

ELORA.—A meeting of young people was held in Knox's Church on the evening of the 1st February, which was opened with praise and prayer by the Rev. John Duff. Alex. Watt, Esq., in the Chair.

Mr. Duff stated the object of the meeting—that he was desirous the young should have all the honour of doing the work, but that he should most willingly attend at their meetings, and aid them to the utmost of his power. It was then

Resolved 1. To form a Bible and Missionary Society, in connection with the United Presbyterian Church. **2.** That the sum of 7½d. annually, shall constitute a member. **3.** That the business of the Society shall be managed by a Committee of nine—consisting of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, &c. **4.** That the Committee shall meet quarterly, on the evenings of the first Tuesdays of February, May, August and November. **5.** That the Annual Meeting shall be held in Knox's Church, on the evening of Tuesday, the 1st February, 1854, at seven o'clock.

The meeting was truly a delightful one. The young people evinced great interest in the cause, and over four dollars were collected. It is also worthy of notice, that a pleasing mark of affection was given to their Sabbath School Teachers, by electing them to the principal offices of the Society. Several parents and others were present, taking a lively interest in the work. Mr. Duff stated the great happiness he felt in seeing them all so willing to work for Christ, and hoped they would not forget to pray—"Thy kingdom come." Mr. Duff then pronounced the blessing.—*Com.*

HYMN BOOK.

To the Editor of the Canadian Presbyterian Magazine.

COLUMBUS, Jan. 1st, 1853.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

It was with some surprise, not unmixed with regret, that I read your editorial remarks, in the October No. of the *Magazine*, on the introduction of the U. P. Hymn Book. No doubt others have noticed the tendency of that article as well as I, and I have waited in the expectation that some person, more competent, would address you on the subject. Failing this, I solicit your attention to the following remarks:—The U. P. Hymn Book has been anxiously looked for by the mass of those connected with our Church, and their desire to possess and peruse it will be much hindered by the tenor of your article; since, if that be correct in principle respecting the need of independent action on the part of the Canadian Synod, the Hymn Book must come before them, not simply for their adoption, but as a work the production of a Committee, who have been laboring and culling, for so many years, from the works of the talented and the pious, the choicest of Zion's songs. A committee will be required to take it up and report—not unlikely their report may contain suggestions of amendment, consequently the entire book would have to be sent down to Presbyteries and Sessions, thus the proposal in your article is virtually to postpone indefinitely its introduction.

This is not all, this *constitutional course* would almost of necessity call out diversity of sentiment, and exceedingly likely by controversy, sow discord among brethren. As a Presbyterian I have the highest respect for constitutional procedure, and most profound deference for ministers and members of the Canadian Synod, still, I cannot but think the course suggested not only utterly uncalled for, but for the above and other reasons, much to be deprecated. I cannot but think of the ridiculous aspect our Canadian Synod (not larger than some of the Home Presbyteries) would present in sitting down to *revise* the Hymn Book! The result of so much experience, piety, and taste; the very idea strikes us common folks as truly ludicrous. The Synod might make a vaporous show of independence, truly, but not a few of those who know something of the Scottish Synod would be hard to convince that it did not savour of presumption. But apart from all this, what is proposed is a procedure beyond what is contemplated by the parent Church; that body (and we formed part of it, when the committee was appointed to prepare the Hymn Book) has done all that as a body it intends, or feels warranted to do; it has sent forth, with full sanction, the U. P. Hymn Book, and no further action is contemplated. To receive and adopt a collection thus carefully prepared, would, in my humble opinion, be far the most creditable course for our body here to take, that is to say, each session or congregation, whenever and wherever it can be amicably and cordially adopted.

That this would be unconstitutional I cannot see. Examples of analogous procedure are not wanting. Certain ministers of our body in different parts of Canada, adopted the amended formula of ordination, and were sustained by their Presbyteries; and in many other respects the Synod, and individual ministers, have been always following, and greatly to their credit, the action of the Home Synod. One instance of the kind particularly in point was, if I am not mistaken, the acquiescence in the late union, and the continuance, in every respect, of the same relation to

the united Church, as that sustained before to the part from which the Canadian Synod directly sprang; that is to say, all this has been without any Synodical action. None, at least, have I heard of.

I trust that these remarks will be received in the spirit of love, in which they are made. Dictated by a sincere desire for the welfare of our Zion, by one who has often, with the deepest emotion, sung a portion of the sacred songs embodied in the U. P. Hymn Book, in a little collection recognised by one of the bodies which now constitute the United Church, in the hope that in the assembly of his saints, I shall soon again have the privilege of praising God in these sweet melodies, I subscribe myself,

With great respect, yours,

A LAYMAN.

It is necessary to append some remarks on the above letter. We do not feel bound to admit critiques on editorials; but, as what we write we are prepared to defend, until convinced of error; and as our friend, "A Layman," has given the best arguments that can be used for the immediate use of the Hymn Book, it may be of service to our readers to have his letter before them.

"A Layman" writes as if, in the editorial referred to, there was opposition to the Hymn Book. It was said then, that we had long been in favor of a Hymn Book. We say it again. But we objected to its introduction in an unconstitutional way. We object now. It is true that there may be irregularities by individual congregations, and no one may feel inclined to say a word about them; but it is quite a different thing to allow them to exist as a right, and to extend over the Church as a principle. There is in this country, among Presbyterians, a spirit of independency, a do-what-I-please sort of feeling, that we shall meet in dead earnest wherever we find it, and contend for constitutional order for the preservation of Presbytery. It is no argument to say a minister has done this, and a Presbytery has done that, and therefore it is law. We say nothing is lawfully done, that is done unconstitutionally, and nothing affecting the rules, doctrines, or psalmody of the Church, can be introduced lawfully, except by its Supreme Court. That is our general principle as briefly stated as we can.

Now to the letter. "A Layman" says, that if we take the constitutional course, we must do as the Church in Scotland did, have a committee to examine the Book, and report, and then send it down to presbyteries and sessions for their reports, and thus postpone its admission indefinitely. Well, if that is the only constitutional course, adopt it. But the Synod may at next meeting take another course, and either refuse or sanction its admission at once, or leave sessions to judge of its admission in their respective congregations.

Again, he seems to think it absurd that our Synod, not larger than some of the Home Presbyteries, should sit down to review what the Church in Scotland has sanctioned. Are we not a Synod having all the powers of an independent judicatory; and, though small, are we to give up our position as a Church? Our friend, we daresay, is a thorough Reformer, perhaps a real Clear Grit, and, of course, whatever the Imperial Parliament enacts, in reference to our local affairs in Canada, he will receive, because the population of Canada West is not larger than many of the counties of England! Oh! friend Layman! We have got responsible government, but we must take the English tax acts, and we must submit to whatever is done in regard to the Clergy Reserves, because the Home Government has decreed, and because the population of an English County is as large as in Canada! Will that accord with your political principles? and if not, how ought it to accord with your religious ones?

Again, the Church in Scotland will take "no further action." Of course not, because it is done for the Church there, but *not yet* for the Church here.

He gives us "examples of analogous procedure." Ministers have "adopted the amended Formula and were sustained by their Presbyteries." They did not require to be sustained by their Presbyteries, because the Synod has already sanctioned the amended Formula; but if ministers used it, and Presbyteries sanctioned them before it was sanctioned by Synod, they acted unconstitutionally. But instead of vague statements, "A Layman" gives us a case in point, which, if he be correct, finishes us at once: that is, that the Church has tacitly acquiesced in the late union, and of course changed the name of the Church, "without any Synodical action," at least, so far as he has heard.

It was a pity he had not heard better, or enquired more. The Synod