

THE APPROACHING MEETING OF SYNOD.

The time is fast approaching when the Ministers and Elders of the Church will be called upon to meet and confer on the various important interests of the Church. In our present state with our institutions and operations still in a comparatively immature condition, many important interests must necessarily engage the attention of our annual meetings. Our home missionary operations, and our means for Theological training, intimately connected together, and forming the great work of our Church in Canada, require full and deliberate consideration. On the steps we now take may depend in a great measure, under God, the future of the Canada Presbyterian Church. Let the friends of the Church earnestly pray that wisdom, and meekness and forbearance, may be largely bestowed on all the brethren.

The meeting will, we trust, be largely attended. Arrangements are being made for the accommodation of members of Synod in Montreal, and for obtaining the usual reduction in fare from the Railway and Steamboat companies. Looking to the proposed establishment of a General Assembly and District Synods, we may regard the ensuing meeting of Synod as perhaps the last general Synod of the Body. We trust and pray that through the blessing of God it may be the means of doing much good, and of giving a fresh impulse to the cause of truth in our land.

THE ASPECT OF THE TIMES PRACTICALLY CONSIDERED.

LECTURE BY REV. DR. BURNS AT CLOSING OF SESSION AT KNOX COLLEGE.

It may be profitable to advert to the analogical relation which seems to obtain between God's special providence in regard to individual members of the Church, and the Church as a whole. As the Holy Spirit takes a gracious dealing with the one in the way of trial for purification and more abundant fruitfulness, so has He in times past dealt with the other in its more visible aspects: yea, is doing so at the present moment. The Waldensian witnesses in the valleys of Piedmont; Wickliffe and his followers in Britain and on the continent, genuine successors of the Culdees of a former age, and with a purer and steadier light; Luther, and Calvin, and the noble army of Protestant Reformers, together with the suffering band of 2,000 in England and 400 in Scotland, in the gloomy St. Bartholomew days of 1662; these were all part and parcel of "the fan in Jehovah's hand," wherewith he was winnowing his floor, and separating the chaff from the wheat. And has it not been the same in times more recent, yea, in our own day? In the earlier portion of the eighteenth century, the Churches in Britain as in Germany and France, imbibed grievous errors, and sunk into a state of great spiritual apathy: and God raised up the Frankes and the Speners of the continent; the Romaines and the Whitfields and the Wesleys in England, and the fathers of the secession in Scotland, as suitable instruments for "trying the spirits," and vindicating the truth. In our own day, the disruption of 1813 in the Scottish Establishment, brought character and principles to the test, and roused slumbering religious communities to a healthier vitality. Under our own eyes, do we not see Churches as it were only half reformed, and establishments which have proved themselves effete, filled with alarm by insidious but persevering assaults from within, and an ominous pressure from without? And assuredly, God has in view wise and gracious ends in all this. Dormant Churches will yet be roused from their slumbers. The "fire will try the gold, the silver, the precious stones, as also the wood, the hay, and the stubble:" and scriptural principles and holy practice shall gain the ascendant over pernicious error, cold formalism, and open profligacy.

There cannot be a doubt, that the most fearful of "the signs of the times," is, the unblushing infidelity which has burst forth in quarters where it was least to be expected, and by agencies which policy as well as principle, might