

slight of ministers of a thoroughly missionary spirit. Here there has been efficient work done during the year, and the results are both apparent and gratifying.

The field under the care of the Presbytery of Kingston is also one of great interest and promise. From this district satisfactory reports have come. Mission stations have been erected into settled charges, new churches built. On the completion of railway extension into the regions where minerals are abundant, greater demands will be made upon the Church to care for the increased population that the mining industries are soon to attract.

Next in order comes the Presbytery of Barrie, having under its fostering care the strictly missionary District of Muskoka. Here the progress made is substantial and gratifying. Accounts from Parry Sound, where the Rev. A. Hudson is stationed, state that much of the indebtedness incurred in the erection of a church and manse has been reduced, and the spiritual results are no less gratifying. Since Mr. Hudson's appointment, little more than a year ago, 100 members have been added to the Church. The people who had endeavoured to maintain ordinances there have much encouragement. They have taken fresh hope and are sustaining the work with commendable zeal. New stations have been formed at Victoria Harbour, a group including Bethune, Parry and Proudfoot townships, Foley and Conger, Sterling, where a new church is being built, and Byng Inlet.

In the older Presbyteries of Ontario, considerable progress has been made. Weak stations have become stronger, supplemented congregations have attained the dignity of self-sustaining charges, new fields have been explored, and mission stations organized. Readers will be gratified to learn that from the Presbytery of Chatham has come the report that

There has been a remarkable awakening at Maidstone and Belle River. No special means have been used, but, during the last six months, the attendance at public worship on the Lord's day has been almost quadrupled. Prayer-meetings held on week days in private dwellings, in various parts of the extensive field, have been crowded, and the membership of the little church has been doubled. Ours is the only Protestant denomination at work in this district, and the gains through our mission to the cause of Christ include families that for many years attended no place of worship.

Manitoba and the North-West, the greatest and most promising field in which the Church is at present engaged, will receive more extended reference in a future issue.

The report of the Home Mission Committee for the eastern section presents a very complete and accurate summary of the work carried on during the past year. The main facts are set forth in tabulated form, compiled with great accuracy and care. Twenty-three ordained missionaries, and probationers either for a part or the whole year were employed in the work of the Gospel. In addition to these forty students from the Presbyterian College, Halifax, Dalhousie College, Montreal, Queen's College, Kingston, and Princeton, N. J., were engaged in the mission work under the oversight of the Presbyteries of the Maritime Provinces. Then there can be seen at a glance the different stations supplied, the services they have received, their strength numerically and financially. Though nothing remarkably eventful in Home mission work in the Maritime Provinces is recorded, there is the most satisfactory evidence that faithful work has been done, and substantial progress made.

Much valuable service in Home mission work has been rendered by the students of the various colleges. In Home mission work, student labour is one of the most valuable agencies the Church possesses, though not altogether without disadvantage. If work is not to be unnecessarily wasteful, some remedy must be devised by which the diligent labours of the students shall not be neutralized by total inactivity throughout the winter.

A matter of encouragement in connection with Home missions is that the membership of the Church generally is taking a more lively interest in the work, and realizing that on them rests a great responsibility for its successful advancement. Large and important issues are dependent on the manner in which the Presbyterian Church of Canada discharges her duty in providing the means of grace for our growing population. She has it in her power to help in shaping the course of what is destined to be a great North American Nationality. As Presbyterianism in the past has helped to lay broad and deep the foundations of civil and religious freedom in other lands, so let it do its part in moulding and guiding this western

civilization, in no spirit of mean or sectarian jealousy, but in the large and magnanimous spirit of Christian brotherhood. With all evangelical churches, may she seek to make the Canada of the future a Christian nation.

RETIRING ALLOWANCES.

MISTAKES CORRECTED.

MR. EDITOR,—The space still at your disposal in your next issue will not allow of such notice of the letter respecting "Retiring Allowances" in THE PRESBYTERIAN of this week, as is called for in view of the strong language used by the writer, in urging discrimination against ministers who belonged to the Church of Scotland in Canada. I shall, therefore, in the hope that I may find room on Wednesday, confine myself entirely to "false facts," which a philosopher of name long ago warned people against, as being more current in the world than "false theories."

"Equity" states what is not historically true, when he says that "at the union (of 1861) the number and ages of the ministers in the U. P. Church were submitted to an actuary, and a certain sum was, in accord with his report, contributed by each of the congregations of that body, that its ministers might have a share in the fund" (A. and I. M. Fund) "without detriment to the interest of ministers of the Free Church." This was done in relation to the Widows' and Orphan's Fund which had, what was for that time, a large capital; but it was *not* done in relation to the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, because there was no occasion for it, the capital being next to nothing. It was for the same reason that no such arrangement was thought of at the union in 1875, when, though the capital was a little larger, it was still insignificant and becoming more so under the weight of increasing expenditure.

