

# THE Home and Foreign Record

OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE LOWER PROVINCES

JULY, 1870.

## ENCOURAGEMENTS.

The work for which we as a church are at present responsible is serious and highly important; yet it is by no means so burdensome as to prove discouraging. It is not heavier than we can bear with the promised help from Heaven. Providence has led us step by step into the position we now occupy, making the path of duty plain, and ever inviting us to press forward.—Whatever the Synod has wisely devised, the people have cheerfully responded to. God has opened the hearts of rich and poor, and they have gladly brought their gifts for the up-building of His glorious temple. When we compare the position of our church at present with what it was twenty-five years ago, we have good reason to thank God and take courage.

In the matter of ministerial support, there has been great and manifest progress. Congregations in the central portions of the church seldom fall far into arrears. They realize the solemnity of their promises, and the deep disgrace of failing to fulfil them. Year by year sees the "arrears" decreasing. The standard of support is also rising; and we trust that it shall ere long reach the adequate height. Much has yet to be done in several of our Presbyteries; but what has been accomplished is sufficient to excite to earnest endeavour in the full confidence of ultimate success. Those who have now the hardest battle to fight are not in a worse position than were many of the most highly favoured of the brethren twenty-years ago.

Another ground of encouragement is the strong and healthy feeling of brotherhood that has been developed throughout our church. We are not yet by any means up to the true Gospel standard in this respect. We must not flatter ourselves by imagining that nothing more need be expected of us in this direction. We are one body; the same soul animates the whole frame; the same heart beats in all our bosoms; we are members of Christ and of one another. It were most delightful and salutary if we could fully realize this precious truth, and act upon it. We have the theory; we have not yet fully reduced the theory to practice; yet here again we are advancing. No one reads of the prosperity of a congregation of our church, however distant, without true gladness of heart. We never hear of a calamity befalling any of our congregations without regret and earnest sympathy. The feeling of brotherhood, of intimate family connection, finds appropriate expression in two of the schemes of our Synod. The Home Mission Board is specially for the benefit of the poorest and most neglected sections of the church. Catechists and licentiates are sent to lonely and desolate places that otherwise might never be reached by the sound of the Gospel. The Supplementary Fund affords an opportunity to the strong to help the weak; and the manner in which this Fund has been sustained is encouraging, and big with promise for the future. It is indeed far, very far short, of the requirements of the church; but no one was so sanguine as to hope that it could be brought up at once to