

# THE PRESBYTERIAN.

JUNE, 1869.



IN January last, a disheartened and dispirited body of men met at Kingston, to deliberate on the steps to be taken to meet the circumstances in which the Church was placed by the withdrawal of the Government grant to Queen's College. Prospects were not cheering. As one member of the Synod dropped in after another, each looked more hopeless of any good result than the one who preceded him. Darker and more gloomy were the views expressed as the time for meeting approached. The utmost hope that even the most sanguine appeared to be capable of feeling was, that the small sum remaining from the wreck might be devoted to maintaining a small Theological Hall, in which the few students who might possibly be attracted to study for the ministry might be received and prepared for the service of the Church. But even the most sanguine seemed to feel that this was a forlorn hope; that all was lost, and that the withdrawal of the grant, following on the loss of revenue occasioned by the deterioration of the stock of the Commercial Bank was fatal, and that nothing remained but to draw the robe decently around the body ere the last agonies of death overtook it. Such was undoubtedly the feeling entertained on the night preceding the meeting of the Synod; but when the Court was constituted, when each member looked the other in the face, almost before the first words were uttered, and when there certainly was no change in outward circumstances to warrant any alteration in the state of feeling, a spirit of hopefulness began to be diffused throughout the assembly. And as one speaker rose after another; as words of hope that something might be done, or objections to different plans were heard stated and were discussed, fears began to be removed, the more timid shook off their dread; hope became in-

creasing confidence, until gradually and not too rapidly, enthusiasm was aroused, which culminated in the bold and startling determination, so pithily expressed by one of the speakers, "the College *must* not and *shall* not go down." That this was no vain boast, and that the confidence felt in the disposition of the members of the Church to meet demands plainly laid before them was well grounded, have been justified by the success already obtained.

Turn from the wants of the Church at large to those of individual congregations. Are there not, in too many cases, the same dull depression, the same gloomy fears, the same want of hopefulness, the same inclination to lay down a burden, or rather the same disinclination to take up a burden which is regarded as too heavy to bear? But has it never occurred to these doubters, to those men of fearful hearts, to try the efficacy of looking things in the face *in company*; of seeing eye to eye; of communing on the subject of their wants; of meeting, if it were for no other purpose than that of "all being unhappy together?" The general practice, and it is by no means to be wondered at, is for the members of congregations to brood in solitude over the financial embarrassments which may have overtaken them as a body, to look upon them as irretrievable and to put forth no effort, because convinced that no effort is of any avail. Meetings are called, but not attended, because people think, whatever they may say to others—and we do not mean by this expression that they try to deceive—that no meetings are of any use since affairs are hopeless. They, therefore, take no trouble to investigate the true state of affairs; to find out their actual obligations, or to discover what chance there is of liquidating them. They give way to depression until what might have been removed by a slight effort becomes a crushing load and a Christian congregation becomes extinct, or, if it still exists, languishes as a