

Bear Creek, on Tuesday the 3rd of June, at 11 o'clock, A. M. The Rev. David Walker was appointed to preach and preside; the Rev. W. McLaren to address the minister, and the Rev. W. King to address the people.

The next ordinary meeting was appointed to be held at London on the 2nd Tuesday of August, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

A special meeting for the transaction of several items of business was appointed to be held at London on the 11th of June, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

JOHN SCOTT, Pres. Clerk.

PRESBYTERY OF COBOURG.

The ordinary meeting of this Presbytery was held in Cobourg, on Tuesday, the 6th of May.

Mr. McLeod reported that he had gone to Percy, and had presided at a Congregational meeting, at which three Elders and two Deacons had been elected. Mr. Thompson road minutes of meetings he had held, detailing the subsequent steps in this matter, and stated that after sermon, he had, in the customary manner, set apart these persons to their respective offices.

Mr. Beattie gave in a minute and interesting report of his labors at Percy, and the neighboring stations, which was received as satisfactory.

Mr. McLeod reported that he had attended a meeting of the Home Mission Committee, and that Mr. Tait had been appointed to labor in this Presbytery.

The Session Records of South, Cavan, Norwood, and Cobourg were received. At a subsequent stage, Committees were appointed to examine these records, and upon their report they were duly acted.

It was reported that some of the Sessions had no proper Records; but that, in obedience to the Presbytery, they were endeavouring to put what they had into regular shape, and that they would be forthcoming at next meeting.

Financial Reports were received from South Cavan, Baltimore, Norwood, Trenton, Cartwright, Springville and Darlington. Three of these Reports were judged unsatisfactory, and a communication, urging to greater punctuality in the payment of Ministers' stipends, was directed to be sent to the congregations from which they came.

Mr. John Strachan appeared as Commissioner from the Presbyterian population of Conseccon. He stated that they had been without a regular supply of ordinances for several years, and that they were anxious to have this privilege. They had taken steps to see what could be raised for their support, and they had £55 on their subscription list. As there were still some who had not an opportunity of subscribing, a considerable increase might safely be calculated upon. As Trenton is the nearest congregation to them, their wish is, to be joined to that congregation, and placed under the charge of Mr. Thomson. The Presbytery were willing to grant them their wishes; but as Conseccon is properly within the bounds of the Kingston Presbytery, the Clerk was instructed to notify their request to the brethren of that Presbytery, and to ascertain if the proposed arrangement of uniting Conseccon to Trenton would be agreeable to them. Meanwhile they direct Mr. Thomson to give all the supply in his power.

In order to expedite matters, it was agreed to intimate the wish of the people of Conseccon to the Murray congregation, and to cite them to appear for their interests at next meeting.

The Presbytery had the sincere pleasure of welcoming back among them their esteemed brother, the Rev. John W. Smith. He returns in renewed health, and has resumed his labours among his people.

The Presbytery agreed to petition the Parliament in favor of the better observance of the Sabbath; and appoint Mr. Roger and Mr. Blain, a committee to draw up a petition, and to for-

ward it for presentation to George Brown, Esq., M. P. P. The said petition to be signed by the Moderator in name of the Presbytery.

It was reported that the Missionary Meetings had been generally well attended, and it was hoped would be productive of increased zeal in the missionary cause.

The Presbytery considered the overture on the examination of students. They are of opinion that the proposed standing committee is unnecessary, and that it is properly the function of the Presbytery to examine students for the ministry.

The Rev. John Smith gave notice that at next meeting he would move an overture to the Synod on separate schools.

The Rev. W. J. McKenzie gave notice that at next meeting he would move an overture to the Synod regarding funerals, and another on the celebration of marriage.

The Presbytery appointed its next meeting to be at Cobourg on the 2d Monday of June at 6 P. M.

J. BOWIE, Pres. Clerk.

PRESBYTERY OF MONTREAL.

REPORT ON THE FORM OF PROCESS.

The committee appointed by the Presbytery of Montreal to consider and report upon the "Book of Discipline" prepared by authority of the Synod and now sent down for the consideration of Presbyteries, beg leave, to report that they have carefully considered the same as published in the *Ecclesiastical and Missionary Record* for January and May 1856.

