

THE APPROACHING MEETING OF SYNOD.

The approaching meeting of Synod is the first appointed to be held in Montreal since our Church was organised. For several reasons, we earnestly hope that the meeting may be a large one. Such a meeting would cheer our brethren in the Lower Province, and would exert a great moral influence, which undoubtedly would be productive of good. We trust many of our ministers and elders from the west will make a point of attending. Our congregations will bear in mind, we hope, the recommendation of last Synod, to defray the expenses of their ministers and elders in attending such meetings. It is not at all just that ministers should be called upon to travel long journeys at their own expense, in attending to the business of the Church. We hope no one will be induced to remain at home on account of the expense of travelling.

We know not, of course, what particular matters may more peculiarly engage the attention of Synod. The important subject of Union, will again be before the Synod, and will, we trust, receive that degree of attention to which it is entitled. A large proportion of the Synod's time will, we hope, be given to conference on the state of religion, and the means to be adopted, under the blessing of God, for promoting the increase of pure and undefiled religion. Too often such matters, the very things most directly connected with the real good of the Church, are thrust into a corner, while minor things occupy the time of Church Courts, and perhaps prove the occasion of angry discussion between brethren. May we be saved from any thing of the kind at our approaching Synodical meeting. In directing our attention to objects connected with the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom, whether among ourselves or in other lands, may we be enabled to cheer and comfort each other, and may we have a large measure of the spirit of love and zeal imparted to each of us, so that our discussions may be carried on in a becoming spirit and temper, and may prove not only pleasant to ourselves, but profitable and edifying to others.

We entreat our readers to bear in remembrance, at a throne of grace, the ministers and elders of our Church, with special reference to the meeting of Synod, that they may be guided and directed in all their proceedings, and that the result may be for the glory of God, and the peace and prosperity of Zion.

LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS AND PUBLIC MORALITY.

No man can deny that we are making most rapid and substantial progress as a country, in what is merely physical and material. The resources of our Provinces are being opened up between distant points, and trade is extending its ramifications into the most remote corners, and property of every kind increasing in value. We hope there is some progress of an intellectual and moral kind. Our schools are multiplying,

and teachers far superior to those employed in former years, may be obtained from our Normal School in Canada West. Our churches are also multiplying, and greater is the scarcity of ministers; still, not a little is being done by the various branches of the Christian church to extend the means of grace to the destitute regions of the country. But, after all, there are certain things which cannot but impress impartial observers with the conviction, that public morality is in a miserably low state amongst us. We find a government taking office with the avowed intention of secularizing the Clergy Reserves, and disposing of that question, in accordance with the often-expressed wishes of the great proportion of the community, and they fulfil their promise, by confirming certain churches in the enjoyment of, we believe, larger revenues than they formerly possessed. We find men occupying high and responsible positions in public descending to traffic and speculate like professed stock-brokers, and justifying their conduct when called to account. We find our statesmen speaking one language in opposition, and another in office. We find many of our parliamentary representatives professing one set of views when before their constituents, and another in their places in Parliament. Such things we deplore, not merely as showing a low standard of public morality and principle, but as tending to demoralize the community, and to spread through all classes the same laxity of principle and practice. Assuredly this must be the natural result. We have been reading, from time to time, of the frequent instances of breach of trust, fraud, &c., which have lately been occurring in the United States, among the officers of public institutions, and the partners of private firms, and we need not wonder if such things become more frequent among ourselves. What is practiced and countenanced in high quarters, will naturally descend. If there is loose morality and still looser practice among those high in official position, assuredly they will spread their influence among other circles. For this reason, then, we lament the things to which we have referred.

We trust, however, that there will be improvement. There was a time when equal corruption prevailed in Britain. But that state of things is, we believe, now at an end there; and whatever defects there may be in British statesmen, or in the system of official appointments, honor and disinterestedness, and principle, must be allowed generally to characterize them. May there soon be an improvement in our own Province. Our people themselves have much in their power. Let them, in recording their votes, give the preference to men of tried integrity and of honorable principle. Let them prefer such qualities to mere smartness, or mere business talent. And while they pray that those who rule may be men who fear God and hate covetousness, let them countenance and support such men, assured that their interests will be far safer in their hands, than in the hands of keen speculators and clever financiers, however plausible their professions may be.

CLOSING OF KNOX'S COLLEGE.

The Session of 1854-5, of Knox's College, closed on Wednesday, 2nd ult. On this occasion a lecture was delivered by Professor Young, having for its object to explain, in its principal features, Sir William Hamilton's doctrine of Sensitive Perception. This Lecture was listened to with great attention by a large audience, including several of the Professors of University College, and gave marked proof of the acuteness of the Rev. Professor's mind, in discussing questions of speculative philosophy. Had our space allowed, we should have transferred the lecture to our pages. It has, however, appeared fully reported in the *Globe*, and has, no doubt, been perused by a great proportion of our readers. The following is the concluding part of the lecture, in which the Professor refers to the beneficial tendency of such inquiries, as a mental training for aspirants to the office of the ministry:—

Among other reasons which induced me to select this subject, I was desirous of giving the general audience which usually assembles at the close of the session, a specimen of the kind of investigations on which the minds of the young men studying in this College are brought to bear. My Junior Philosophy students have been occupied during the last six months with a course of study, of which the doctrine of Sensitive Perception forms a part, and all the points referred to in the lecture just delivered, have been not only presented to their notice, but pretty largely discussed. I differ in opinion from those who think that our young men—coming up to Toronto, as many of them do, without much previous training—are unqualified for strong meat, and should be fed with milk, or milk and water, like babes. If I may judge from the short experience of two years, I would say that of the young men who enter our college, a very respectable proportion are able, notwithstanding any disadvantages under which they may have labored, to grapple at once with questions demanding close thinking, if only these be brought before them in a proper manner. Students—at least students who are worthy of the name, and to whom a college course is fitted to be of any service—like to have to deal with difficulties. What does not task their reflective energies, they quickly feel to be insipid and wearisome. On the other hand, problems like those of Speculative Philosophy, besides the intrinsic interest that may attach to them, derive a zest from the mental effort that must be put forth, in order to their being fully mastered. The young men whom I have this year introduced to philosophy have tasted a little of this difficulty in examining the doctrine of Sensitive Perception; and I am confident that they will not feel it to be a discouragement, but that it will rather prove an incitement to their generous minds, to be told that the problems with which they will be brought in contact as they pursue their studies in this department, are not less arduous, but on the contrary a great deal more so than that with which they have been grappling.

“Nunc in ovilia;
Mox in reluctantes dracones.”

Speculative Philosophy is often spoken of as a dry and useless study; but this is the language of men who know neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. Without undervaluing other branches of secular learning, I consider this much-calumniated study to be far before all the rest, as a means both of mental discipline and of refined gratification—while it has a connection with the highest and most lasting interests of mankind, to which none of those that have been