

To the Editor of the Record.

### VISIT TO SIMCOE, VICTORIA, AND PORT DOVER, BY THE REV. GLO. CHILYNE.

In compliance with the order of Presbytery, I send you a brief account of my visit to Simcoe, Port Dover, and Vittoria, which I paid, in accordance with its appointment.

I arrived at Simcoe on Thursday, the 25th of September, and immediately called upon Mr. Polley, an Elder, and D. Campbell, Esq. To these gentlemen I frankly stated that I had been appointed by the Presbytery to visit these parts, and preach to the Presbyterian population on the Lord's Day; and, if the people wished to hear, that I intended to hold a meeting on a week evening, for the purpose of giving an exposition of those principles which had recently divided the Church both here and in our native land. I was kindly received by both gentlemen; Mr. Campbell said the people would be glad to hear those principles expounded, and promised to make all necessary arrangements for divine service on Sabbath. I intended to have called upon others, but had no time for that; and next day (Friday) I was anxious to leave early, as no previous intimation had been given at Port Dover or Vittoria of my intention to preach at those places on Sabbath, and I would have an opportunity of doing so on my return to Simcoe on Saturday. On the way to Port Dover I called on a Mr. Waddel, a respectable, intelligent, and prosperous farmer, and got him to circulate the notice of the intended service at Port Dover on Sabbath. Having made arrangements at Port Dover, I went on to Vittoria, where I arrived at night, and next morning issued notices of divine service on Sabbath evening. As it rained, I was unable to return to Simcoe in the early part of the day, but was able to pay a few visits at Vittoria. On returning to Simcoe I was grieved to find that no official intimation had been given of my appointment. I preached, however, in the Baptist Church to a small congregation.

Simcoe is the district town of the Talbot District, situated in the heart of a very fine surrounding country. Its situation is beautiful, and it has some water privileges for mill purposes, from a small stream which runs through it, and which will add much to its prosperity; yet, being situated inland, seven miles from the lake, it can hardly ever become a large town. Having got some refreshment, after service here, I set out immediately for Port Dover, where I was to preach at two o'clock. There being no Church, the service was held in a large room of one of the hotels. Here there was a large and attentive congregation; not fewer, perhaps, than 150 to 200 were in attendance, and it is to be hoped that the word was not ineffectual. Before pronouncing the blessing, I mentioned that I had been appointed by the Presbytery to visit them and preach; and if they should desire, that the intention was to give them a stated supply of preaching; but as they were at present supplied with regular service by Mr. Dyer, this would not be necessary. After the congregation was dismissed, I was requested by several individuals to visit them again, or even to follow out the Presbytery's original intention. Though at present this might not be deemed necessary, another visit in the course of this winter might be profitable. Here it is not well known whether those holding Free Church principles, or those adhering to the establishment of Scotland, are more numerous, but it is thought the former are so. Mr. Riddel, a merchant, is a warm adherent of the Free Church. Both parties, however, have agreed, as far as the building of a Church is concerned, to unite their efforts in erecting simply a Presbyterian Church, without saying in connexion with the one body or the other.

Port Dover is situated very beautifully, and stands considerably above the level of Lake Erie. It is at present increasing rapidly, and has the prospect of being, at no distant period, a place of considerable importance. It possesses several great advantages. It will be the principal shipping place of the Long Point country, and is at the terminus of the plank road from Hamilton. A good harbour is at present being constructed; and it has communication with Buffalo by a steamboat, which calls on its passage to and from Detroit.

In the evening I again preached at the pretty little village of Vittoria. The school-house, a large one, in which the service was held, was crowded, though the night was by no means fa-

vourable. The congregation was very orderly and attentive. At the conclusion, I mentioned, as I had done at Port Dover, that much as I valued those principles for which the Free Church of Scotland had been a contending; essential as they were to the independence of Christ's Church; and necessary as they were to secure the rights of conscience and of religious liberty; I should refrain from entering upon their discussion on that occasion, but exhorted them to exert their influence, and to adopt them as their principles. Here the majority are decidedly Free Church in principle; but both parties are more lag with the erection of a very neat brick Church, simply as a Presbyterian Church. At Simcoe the Presbyterians are few, the majority adhering to the Establishment. Vittoria is equally distant from Simcoe and Port Dover. The distance is seven miles, and Port Dover is just seven miles from Simcoe, so that these three places stand as it were on the three angles of an equilateral triangle.

During my visit, I was surprised to find, in my intercourse with the people, the erroneous opinion very prevalent, even with intelligent individuals, that, though they approved of the Free Church at home, there was no need for a separation in this country. So far they are right, if they mean that we ought all to have carried out Free Church principles; but if they mean that there was no need of ceasing to have connexion with the Establishment of Scotland, they are certainly wrong. Such as hold this opinion can only take a limited view of the question, as it is quite erroneous. Instead of regarding it as involving fundamental principles, essential to the purity and prosperity of the Church of Christ, they regard it only as a matter of a local nature, and perhaps confine it to the question of patronage, which has little to do with the subject at all. It is something of far more importance than this. It is a question involving nothing less than the sacred and inalienable rights of religious liberty, as well as the crown rights of the King of Zion. The whole history of the events connected with the controversy in Scotland evinces that the establishment has violated the constitution of the Presbyterian Church, sacrificed the rights of the Christian people, and departed from the standards by which the government of the Church is carried on, and is, therefore, no longer entitled to be regarded as the Church of Scotland—as the Church of our fathers. It is a thing altogether different, and which our forefathers were they to arise and see, could not recognize. It is no longer a true or pure Presbyterian Church; not a Church organized by Christ's law; but a mere creation of the state,—such as the Church of England was by King Henry VIII.