The committee would at the outset take exception to the title "Book of Discipline" which does not appear accurately to describe the contents of the chapters; a very small part of which pertains to the discipline of the Church. The committee would therefore recommend that the title of any such rules and regulations should be "Directory for the Practice and Procedure of the Church Courts of the Presbyterian Church of Canada."

The committee would further observe that the first six chapters published in January and the remaining twelve published in May are in most of their particulars reprints from the well-known "Books" of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland with certain alterations and abridgements.

These "Books" are acknowledged to have been prepared with great care and wisdom; and for their respective churches it is believed they have been found suitable and useful; but the committee fear that in the abbreviated, altered, and intermixed form in which they are presented to us they lose much of their original value and completeness. These rules besides introduce practices, if not opinions also, which are quite novel to the church: as for example the statement about the Deacon's office in Chap. I No. 7; also the practice of a minister, other than the regular minister of the church, acting as moderator of the Session in Chap. II. No. 3; as also the mode of admitting members of the Church and of granting certificates in Chap. II. Nos. 7 and 8; and further, the presenting of a call to a probationer through the Presbytery to which such probationer belongs in Chap. VI. No. 10. Besides the whole of Chap. IV. embodies rules some of which are novel and inapplicable, and others it is to be feared are inconsistent with the constitution of the Presbyterian Church as hitherto understood by us, especially those that give ecclesiastical sanction to committees of management for the funds and property of the Church.

The committee would specially particularise as objectionable Chap. IX. "On Presbyterian Visitations" which, with slight alterations, has been taken from the Directory of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, but which would,

we apprehend, be found as a whole too precise and stringent for our use, and, in many of its particulars, unsuitable to our circumstances, and might, in their application, be fraught with danger to the comfort and welfare of the Ministry and of the Church in Canada.

In this matter the committee are of opinion that it would be well to permit Presbyteries to adopt such a course of enquiry as they might judge best in any particular case: the "Directory" at the same time recommending general heads of examinations; as, for example, that the Minister should be examined on matters pertaining to worship, teaching, and the pastorate; Elders and Minister on government, discipline, state of religion, family, congregational and general; the Deacons on the constitution of their court, revenue and property, with their distribution and management; after which any one in the congregation may be permitted to make any statement or to ask any advice in reference to the above matters. Some such recommendation as this your committee think would be a sufficient guide for Presbyteries.

Many of the regulations in the remaining Chapters are of unquestionable excellence and value, and the "Books" from which they are taken may be studied with much advantage; but however excellent these may be, it is obvious that they have arisen out of a somewhat different set of circumstances from those in which our Church is placed. They are in fact not rules and constitutions devised and prescribed to which these Churches should, on the authority of their Supreme Courts, accommodate their practice; but, on the contrary, they are the ancient use and wont of their respective Churches put upon record by men of wisdom and experience. In our case, however, it is to be feared, that many of these rules would amount to a series of new enactments or forms, in many cases difficult of application and which have not arisen spontaneously out of our own experience and necessities.

The committee are far from thinking that a "Directory" entirely originating from our own practice is to be expected. The infant state of our Church has not permitted the maturing of our forms, and it is besides right that we should wisely avail ourselves of every possible aid for the perfecting of our ecclesiastical procedures. In doing this, however, your committee deem that as large a circle of "Books" should be consulted as possible, and especially the "Books" of those Churches whose condition and circumstances are most like our own in these Colonies. Taking this view of the case the committee would recommend the Presbytery to overture the Synod at its next meeting in June to adopt as the basis of a "Directory" "the Form of Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church of the United States." This "Book" was prepared by a Church whose position, especially at the time of its ratification in 1821, was identical with our own. It was written by men eminent for piety and learning and embodies all that is best in the "Books of Discipline" of the Church of Scotland. Its style is that of the Confession of Faith, and its regulations are fitted to guide, without fettering, the procedure of the Church. With such alterations and additions as the experience and wisdom of our own Church might dictate your committee are of opinion that this "Book" might be rendered eminently useful for the Church of Canada.

The committee would further recommend that the Overture to the Synod should request the Supreme Court to appoint three or more committees in different Presbyteries of the Church amongst whom the various Chapters of said "Book" may be distributed for alteration and amendment, and who should be instructed to interchange their labours and make a joint report to the succeeding meeting of Synod. In this way your committee believe that the experience and wisdom of the whole Church would be gathered up and a "Directory" for our Church Courts constructed not inferior to any yet issued.