

ing" But this arrangement did not prove a sure protection to the Synod, as will hereafter appear.

SECOND ANNUAL MEETING.

In obedience to the call before referred to, the second annual meeting of the United Synod was held at Prescott, commencing Tuesday, June 4th, 1833. The following ministers were present, viz.: Messrs. McDowall, Smart, W. Bell, Boyd, Buchanan, Gemmill and Lyle, from the Presbytery of Brockville, and Messrs. A. Bell, Ferguson and McMillan, from the Presbytery of York. The Presbytery of Brockville was also represented by elders Benjamin Carr of Perth, Mathew McIntosh of Prescott, and Archibald Nairn of Lanark; and the Presbytery of York by elders George Miller of Toronto (Township), and Thomas Robson of Caledon. Rev. Messrs. Jenkins, Harris, King and Bryning, of the Presbytery of York, were absent. Mr. McDowall preached the opening sermon, and the Rev. Peter Ferguson was chosen Moderator. The following are some of the items of business transacted:—

VISITATION.—The Presbyteries were enjoined to hold Visitation Presbyteries in the several congregations, to enquire into the state of each; and they were directed to arrange to visit and examine all the churches at least once in every two years.

CHURCH HISTORY.—Messrs. McDowall, W. Bell, and Smart, a Committee appointed two years before, to draw up an account of the origin and early history of the Body, reported progress, and were enjoined to proceed with the work, and report at the next meeting. The good intentions of the Synod in this direction do not seem to have produced the very desirable results aimed at, and the Committee probably never made a subsequent report.

THE LABOURERS' HIRE.—Provision was voted for moderate compensation to Synod and Presbytery Clerks.

TEMPERANCE.—Considerable progress was reported in the temperance work among the congregations.

THE PRESBYTERY OF YORK reported that Mr. Jenkins had given up the charge of the Church in Scarboro', and Mr. Eastman that of Clinton, "in order to give more attention to other parts of their respective charges," and that both of these churches had since been supplied by Presbytery. The report adds, "Lastly, however, the congregation of Clinton has not submitted to the authority of Presbytery, and, in all probability, will not remain in connection with this Body." The reception, July 17th, of Mr. James Rogers, probationer, and July 21st, of Mr. James Howey, probationer, and Rev. George McClatchey, all of them from the Secession Church of Ireland, after an examination as to their theological views, was also reported, as were also certain resolutions (elsewhere referred to) in reference to Union. The report also announced that Rev. D. W. Eastman withdrew from Presbytery, "at our meeting in February."

THE PRESBYTERY OF BROCKVILLE reported a resolution on the subject of Union, "passed at their last meeting;" also that Mr. James Cairns, probationer or student, had been labouring as a missionary, and that the church at Huntingdon asked the restoration of Mr. James Miller to a place on the list of probationers, from which he was suspended one year before.

SYNODICAL ACTION. Mr. Eastman's name was dropped from the roll of Synod, Mr. Smart dissenting.* Synod decided, on reference from the Presbytery of York, that a member who has adopted a child as his own, may obtain baptism for it although it be not the child of believing parents. Rev. A. Bell was appointed to prepare, with assistance, a collection of sacred music, and to publish it, in order to facilitate a more extensive cultivation of sacred music in the several congregations. The action of Synod in reference to Union will be noticed elsewhere. The Synod voted not to restore Mr. Miller, and adjourned to meet at York on the third Monday of June, 1834.

PROGRESS TOWARDS UNION.

Soon after the session of the United Synod at York in 1832, Messrs. Ferguson and A. Bell, members of the Committee of that body, had an interview with Rev. William Rintoul, Convener, and another member of the Committee appointed by the Synod of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland "to obtain information relative to the proposed union;" and the result of such interview was reported by Mr. Bell to

*Probably because of his own use of revival measures and Watts' Hymns, and his consequent sympathy with Mr. Eastman and the American ministers.

