

have made private arrangements for their entertainment and accordingly will not be provided for by the committee, now making up their final list.

THE Presbytery of Toronto, at its last meeting, adopted a course which, though it might be difficult and in a number of cases impossible for less compact Presbyteries to follow, is still well worthy of consideration, and as far as possible, of imitation. Every one at all acquainted with the facts, knows with what perfunctory debate and examination overtures are brought into Presbyteries and forwarded to the Assembly in a crude and ill-digested state in themselves, and in the minds of commissioners, also from the Presbytery overturing. To avoid this, Toronto Presbytery resolved to hold a special meeting for the consideration of overtures which it was asked to send up to the Supreme Court. The meeting was a very excellent one both in numbers, in spirit and in its results. Each overture received a very full consideration, many members took part in the discussion of them, and as finally adopted they carried with them the weight of being in the shape which the deliberate judgment of the Presbytery agreed upon as best. Among the overtures brought before the Toronto Presbytery at its special meeting was one by Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, on the method of dealing with vacancies and the settlement in them of ministers. It is high time, I will agree, that something was done in this regard, if Presbyterianism in our hands is not to be utterly demoralized and become neither Presbyterianism strictly nor Congregationalism. Ministers who have been moderators of the sessions of vacant congregations could tell a tale if they wished, which would be anything but creditable, to put it mildly, to our method or rather want of method of procedure in the premises. From suggestions made in the Presbytery, and in our columns from time to time on this most important matter, we have not the least doubt that some method can be devised, which will go far to remedy evils which all who value our system of church polity, deplore. There must, however, accompany any remedy which may be proposed to make it effective, a course of education of our people by the pulpit, in Sunday-schools, Bible classes, C. E. Societies and in the press as to the real character of Presbyterianism as a form of church government, founded on and agreeable to the word of God. Let ministers themselves in their character as members of church courts be more faithful to it, let all whose duty it is instruct the people as to the submission due to courts called into existence under God by themselves, and necessary for the edification of the body of Christ, and we have no fear but the result will be to put an arrest upon a state of things, which, if allowed to go on, threatens to end in disintegration.

#### OBITUARY.

THE LATE PRINCIPAL MACKNIGHT, D.D.

IT is with deep regret that we note the departure of this well-known, beloved and valued and faithful servant of the church, which took place on Friday the 27th ult., after only a few days' serious illness. The following brief record of his life and work is condensed from the *Presbyterian Witness* of Halifax, but has unfortunately been delayed by press of matter.

Dr. Macknight was sixty-eight years of age at the time of his death. At his funeral, which was largely attended, his fellow professors and others took part and President Forrest, in a touching and beautiful address paid a tribute to the memory of the departed. He was a native of Dalmellington, Ayrshire, Scotland. His literary training was received at the University of Glasgow, and his theological course he took in the New College, Edinburgh. In 1855 he came to Nova Scotia to teach Hebrew in the Free College, and combined with this work the pastorate of the Dartmouth congregation up till 1868 when he resigned having been appointed to teach exegetics as well as Hebrew. In 1871 he was appointed to the chair of Systematic Theology, in 1877 the University of Glasgow conferred on him the degree of D.D., he was appointed Principal of the College at Halifax in 1878, and in 1885 he was unanimously elected Moderator of the General Assembly. He was an accomplished scholar, a profound theologian, an acceptable and most instructive preacher, and had the happy art of applying old truths to modern circumstances. His services were much in demand and no man was ever more willing to spend and be spent in the service to which he was called.

"The foremost students of our College, men who have taken post graduate courses in great schools abroad, have told us often of their high sense of Dr. Macknight's attainments, and especially of his suggestive originality."

Dr. Forrest appropriated to the occasion of the funeral address the words, "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty." It is even so. The seat is empty which Dr. Macknight filled with rare ability. His seat in the Theological Chair, and his seat in the Presbytery, Synod and Assembly will be empty, and it will be long before his place can be occupied by his peer. In the words of Dr. Forrest:

"A more genial, sympathetic, more thoroughly reliable friend we have never met with. No man had a keener sense of humor, or enjoyed with heartier merriment a good story, and yet no one ever heard a word from him which betrayed the faintest trace of coarseness. A pure minded man his conversation was always elevating."

Dr. Macknight was in full sympathy with the purest evangelical orthodoxy, and at the same time ever ready to receive new light.

The church has great reason for thankfulness to God for the gift of such a man as Dr. Macknight, a man with his calm, wide, hopeful view of the movements of our age. He studied the tendencies of the time and understood, as few did, how to mediate between the old and the new, how to make peace between seeming antagonisms, how even to bear home rich tribute from fields opened up by men who had not the fear of God before their eyes. It will be well for the church in Canada if the calm and fearless faith which saved Dr. Macknight from panic in the face of the most serious problems our time, will become universal.

#### SYNOD OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

THE Synod of British Columbia, embracing the four Presbyteries of Calgary, Kamloops, Victoria and Westminster, met lately in Knox Church, Calgary. Among those present was noticed Rev. Dr. Robertson, superintendent of Home Missions. Divine service was conducted by the retiring Moderator, Rev. T. Scouler, of New Westminster, who preached a very able sermon on the words found in I Timothy i. 12, after which the Synod was constituted by prayer. The Moderator then called upon the Synod to appoint his successor, and Rev. J. C. Herdman was unanimously elected. The newly elected Moderator thanked the members of the Synod for his election, and also referred to the death of the Rev. R. Jamieson, of New Westminster, which had taken place since the last meeting. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded the ex-Moderator for the service he had rendered during his term of office and for the excellent sermon he had preached. Rev. T. Scouler, briefly acknowledged the vote of thanks. The morning sederunt was closed by the Moderator pronouncing the benediction.