Again, "Equity" is mistaken in saying that ministers who, before the union in 1875, belonged to the Canada Presbyterian Church "paid their rates" to the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund "long years previously." Their congregations, no doubt, contributed annually half a collection, as they were called to do, and it may be assumed that the ministers themselves did at least their part in supporting the Fund in that way. But, while the Widows' and Orphans' Fund had, from the time of its institution, derived no small part of income from a ministerial rate; it was not till 1877, *two years after the union*, that the ministerial rates in connection with the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund were laid on.

The "false facts" referred to being subtracted from "Equity's" letter. I think it will be seen there is nothing left in it to justify the course that he proposes. And I venture to add that, while the generosity displayed in the matter at the time of the union is hardly worth boasting of, in view of the smallness of the capital, it would be very humiliating to undo it by repeating of it nine years after.—JAMES MIDDLEMISS.

Elora, May 31, 1884.

OBITUARY.

Mr. Donald Fraser, of Nairn, died on the 29th of February last, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. If it is proper, and I think it is, to give special notice of the death of ministers, even when by reason of death their term of public service is comparatively short, it seems to me that it is equally proper to give a respectful public notice of the death of elders who were extensively known and had faithfully served the Church without fee or reward for a lengthened period of time.

Mr. Fraser was an elder in the East Williams congregation for forty-four years, being one of those elected to the first session formed in said congregation, in 1840, and the last survivor of five elders who composed that session; and I venture to say that a uniform testimony would be borne by all who knew him affirmative of his diligence and faithfulness in the discharge of the onerous duties that devolved upon him on assuming the responsibilities of the eldership. His uniformly correct moral character; his conscientious punctuality in attending all meetings of session in all circumstances; his painstaking in holding prayer-meetings and conducting them; and in visiting the sick and the dying; and in carrying on Sabbath schools in the congregations, unmistakably indicated the kind of principles that governed his mind and heart, and furnished an example, which, if followed

by the eldership in general, could not fail, by the blessing of God, of being productive of much good to the Church.

While Mr. Fraser was always careful to honour the Scripture precept of not letting the left hand know what the right did in the way of giving, the writer knows of several instances in which he exercised a generous liberality in helping the cause of Christ with his means that do honour to his character. To two of these he begs leave very briefly to refer. The first of them took place in connection with a young man who was studying for the ministry, but was personally unknown to Mr. Fraser. He got into pecuniary difficulty about the middle of a session at college owing to the failure of supplies on which he had been depending. He was thrown into great perplexity, but as he was on the eve of leaving college in utter despair of receiving help from any quarter, his case came in some way under the notice of Mr. Fraser and he at once sent him a considerable sum of money which at once relieved him and enabled him to prosecute his studies at college till the end of the season. I never heard of his being in like difficulties afterwards. He has been dead for some time, but he laboured for some years with considerable success in the Master's service.

The other instance to which I refer was at a time when the harvest was great and very pressing and the labourers very few. The Church, or rather perhaps the Presbytery of London which covered then the whole of the Western peninsula of Ontario was trying to collect money for the purpose of paying the travelling expenses of such ministers as they could prevail upon to come into the field from afar to give much needed help. Mr. Fraser, at the time, had no money in hand that he could spare, but what he had he gave—he gave a valuable horse with instructions to apply the gift to the above object.

I will let these instances of Christian liberality speak for themselves. They show what spirit he was of, and as examples they are highly worthy of imitation. Mr. Fraser had indeed a mind of his own, he studied and thought for himself; he therefore adhered with notable tenacity to such principles and practice as he believed to be founded on divine truth, without much regard to consequences. Whether or not he carried this trait of character too far, I do not feel myself called upon to give any opinion, but I may say that my impression is that there is a possibility of running into dangerous error on either side of such a question which ought to be very carefully guarded against.

I have no doubt that there are many honest searchers after truth, who, for reasons that might be mentioned, without in the least impeaching their integrity, find it difficult to reach the golden medium that would equally secure them against dangerous laxity on the one hand, and needless scrupulosity on the other. All Christians are not endowed with Paul's measure of knowledge and strength, which enabled him in many perplexing cases to reconcile the "expedient" with the "lawful" without compromising any essential principle, but standing still securely on the immovable rock of eternal truth.

In ordinary cases and with common light when difficulties arise in the study of questions of inferential casuistry, if the essential and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel are cordially received and firmly held, together with a liberal margin of congenial sentiment and Christian practice to facilitate harmonious co-operation can be obtained. Bible teaching evidently enjoins upon the Church the exercise of charity and mutual forbearance in minor matters. Its emphatic injunction, often repeated at least in substance, is to use all diligence in keeping the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace and to study the things that make for peace.

London, May, 1884.

UNDEVELOPED TALENTS IN OUR CHURCHES.

If the undeveloped talents in the Christian churches of to day were brought out and thoroughly harnessed, I believe the whole earth would be converted to God in a twelvemonth. There are so many deep streams that are turning no mill-wheels, and that are harnessed to no factory hands.—*Dr. Talnage.*

THE reports from Turkey are very unfavourable to mission work. Some of the mission schools of the American Board have been closed by the Government and others are threatened.