

people, as the best portions of a population cannot be induced to link themselves with institutions of an uncertain and temporary nature. He was further to indicate that the steady action of our Committee had been opposed to the creation of the evils of an endowment; our grants having been strictly limited to a year and having been every year carefully reviewed without any real or implied pledge of their continuance. Moreover, that we had so constantly kept the duty of self-support, where possible, before the people, as to lay us open to the charge of too much eagerness on that subject. The suggestion as to lay preachers supplying the churches alluded to, was to be met by the statement of impracticability at present; the craving of the people throughout the country being increasingly for a thoroughly trained intelligent ministry. He was to urge that our grants were always understood to be temporary only, and not in perpetuity; and that a trial many years ago of the sliding scale in Western Canada had proved a disastrous failure.

The instructions of the Committee were complied with in a document of ten pages 4to., in which, it is believed, every argument suggested by the state of the churches and of our country will be found. It has elicited the following reply dated Dec. 6, 1860. The needful extracts only are given.

"Yours — was considered by our Committee on Tuesday last, and I am instructed to send you the result of our deliberations. Permit me to assure you that we cherish a deep interest in your churches, and a sincere concern for the comfort of our brethren, who, we believe, are faithfully performing the duties devolving upon them. In some cases they have no doubt to struggle against many opposing influences, and nothing can support them but the manifested presence of the great Master they serve, and for whose glory both they and we are concerned. We trust therefore they will believe that the subject of our correspondence has not been introduced from any suspicion respecting them, or any lack of confidence in them. Your communication received a lengthened and very careful consideration of the entire subject to which it relates. The Committee still think that stations which have been for so many years on our Grantee List, as some of your churches have been ought in some way to be dealt with. In the nature of things, our grants will degenerate to the character of endowments which are opposed to the principles by which we are distinguished. * * * Under the influence of these views, it is the judgment of the Committee, that although they yield the point for the present, it must be adopted for the future."

The Secretary proceeds to state more formally that at our next Annual Meeting the *principle* involved in the letter of Sept. 4th, must be acted upon. An occasional exception may be adjusted by correspondence, but stations that have been five years upon our list must expect an annual reduction at least of one fifth of the grant until it ceases altogether.

It is proper to state that the Society is quite willing to enter upon new ground wherever there is fair promise of usefulness and the establishment of a self-sustaining interest; there is no indisposition to afford pecuniary aid for a few years until such stations gain strength; but there is a determination not to continue grants for the same amount for an indefinite number of years. Will every member of each church (and congregation), that has been five years on our Grantee list consider at once what can be done. Perhaps vigorous effort and some self-denial might at once make the cause self-sustaining. But if not, preparation must at least be made for the diminution of the Society's grant.

HENRY WILKES,

Sec. & Treas.

Montreal, 15 Feb., 1861.