Public meetings were arranged for as follows: Home Missions, Sabbath School, Foreign Missions, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings respectively.

The Rev. Fraser Campbell, of Rutland, India, spoke on his work in that country in connection with the subject of Foreign Missions.

The Report on Statistics and Finance was presented by Mr. Scouler, convener, which was duly adopted and the thanks of the court conveyed to the convener.

The Report on Systematic Benevolence was presented by Mr. J. A. Matheson, which, with recommendations, was adopted and the convener thanked.

On Wednesday evening the Home Mission report was presented by Mr. McLaren, convener, before the Synod in public meeting. In summing up he pressed the following recommendations:—

1. That ministers, and especially of self-sustaining charges, press increased liberality on their people.

2. That conveners of Presbytery Committees send to the Synod's convener, a month prior to meet of Synod summaries of reports submitted to Presbytery from home missionaries and catechists.

Mr. Scouler moved the adoption of the report which was seconded by Mr. McKenzie, who spoke kindly of the earnestness, industry and hospitality of the Mormons and others residing in the St. Mary's and Lee's Creek districts.

Dr. Robertson, superintendent, with his usual ability and fervor, addressed the Synod on the work of the Home Mission field and urged increased liberality in connection therewith. The thanks of the courts were given to the superintendent for his interesting address.

The first item on Thursday morning was the protest and appeal of the Rev. P. McF. McLeod against the finding of the Presbytery of Victoria in the matter of his preaching in the old Methodist Church, Victoria, on the 10th and 17th of September last.

In the afternoon, Dr. Bryce, of Manitoba College, presented the claims of that institution, giving facts of interest in regard to the attendance, finance and professorial arrangements of the college, for which words he received

the cordial thanks of the Synod. Thereafter the Rev. Mr. McLeod spoke in his own behalf and was followed by Revs. D. McRae and Dr. Campbell representing the Presbytery of Victoria.

At the evening session the reports on State of Religion and Sabbath Schools were given by Revs. Mr. Herdman and Dr. Campbell respectively, who received the thanks of the Synod for their excellent reports.

Dr. Campbell, who held the floor on Friday morning at the former session on adjournment, continued his speech in behalf of the Presbytery of Victoria.

Mr. D. A. McRae then spoke of the various points brought forward by the appellant.

Dr. Robertson craved to be heard, inasmuch as his name had been frequently brought forward in the discussion, and the Synod granted him the opportunity of explaining his connection with the case.

On resuming at 2 p.m., the Synod agreed to hear the reading of the documents relative to the protest and appeal of Mr. McLeod in the matter of his granting domits from the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, after he had resigned his pastorate in that church.

Thereafter Mr. McLeod appeared in his own defence, and was followed by Dr. Campbell, who defended the action of the Presbytery of Victoria.

Mr. McLeod summed up his case, after which the parties at the bar of the Synod retired and the court proceeded to consider the evidence.

The report on Foreign Missions was presented at the evening session by Mr. McLeod, convener, which was duly adopted in the recommendations and the convener thanked.

Then Mr. Campbell addressed the Synod and spoke in a very practical way of the great opportunities lying open to all Christians for work among the millions of India. He deprecated the over-sanguine reports that were sometimes sent home by missionaries, raising expectations that were often disappointing in their results.

Much as he loved the cause of Foreign Missions, he would not desire to see Home Mission interests suffer. Let our people give what they wish to Home Missions, French Evangelization, and other such subjects, and he would be satisfied to receive all money for which they had no further use towards Foreign Missions.

At the close of the public meeting, the Synod resumed business and continued in session till one o'clock. The third appeal was taken up in the matter of the organization of a new congregation and relative documents were read by the clerk. The Synod adjourned to meet at 10 o'clock a.m. to dispose of the various appeals and other business.

The Synod met at 10 a.m. Saturday. Mr. Chapman, who appeared for the petitioners, addressed the court at considerable length.

At 2 p.m. Mr. McLeod spoke on the subject of the petition. Thereafter Mr. D. A. McRae, Mr. D. McRae, Mr. A. B. Winchester, and Dr. Campbell spoke in support of the action of the Presbytery of Victoria.

Mr. Chapman then briefly replied, Mr. McLeod waiving his right of reply. The hour of adjournment having come the Synod adjourned to meet at 8 o'clock, the parties at the bar being removed.

After serious and prayerful consideration for about three hours, the Synod arrived at a decision and the parties were recalled.

The finding of the court was to the effect, that the protests and appeals were dismissed, the action of the Presbytery of Victoria sustained and liberty granted to the new congregation to continue to worship as at present until September.

The finding was acquiesced in by both parties, on which the Moderator led the Synod in thanksgiving to God for His guidance and in supplication that the things that had happened may be for the furtherance of the Gospel.

The Report on Sabbath Observance presented by Mr. Stephen, convener, was received and adopted with recommendations, and ordered to be transmitted to the Assembly's convener.

The Report on Temperance was presented by Mr. Herdman in absence of the convener, Mr. Wright, received and adopted and ordered to be transmitted to the Assembly's convener.

The next place and date of meeting was fixed to be Nanaimo on the first Wednesday of May, 1895, at 8 p.m.

Two overtures were presented to the Synod from the Presbytery of Calgary and were duly received and adopted, one of which dealt with a reconstruction of the General Assembly's Home Mission Committee. Many Western Presbyteries have been practically disfranchised by the method of representation now in force. The overture aims at giving to each of the Eastern Synods two representatives, and one representative to each of the Synods of Manitoba and North-west, and of British Columbia.

The usual votes of thanks were given, and the court adjourned at 12 p.m. on Saturday.

We had a pleasant, but all too brief call lately from our brother editor of the *Presbyterian Witness*, Halifax, who was in the city attending a meeting of the Hymnal Committee, of which he is a member.