It is a fundamental principle of the Presbyterian Church that Christ is Head of his Church, which is his holy, purchased with his blood. What have civil rulers, who may be Papists, Prelates, Atholites, Deists, Unitarians, Arrians, Socinians, or Infidels, to do with the internal regulation and government of Christ's Church? The very thought is almost sacrilegious; and how can any one that is enabled, through grace, to regard himself as a member of Christ's body, such such usurpation of Christ's rights, and such dishonour to be done to Christ's authority? Yet I humbly conceive that every one who adheres to the establishment of Scotland—no matter where may be the place of his residence, whether in the wilds of Canada, under the burning heat of the torrid zone, or in the frozen regions of Greenland, as far as he can, countenance and sanctioning the dishonour done to Christ, and the violation of the Christian's rights. It is laid down in our state laws that there is a government in the Church distinct from the civil magistrate, by which Christ rules, through his ministers, according to his mind, as made known in his word, without interference from any external authority. This is a position in which both the rights of Christ are involved, and the rights of conscience. Allow once the civil magistrate to take the rule in the Church, as has been done in Scotland, and you at once set aside Christ's authority and take the reins of government out of his hand. The authority of the civil ruler comes in between Christ and the conscience, and the rights of religious liberty are destroyed. The rulers in the Church are no longer at liberty to act according to the word of God and the dictates of conscience or sense of duty, but must set conscience and the revealed will of Christ aside, and obey the orders of,

it may be, anti-Christian men. This is the enslaved and degrading position of the establishment of Scotland. Presbyterians in Canada, will you sanction this? which you must do if you remain in connexion with it. Such was not the mind of the Apostles, when commanded to be unfaithful to the communion which they had received from Christ. They nobly replied, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." It is surprising to hear it sometimes said, "We approve of the Free Church, and had we been at home we would have been of the Free Church," by persons who yet remain in connection with the establishment. Such are either gross hypocrites, or are entirely ignorant of the nature of the question, and take a narrow view of it, as if it were a question about patronage confined to the limits of Scotland. Do away with patronage entirely, and the great matter to dispute would remain. Such, however, as say this, give an involuntary approbation of the principles, while they have not the fortitude or self-denial to carry them out; and we often see how they value Free Church principles, by the respect and favour which they show to the respected Deputies from that Church who visit Canada. Would such be anything but what they are, were they in Scotland to-morrow? No; it is all mere pretence; but, at the same time, we thank them for the testimony which they give to the excellency of the cause which we espouse.

Ag on:—There is another fundamental principle involved in this question,—the rights of the members of Christ's body,—the Christian people, i. e., that the pastoral relation shall not be formed without their consent. That there shall be a call from the people. This is a thing laid down in our standards, and taught in our books of discipline. Does the establishment of Scotland maintain this? Have they never thus violated the constitution of the church, and given up, sacrificed, the rights of the people. All who adhere to them are consenting to, and sanctioning this, and they must not blame us for refusing to do so. The call is completely set aside or destroyed. It is granted to the people merely to object, while the Presbytery may over-rule the objections, and if the Presbytery should not over-rule them, the civil court may decide the case, and order the Presentee to be inducted, and visit the Presbytery with pains and penalties should they venture to resist. The ministers of the establishment, have not only surrendered their own liberty but the rights of the people of Scotland; but it is pleasing to think, many of the people of Scotland have shown that these rights they would not yield, while the ministers of the Free Church as nobly shewed that their liberty they would not barter, for the houses and money of the establishment. It will be said, that the call of the people had long been nullified by the Church; True, but I conceive there was this great difference. Tho' the call had become almost a dead letter, yet the evil was believed to be in, and confined to the Church, and that the remedy was in the Church itself. Hence, the minority who wished to uphold the constitution of the Church, and the rights of the people, remained in, believing that as soon as they could obtain a majority, they had the power of remedying the evils which they deplored. Accordingly, when they got the majority, they set about applying the remedy. It was then that the civil courts stepped in, and put forth claims which had never before been made, and declared that the Church had no such independence as they had imagined. The patrons saw that the power which they had so long wickedly wielded for merely political purposes, was to be abridged, and they found, no doubt, willing as well as interested judges, in the Court of Session, and determined to hold the power which they had unjustly obtained, whatever might become of the Church or the rights of the people. And if the Established Church of Scotland has so unfaithfully yielded this up, and sacrificed the rights of the people, it is certainly evident to all who wish to see, that they who adhere to it are sanctioning its actions, and, wherever may be their place of abode, participate in its guilt. According to previous intimation, I preached at Niagara, on Sabbath 12th of October: in the forenoon, at what is called the cross roads, three miles from the town. Thers Wm. Serron, Esq., has generously built a very handsome little Church at his own expense, and given it as a testimony of his approbation to Free Church principles, though