

posed of bringing this subject before them, and, if deemed expedient, organizing a building committee in each congregation. The following were added to the committee: C. S. Patterson, Jon. Green, U. Seymour, D. Dick, Esq., and Dr. Holden.

On the report of a committee, appointed for the purpose, the Clerk was instructed to grant a Presbyterial certificate to Mr. Thom, student of Divinity, about to return to Knox's College.

The Presbytery took into consideration the subject of candidates for the ministry, and appointed a committee, consisting of Messrs. Rogers, Gregg and Wilson, to confer with and encourage promising young men to devote themselves to the work of the ministry; and to take steps towards raising funds to assist them in prosecuting their studies.

An extract was read from the minutes of the Presbytery of Hamilton, to the effect that having examined Mr. Thos. Hodgkins, a minister of the O. S. Presbyterial Church of the United States, they had resolved to apply to the Synod for leave to receive him as a minister of this Church.

An extract was read from the minutes of the Presbytery of Toronto, to the effect that they had examined and were fully satisfied with the character and attainments of Mr. A. C. Geiker, formerly Minister of the Congregational Church, and an applicant for admission as a minister of this church.

Mr. Gordon reported that, after due notice, he had moderated in a call in Chalmers' Church, which was unanimously given to Mr. David B. Pearce. The call, duly attested, was laid on the table till next meeting.

The Clerk was authorized to grant a Presbyterial certificate to Mr. McCaughey as an ordained missionary of this Church.

The next meeting was appointed to be held in Belleville, on the 14th of Nov.,—on which day therefore the Presbytery met in Belleville. The chief business transacted was the sustaining of the call to Mr. Pearce, hearing his trial pieces, and appointing his ordination to take place on the 29th Nov., at 11 o'clock, A. M.

WILLIAM GREGG, *Pres. Clerk.*

#### PRESBYTERY OF COBOURG.

This Presbytery met in South Cavan Church on the 4th of December. There was a good attendance of ministers and elders.

It was agreed that in future no verbal reports be received in place of the half-yearly financial statement, and these congregations that have not given it in for last half year, are enjoined to do so at the first meeting. It was likewise agreed that the terms for receiving their statements be altered to the 1st of May and November, and that a month previous to these dates the clerk forward a schedule to the several ministers, to be handed by him to the treasurer, and that he fill them up with the sanction of the deacons' court.

It was recommended to some of the congregations to adopt the system of half-yearly payments to their ministers, and to one to have deacons elected and set apart to the office.

Several members were appointed to supply Grafton congregation.

Mr. McLeod reported that he had attended a meeting of the Home Mission Committee and that in compliance with the Presbytery's request, Mr. Beattie had been appointed to labour in its bounds.

It was agreed that for the better conducting of missionary meetings the Presbytery be divided into three sections—the eastern, consisting of the congregations under the care of Messrs. Andrews, Bowie, Thompson and Beattie—the central, those under the care of Messrs. Roger, Blain, McLeod, McKenzie, and J. W. Smith—the western, those under the care of Messrs. Douglass, Smith, and Boag. Mr. Andrews to have charge of managing the meetings in the eastern, Mr. McLeod

the central, and Mr. Douglass the western section.

The Presbytery enjoin that all records of sessions be laid on their table for examination at next meeting.

The Presbytery appointed its next meeting to be held on the 4th Tuesday of January, 1856, at Peterboro', at 11 A. M.

JAMES BOWIE, *Pres. Clerk.*

#### PRESBYTERY OF TORONTO.

The Presbytery of Toronto met on the 5th Dec., in terms of the notice in last Record, and continued six days in session.

Sixteen ministers and four elders were present, the greater number of whom attended till the close. Among the items of ordinary business before the court, the following may be noticed:

There was read a reply of the Governor General to the Presbytery's memorial, in reference to the appointment of a day of special thanksgiving for the abundant harvest and the successes of the allies in the East. As his Excellency fears there would be difficulty in the way of issuing a proclamation for a general thanksgiving at present, the Presbytery agreed to appoint Wednesday, 19th Dec., to be observed as aforesaid, by all the congregations within the bounds. Also a committee was appointed to bring this matter before the other denominations, and to invite their co-operation.

The subject of procuring mansees throughout the congregations was considered in terms of the Synod's deliverance. It was agreed that the clerk be instructed to write circulars to ascertain where there are mansees and where there are none, and, also, where steps are now being taken for providing them, requesting an immediate answer.

