

The following reasons for dissent from these resolutions were given in, viz:—

REASONS FOR DISSSENT.

1. That the object desired in the petition or memorial to Parliament is a thing, which, in our civil capacity, we are entitled to demand from the government of our country.

2. That we are decidedly opposed to confounding things civil and things ecclesiastical, and consider that our legitimate course of conduct as a voluntary Church, to obtain for our people their civil rights which have a religious aspect, is to enlighten the people themselves, and to stimulate them to use all constitutional means to obtain such rights; inasmuch as we, as a Church Court, acknowledge no superior, or even equal in any civil power in the world; and inasmuch as we have avowed this principle openly, as a Synod, by making it the basis of the views expressed in the proceedings of the Committee on Union with the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

(Signed,) JOHN J. A. PROUDFOOT.  
WM. BARRIE.  
ROBT. CHRISTIE.  
WM. M. CHRISTIE.  
THOS. CHRISTIE.  
JAMES ROY.  
WM. AITKEN.

Upon the discussion a correspondent of the U. P. C. M. has the following sensible remarks:

There are many points on which both parties are agreed; so that the difference at first sight appears greater than it really is. Both admit that ministers ought to petition for the observance of the Sabbath, as citizens, and that even as ministers it is their duty to enlighten the people themselves, and to stimulate them to use all constitutional means to obtain their civil rights which have a religious aspect.—Now this really does appear to be giving up the whole question. If it be consistent for members of Synod, as ministers of religion and members of civil society, to urge their people to petition the Legislature against the desecration of the Sabbath; how can it be wrong to extend the very same principle to the Synod itself? Surely, what a man may do, not only as a citizen, but as a Christian and a minister, it is perfectly right for the Synod to attempt. But what is meant in the reasons

of dissent, by the phrase, "constitutional means? It cannot mean the right to petition, as that is the very course dissented from; and it certainly is inconsistent with voluntarism for a Christian and a minister to ask the Legislature to go beyond its province, as it would be for the Synod.—Neither can it mean to enlighten the people themselves; for this is carefully distinguished from stimulating them to use all constitutional means "to obtain their civil rights which have a religious aspect." Surely, such an important subject ought not to have been wrapped in doubtful phraseology.

There appears to us to be a good deal of confusion of thought in the reasons of dissent; and therefore they do not seem very consistent with themselves. The first reason of dissent is not so much framed against the fact of petitioning the Legislature, as against the kind of petition that ought to be presented: for it admits that, the object desired in the petition is a thing which in our civil capacity we are entitled to demand from the government of our country. If the particular kind of petition then, presented for consideration, be objectionable, why not propose another, based on different principles? The dissentients do not surely intend to affirm that a minister may petition as a minister, and that his people may petition as christians; but that a Presbytery, or a Synod cannot petition as such; there being no more inconsistency in the one case than in the other. Were the privilege of 'assembling ourselves together on the first day of the week' interfered with, would it be incompetent for the Synod to petition for its restoration, on the ground that it is a 'civil right which has a religious aspect'? We hardly think that the dissentients would maintain such a principle; and yet the reason that appears to them so conclusive in the one case, ought to be equally so in the other. The truth is, that in Scotland, a few years ago, a similar objection was urged against petitioning parliament in favor of shutting the Post Office on the Lord's Day. To evade the objection, many petitions were framed on purely civil considerations, as many Scotch voluntaries objected not against the fact of petitioning, but against the kind of petitions that were presented. It was ultimately felt, however, that it was taking far too low ground to advocate the observance of Sabbath as a mere civil institution—to demand it as a political privilege—and now almost all