

grievances, or (why not?) to receive their advice or admonitions? But, if it be supposed that his presence is necessary to give validity to their proceedings, and that he sits as preses of their meeting, or as director of their deliberations and votes, I shall only say that the words of the Confession give not the slightest countenance to such claims, which are utterly inconsistent with the common principles of Presbyterians, and in particular with the well-known and avowed principles of the Church of Scotland. A similar answer may be given to the objection against the last clause of the Paragraph. May not any Christian, whatever his station be, "provide that whatsoever is transacted," even in synods, "be according to the mind of God?" If the legislature or government of a nation have a special care about religion, or if there is any particular duty at all which they have to discharge respecting it, and particularly if they have power in any case to call synods, must it not in a special manner be incumbent on them to see to this? Nor does this imply that they are in possession of any ecclesiastical powers, or that they pass a public judgment on true and false religion. Their private judgment is sufficient to regulate them in their public managements in this as well as on many other subjects, about which they exercise their authority, without sustaining themselves as the proper judges of them, as in the case of many arts, sciences, &c., which they patronize and encourage. Must not Christian rulers, judges, and magistrates provide that "whatsoever is transacted" by themselves, "be according to the mind of God?" Is it not highly fit that they should be satisfied, and that they should by every proper means provide that the determination of synods be according to the mind of God, if they are afterwards to legalize them, or if they are to use their authority for removing all external obstructions out of the way of their being carried into effect; both of which they may do, without imposing them on the consciences of their subjects? And, in fine, are there not various ways in which they may provide as here stated, without assuming a power foreign to their office, or intruding on the proper business of synods, or ecclesiastical courts? But, if it be supposed that the magistrate, as the proper judge in such matters, is to controul the deliberations of the ecclesiastical assembly, to prescribe and dictate to them what their decisions shall be, or that, when they have deliberated and decided, he may receive appeals from their decisions, or may bring the whole before his tribunal, and review, alter, and reverse their sentences, I have only to say, as formerly, that the words of the Confession give not the slightest countenance to such claims, which are utterly inconsistent with the common principles of Presbyterians, and in particular with the well-known and avowed principles and contentings of the Church of Scotland.

But though I consider these objections as destitute of a solid foundation, yet, as the construction on which they proceed has often been put on the passages to which they refer, I, for my part, can see no good reason why an explanation should not be given of these passages, or of the doctrine contained in them, with the view of preventing all misconception of the sentiments of those who approve of the Confession: provided the two following things are attended to. In the first place, that this declaration do not fix on the Confession the obnoxious sentiments which are disclaimed. And, in the second place, that it do not, under the cover of general and ambiguous expressions, invalidate or set aside the general doctrine respecting the exercise of civil authority about religion which is recognized in the Westminster Confession, and in those of all Protestant Churches. Explanations of this kind were given in the early papers of the Secession, which are sufficient to shew that they entertained no principles favourable to persecution or injurious to the liberties and independence of the church, and that they did not view the Confession as containing such principles.

MEETING OF THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA, AT COBOURG.

The principal acts of the Synod, at their late Session, are given in this No. of the *Record*.—All we here contemplate is rather a short and general outline of the more interesting and important business with which our fathers and brethren were occupied during the Session.

The first meeting of Synod was opened on the evening of Wednesday, the 4th June, at 7 o'clock, by a sermon from the Revd. John Bonar, of Larbert, one of the deputies from the Free Church of Scotland. Mr. Bonar selected as the text of his admirable and truly seasonable discourse, these words from I. Chron. xii. 32. "*Them that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.*" The Revd. Henry Esson, one of the Professors of the new College, had been appointed to discharge this duty, but in compliance with the request of the Synod, Mr. Esson having undertaken to give an inaugural discourse as one of the Professors, Mr. Bonar kindly undertook to occupy his place. Immediately after the sermon the Revd. M. Y. Stark, of Dundas, the former Moderator, constituted the Synod, by prayer; and thereafter the Revd. Dr. Burns, of Knox's Church, Toronto, was unanimously chosen Moderator, and took the Chair accordingly.

After an address by the Moderator, Professor Esson proposed that the thanks of the Synod be given to Mr. Bonar for his excellent and impressive discourse, and the proposal having been seconded and cordially agreed to, the Moderator conveyed, in suitable terms, the thanks of the Synod to Mr. Bonar.

In terms of the recommendation of the Commission, it was arranged that the hours at which the Synod should meet on following diets, should be from 10, A. M., to 5, P. M.: the first two hours, viz. from 10, A. M., to 12, M., being set apart for private conference; the devotional exercises to commence at 12, M.; the remaining hours during the day to be occupied with the public business of the Synod; and the evening sittings to be continued from half past 6 till 10 o'clock.