The special business before the court was the Presbyterial visitation of Knox's congregation, Toronto. The Rev. Mr. McFavish, Moderator, preached an appropriate and impressive discourse on Rev. xxi. 5, 'Behold I make all things new,' after which the case of visitation was proceeded with. The state of the congregation was fully inquired into, by a careful and protracted examination of the Pastor—the Elders who had recently tendered their resignation—the Trustees—the Elders elect, as well as a number of other members and adherents of the congregation. The Presbytery likewise held several private meetings for conference and consultation. The following is the finding come to:—

*Knox's Church, Toronto, Dec. 12th, 1855.*

The Presbytery resumed consideration of the state of Knox's congregation, after a lengthened conference, and taking a conjunct view of the whole case, they unanimously agreed to the following deliverance:—

From the evidence it appears that dissensions and heart-burnings exist in the congregation; and that on the part of a considerable number of church members, there is dissatisfaction with the Pastor; and that these evils have assumed such a magnitude as to be a public offence, to hinder edification, and to affect seriously the interests of religion.

The attention of the Presbytery has been directed to a number of causes from which this unhappy state of things has been alleged to spring—which are principally the following:—Dr. Burns' neglect of his congregation by engaging in missionary labour to an uncalled for extent, and so as to occasion inconvenience to his people—the vexatious opposition offered by Dr. Burns to the ordination of Messrs. Pyper and Campbell to the office of the Eldership;—the improper conduct of Dr. Burns in tampering with witnesses in the course of the investigation prosecuted before the Session of Knox's church in the said case;—indications on the part of Dr. Burns of a want of sincerity and honesty of purpose;—the defects of Dr. Burns' pulpit ministrations;—the neglect, by

the late Elders, Messrs. McMurrich and Shaw, of the duties incumbent on them as elders;—the laughtiness of manner exhibited by the trustees towards members and adherents of the congregation;—and the objectionable character of the constitution under which the trustees hold office.

1. With regard to the first of these causes, viz., Dr. Burns' alleged neglect of his congregation by engaging in missionary labours to an uncalled-for extent, the Presbytery not only exempt Dr. Burns from blame in this matter, but would express their approbation of his missionary zeal, and the abundance of his labours in the spiritually desolate part of the Province; and in as far as there may have been any irregularity in the manner in which Dr. Burns has on several occasions absented himself from his pulpit, the Presbytery would merely notice that his conduct on these occasions has been already adjudicated on by his ecclesiastical superiors.

2. With regard to the second of the above-mentioned causes—the alleged vexatious opposition offered by Dr. Burns to the ordination of Messrs. Pyper and Campbell to the office of the eldership—the Presbytery are of the opinion that the opposition offered by Dr. Burns to the ordination of these gentlemen has been in some points vexatious, viz., by Dr. Burns, as moderator of the Kirk Session of Knox's Church, affording an opportunity to members and adherents of the congregation to give in objections against Messrs. Pyper and Campbell before the Session on more than one occasion, contrary to the law of the church; and by himself giving in, after the serving of the edict, objections which partly had been adjudicated on by the Synod, and partly were such as to impress the Presbytery with the conviction that they would not have been urged, had not objections already disposed of been still allowed to influence Dr. Burns' action; and, moreover, by representing to a meeting of the congregation of Knox's church, held after last Synod, that the decision of the Synod in the case of Messrs. Pyper and Campbell had not been a decision on the merits of the case;—which opposition must have been felt to be the more grievous inasmuch as Burns had previously endeavored to persuade the Sabbath School teachers to remove Mr. Pyper from the office of superintendent, while the charges made against him had not been proved; and had used his influence to get the Sabbath School teachers to investigate these charges—a duty which could only properly be performed by the Kirk Session.

3. With regard, in the third place, to the charge of tampering with witnesses, in the investigation prosecuted before the session in the case of Messrs. Pyper and Campbell, the Presbytery find that though Dr. Burns may have used unguarded language, particularly to one witness, there is nothing to warrant the conclusion that he attempted or desired to elicit from the witnesses testimony inconsistent with truth.

4. In the fourth place, with regard to the charge brought against Dr. Burns of a want of sincerity and honesty of purpose, the Presbytery find that nothing has been adduced to prove Dr. Burns to be insincere or dishonest of purpose; and the Presbytery have confidence in Dr. Burns in these respects. At the same time they are of opinion that Dr. Burns is in the habit of speaking in a rash and precipitate manner, making assertions for the truth of which he does not possess sufficient evidence, and adhering pertinaciously to these after sufficient evidence of their incorrectness has been brought forward; and to this the Presbytery would attribute the impressions of the want of straight-forwardness which seem to have been produced in the minds of various parties who have given evidence before the Court.

5. With regard to Dr. Burns' pulpit ministrations, the Presbytery find that the evidence before them is of a conflicting nature, and such as to afford the court no adequate grounds for pronouncing a definite judgment on the subject. But they would direct Dr. Burns' own attention to the