

## An Efficient Ministry.

**A**MONG the best gifts of God for the up-building of the Church is an efficient ministry. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has to bless her glorious King that He has been mindful of her in this respect. Hundreds and hundreds of faithful men are preaching the Gospel in our pulpits, in humble homes, in lonely and secluded settlements, far off upon the prairie, or in the depths of the lumber woods. Sinners are converted; saints are edified; the sick are visited; the dying are comforted; the young are instructed, and the Way of Life is proclaimed to all. The Church is realizing the importance of having an efficient ministry. She has six Colleges in which her young men are trained for the work. She invites parents to consecrate their sons to this, His high calling. She pleads with the "Lord of the vineyard" to "thrust forth" more labourers. She has devised liberal means for the adequate support of the ministry, thus in a very practical and tangible manner proving the high esteem in which she holds the office. What could be more encouraging than the response made by the people to the appeals of Presbyteries in connection with the Augmentation Fund? Presbyteries have of late been brought into closer and more frequent intercourse with the congregations. This intercourse is, or should be, perfectly confidential. The Presbytery has the power and right of superintendence. It sees whether congregations under its charge are prospering. Should there be failure anywhere—should there be trouble—should the work of the Lord be at a stand-still, or (as sometimes happens) should it be going back—the Presbytery takes cognizance of all the facts, and wisely acts in the best interests of the Church, and with a view to the glory of God. If Presbyteries are remiss in the discharge of their *episcopal* duties, if they fail in *overseeing* the flocks committed to their care, the Augmentation Fund will fail as a matter of course; and the cause of God will suffer.

We have watched with interest a discussion in the Free Church of Scotland on ministerial efficiency. Dr. Whyte, of Edinburgh, makes the following remarkable statement: "One of our ministers is settled

over a congregation, and unless he is called to another charge, or leads a too scandalous life, or dies, the Church hears no more of him. He may be the idlest man in the parish, he may have fatally mistaken his calling in life, he may scatter a united and once flourishing congregation, he may neither preach, nor catechize, nor visit, nor do any of the things he is ordained and supposed to do, but he remains safe and secure in his manse and his income, as no other man in the community is, till he does a mischief to the cause of Christ and His Church which his successor can hardly repair in a lifetime." Can there be even one such minister among the Presbyterians of Scotland? We should hope not. But then Dr. Whyte seems to picture from the life. He asserts mournfully that in Scotland there is no way of dealing with such a case. We will not undertake to say what disabilities our brethren in Scotland labour under; but we know that according to the Presbyterian system the Presbytery is very solemnly bound to deal promptly with such a case, and to find a remedy. We know that in our own Church a Presbytery would not be regarded as having discharged its duty were it to wink at flagrant inefficiency in the pastoral office. It will become more and more the recognized right of the Presbytery to deal with such cases. It is not good for the pastor or the people that the pastoral relation should continue one day too long: and it is for the Presbytery ultimately to determine. We hope the day is not far distant when in our own Church every congregation shall have a suitable minister, and every minister a suitable sphere of labour.

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## Wiclif.

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**T**HE five hundredth anniversary of John Wiclif's death has been widely commemorated by the Reformed Churches. An opportunity has thus been afforded of bringing prominently before the people the condition of Western Christendom during the Dark Ages, when the Church of Rome was supreme—those "Ages of Faith" to which some look back so longingly. Wiclif was, in fact, the founder of Puritanism, and his influence is never-dying. He left his impress upon England, and indeed all Europe