On Thursday, the 5th, after two hours spent in private conference, the Synod, at 12 o'clock, engaged in devotional exercises, and then proceeded to public business. The Revd. Wm. Arnot, from Glasgow, one of the deputies of the Free Church of Scotland having been introduced to the Synod and a Commission having been presented authorizing Messrs. Bonar and Arnot to represent the Free Church at the Synod, these brethren were cordially requested to take their seats and aid the Synod by their valuable and welcome counsel. Various papers were read, and committees were appointed to examine the records of Presbyteries, and report. The Minutes of the last Synod in October were read and approved. The Treasurer of the Synod fund gave in a report, and a Committee was appointed to act as auditors. The Committee formerly appointed to meet with the Presbytery of Niagara, reported their proceedings, and recommended in order to the attainment of a cordial and permanent union between the bodies that time should be given for the cultivation of a more intimate intercourse. The recommendation of the Committee was approved of and adopted, and the brethren were instructed to cultivate a friendly intercourse with the Presbytery of Niagara.

The reply of His Excellency the Governor General, to the Memorial transmitted from the last Synod, anent the continuation of Government allowance, to certain ministers of the Synod was read; and it was also stated that a communication had been received from the Attorney General, that the allowances were withdrawn. Mr. Stark, produced a letter from the Colonial Committee of the Free Church intimating a grant of £200 in aid of the Mission funds of the Synod together with £150 in behalf of the theological library.—An overture by the Rev. Messrs. Mackintosh, Lindsay, Gordon and Boyd, for an application to

the Free Church, to do her utmost to send preachers to labor in Canada, although only for a limited period was submitted to the Synod. After interesting addresses on the subject of the overture, and the religious wants of Canada were given by the respected deputies of the Free Church, and various Ministers and Elders; it was agreed that the overture be adopted & application be made to the Free Church of Scotland, and the Presbyterian Churches of England and Ireland.

The overture from the Presbytery of Toronto anent a letter to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, with a view of opening a correspondence with that church, and presenting a testimony against American slavery, and the encouragement understood to be given thereto, was read and a committee appointed to draw up resolutions and a letter. Thereafter the report of the College committee was read and approved of, and the appointment of Dr. Burns, as Primarius Professor of Divinity, and of Mr. Esson, as Professor of Literature and Philosophy, was confirmed. This report was full of most interesting and gratifying statements in regard to the advantages which have already resulted during the first session of our infant college. The encouraging progress of the promising young men who have already come forward to the work of preparation for the holy ministry, the fine talents, the warm enthusiasm and the academic taste displayed by Mr. Esson in his professional labor, and in the arrangements and success of his preparatory school, are beyond all praise. Nor can we speak in sufficiently high terms of the indefatigable zeal and the singular ability manifested by Mr. King in the direction of the theological studies of the young men during the session recently closed: the temporary duties of the Divinity Chair having been discharged by Mr. King while he was successfully and actively engaged in the laborious duties of the ministry in the new congregation in Toronto, besides greatly contributing his effective assistance in visiting various and distant missionary stations. It is much to be desired that the views of the Synod may be speedily carried out in the appointment of two additional professors, one of whom may take charge of what may be more strictly called the Theological Department, while the other may conjoin the chair of Oriental languages with a course of Biblical Criticism and other kindred studies. We trust that accomplished Ministers from Scotland may be procured to fill these important situations. But if, after every effort, this advantage cannot be attained, the Synod must then use its best endeavours to appoint the most highly qualified of our own Ministers as professors. Our readers will recollect that in the April number of the *Record* we stated that 14 students in all had attended the College in winter under the care of the Revd. Messrs. King and Esson; several have since been added to the number, and never since the subject has been taken up in Canada, of training native youths for the Ministry, has there appeared a better prospect than at present, of carrying out this design successfully. It seems as if the Lord of the vineyard were giving a glorious answer to the prayer to send forth labourers to the harvest, in providing the very best of men most needed for the spiritual destitution of this country. In all respects the conduct and progress of our students has been most satisfactory. Nor has there been wanting encouragement of another kind. The Church in the Fatherland has had her Campbells and Collingss to devise and execute liberal things, and we too have had a magnificent example among ourselves of what our prosperous and right hearted merchants can do to help forward the work of the Lord. We allude to the generous and noble assistance which has been afforded not merely to the great work of church extension among us, but also to the not less important work of college education by the splendid gifts of our admirable and benevolent friend, Isaac Buchanan, Esquire. Mr. Buchanan's gift of £500 to the College will be productive of permanent and highly valuable re-