commission, which is hereby appointed to be held on 27th October next, at eleven o'clock, that they may be prepared to take such action in this matter as may appear requisite; and the Commission hereby cite Professor Smith to appear for his interest at this *in hunc effectum* meeting, and instruct the clerks to see that a citation is served upon him in due form." He thought it necessary to state openly and frankly that that motion contemplated the possibility, by no means the certainty, that the Commission might see cause to interpose its authority to prohibit Professor Smith from resuming his teaching in the College at Aberdeen—and if that should be the issue of the committee's inquiry, it was evidently necessary that the Commission should meet previous to the commencement of the College session. That was the reason why an *in hunc effectum* meeting was proposed to be held at the end of October.

Dr. Gould seconded the motion. A question was now raised of graver and wider aspect than that merely affecting Professor Smith. He, however, protested against the idea that in the question that had been raised any new light had broken upon the world. He believed it was an old question, and that not merely in English but in German works the question had been stated forty years ago, and that with more ability than it had ever been stated by Professor Smith in the articles which had occasioned the present re-opening of this question.

Professor Macgregor moved.—"While deeply regretting the renewed agitation in connection with Professor Smith's public teaching, the Commission, considering that the case of Professor Smith has already been dealt with by the Assembly, and that such matters as that which has emerged since that time ordinarily fall to be dealt with by the College Committee and Presbytery of Aberdeen, resolve, *in hoc statu*, to take no action in the matter." In supporting the motion, Dr. Macgregor argued that there had not been any alleged violation of the law, but an outrage of the feelings of the Church in relation to Scripture. He never heard of the Commission trying a man, and it was for those who thought there was an accusation provable against Professor Smith to go to the Presbytery of Aberdeen, demand to be received as prosecutor, and have the case tried.

Mr. Donald Falconer, Carmylie, seconded the motion.