Rev. Mr. Smart, Convener of his Committee, under date of July 20th, 1832, as follows:—"We agreed:

1st. As to the importance and necessity of a union, etc., etc.
2nd. That it should be an amalgamation, forming a Church of a composite character—making mutual sacrifices.
3rd. That the admission of ministers and probationers afterwards shall not be confined to those of the Church of Scotland, but all that are orthodox shall be equally eligible; and every effort shall be made for a Seminary to bring up native preachers.

4th. Claims for Government provision on the part of the Kirk clergy, by virtue of their established rights, to be common for the whole body.

5th. Any delay consequent on the consideration of the necessary measures to be attended with peace and non-interference with each other's preachers and congregations.

Mr. Bell added: "I am convinced that should all the brethren on both sides agree as well as did we four, a union need not long be delayed." And such was the general view of the matter among members of both Synods. Afterwards, the Convener and members of the Kirk Committee met with Mr. Smart, and obtained from him the information required in reference to the ministers and churches of the United Synod. This information was reported to the Synod of Canada, meeting at Kingston, August 2nd, 1832, with the added statement. "Mr. Smart reported that, in his opinion, the people would generally be favourable to a Union . . . and stated that the basis of the Union to which the United Synod would agree, would be the standards of the Church of Scotland." Up to this point, everything appeared to be favourable, but the action of the Synod of Canada upon this report was most unfortunate—possibly because it was not, in some respects, correctly understood. It did not provide for a union of the organic bodies, but authorized the reception of the members of the United Synod *individually* by the several Presbyteries of the Synod of Canada within the bounds of which they were located, *not* upon presentation of certificates of membership in the United Synod, but upon production of the extracts of their ordination, and upon declaration, by themselves and by their Church sessions, of their adherence to the standards, etc., of the Church of Scotland. In short, the United Synod, as a Synod, was ignored, and provision was made only for the reception of individual members, and that without a guarantee, as it was understood, that *all* would be accepted. It was believed by many that the intention was, by taking in a select number of *the elect*, to divide, and thus practically to destroy the United Synod, as a dissenting body, leaving the non-elect outside of any organization. These conditions, as so understood, were exceedingly distasteful, particularly to the members of the York Presbytery who had so recently exacted similar terms from the American ministers, at Clinton. At a meeting of the York Presbytery, held at Streetsville, November 21st, 1832, resolutions on the subject, drawn by Rev. A. Bell, were adopted, the second reading as follows:

Resolved, That, however desirous this Presbytery may be to have a union effected, yet the terms proposed by the Synod of Canada, as constituting the members of that Synod the sole judges in the case, are such that this Presbytery, as an integral part of an independent Presbyterian Church, cannot submit to them.

Presbytery also considered a union with the Synod of Canada inexpedient, "until it becomes an independent Synod," but, nevertheless, suggested the appointment of committees by the two Synods, to agree upon terms and report to their respective bodies. The grounds of opposition in the west were stated at length by Mr. Andrew Bell, in letters dated December 5th, 1832 and January 1st, 1833, one addressed to "the Clerk of the Presbytery of Brockville," and the other to Rev. Wm. Smart. The following sentences are quoted:

"We are all exceedingly surprised to find that you are anyway willing to submit to such degrading terms as are proposed by the Kirk in calling on us *individually* to come forward with our credentials. It is true they are very strict in receiving their own men, and were we coming to an even-handed union this would be a guarantee to us that all was as it should be with them. We are equally strict, and ought not this to be an equal guarantee to them in joining with us? It appears from their own printed minutes that *only our present ministers are to be received*, and they refuse to stipulate to receive any more from the Secession* or the Synod of

* Mr. Bell, at this time, felt assured that the Missionaries of the United Secession Church, then coming in considerable numbers to Canada, would join the United Synod should it continue independent of the Establishment; and he seems to have been influenced to a considerable extent by this assurance, in his opposition to the Union with "the Kirk" on the terms proposed. The reception of the £700 sterling from Government, however, effectually prevented such accession, as the Secession Church would not permit her Missionaries

to be officially associated with ministers who accepted Government salaries.

Uster. In a short time a new Presbytery or Synod would rise up, composed of those flocking in from the old country—perhaps more numerous and respectable than we are now—to our everlasting shame and disgrace. We have licensed and ordained several who probably will not be received. Ought we not in common honesty to make certain terms for them before we think of joining ourselves?"

In both letters Mr. Bell strongly urged his brethren at the east not to think of accepting the terms proposed *individually*, nor "to go *unless all go*." "Let our Synod," says he, "be a *United Synod* until we can get all to go together. . . . Let us stay together; let us meet together in Synod next Summer at Prescott, and then let us enter vigorously as you please into negotiation for a Union upon fair and honourable and equal terms. We are as anxious as you are for a union, but we wish to act cautiously in the matter and see each other in Synod first." In reference to the Establishment, Mr. B. wrote:

"After the manner in which we have testified against the evils of Established Churches, we ought to be very careful how we aid or abet what is condemned by almost the whole province. It is true that the Secession at home has pledged herself to return to the Church of Scotland when her corruptions are done away with. But we are no part of the Secession here, and, as an *Independent Presbyterian Church*, have a right to equal terms and an even-handed Union."

Mr. Bell refers to the overture then pending before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, forbidding the reception of any but licentiates or ministers of that body, into Synods and Presbyteries in the Colonies, and argues that, should it be adopted, as it was likely to be, members of the United Synod, even after joining the Synod of Canada, would be again turned adrift, after that Synod had "gotten possession of our churches and congregations." "Their present tenacity," he continues, "to the Establishment shows that they would rather sacrifice us than run any risk themselves. Would it not be much better for us to wait till all these things are settled, and the nature of their connection with the Kirk clearly defined?"

What action was taken by the Brockville Presbytery has not been ascertained. It is evident, however, that it was much more favourable to speedy Union than was that of the Presbytery of York. It is known, too, that Mr. William Bell readily agreed to the terms proposed as soon as they were made known, and that he made public, through "The Watchman," his intention of joining the Synod of Canada upon those terms. But at a meeting of Presbytery* held at Perth, January 1833, "the interpretation which two ministers present gave to those terms" were not satisfactory to him, and he did not at once change his Presbyterian relations. Besides, a Formula of admission for Members of that Presbytery to the Bathurst Presbytery (in connection with the Synod of Canada) prescribed by the latter, had an unfavourable influence. And so action was delayed in both Presbyteries of the United Synod until the meeting of Synod at Prescott, in June, 1833, when the following resolutions were adopted:—

1. *Resolved*, That a union of Presbyterians in Canada, professing the same faith, and adhering to the same standards of Doctrine, Government, Discipline, and Worship, if attainable on Scriptural grounds, is highly desirable.

2. *Resolved*, That the members of this Synod, having examined the Formula of admission prescribed by the Bathurst Presbytery (in connection with the Synod of Canada,) as a condition of Union, and presented to the members of the Brockville Presbytery who were willing to unite upon the grounds of the Resolution of the Synod of Canada, are sorry to observe that the presenting of such a document has a powerful tendency to prevent the effecting of the desired Union, being neither expressed nor contained in the original Resolution passed at the last meeting of the Synod of Canada at Kingston, and going beyond the power given by it; and as the members of this Synod wish to promote a Union by every means in their power not inconsistent with their character and standing as Presbyterian ministers, they hope that the members of the Synod of Canada will review the subject, and rescind everything which has any tendency to prevent the attainment of an object so desirable.

3. *Resolved*, That as the members of this Synod cherish the hope that a Union of the two Synods will, at no distant day, be effected, they consider it expedient that each body should appoint a committee—that the two Committees meet and agree upon terms of Union—that the said terms thus agreed upon be submitted to the two Synods for their approval, and if approved, be received and published as the Basis of Union.

4. *Resolved*, That, in pursuance of the above Resolution, the Rev. Messrs. Robert McDowall, William Bell, Andrew Bell, and Peter Ferguson be commissioners on the part of

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to be officially associated with ministers who accepted Government salaries.

* This was a meeting of Bathurst Presbytery, of which Rev. John Cruickshank, Presbytery Clerk, gave official notice, November 10th, 1832, to Rev. William Smart as Clerk of the Presbytery of Brockville. A conference seems to have been intended and to have been held, but with unfavourable results.