

tious and worthy man; and that he had refused to obey their instructions, because he believed that only in that way could Metis survive and the Presbytery be saved from the folly of destroying one of its own Stations.

And as to the second and last meeting of Committee I attended, Oct., 1877, I can but repeat what I said in my first reply, namely, that I requested the restoration of the Metis grant; that I expressed surprise to have heard it stated during the Summer, that the Presbytery had asked its withdrawal, for the purpose of "starving out" Mr. Fenwick; that I deprecated any such interpretation of the Presbytery's action; that I did so unchallenged; that when told the Presbytery were "afraid of Fenwick's pen" in not insisting on the change proposed, I replied that the Presbytery were anxious to avoid even the appearance of harshness; that several times during the work of the committee I recurred to the Metis matter in the hope of still getting the grant renewed; that notably when a large grant was passed to a congregation in the Presbytery of Hamilton, I asked how this accorded with the treatment of Metis; and that the answer by a member of Committee was perfectly definite and can be produced in its exact original form.

There are many points in the Doctor's letters that, did space permit, I should have liked to notice:—The fallacy involved in speaking of members of Committee as "representatives of Presbyteries," though they are appointed by Assembly, and Presbyteries communicate with the Committee through written extracts; the "mistake" also in speaking of "loyalty to the Assembly" as demanding the withdrawal of the Metis grant; and many other things of which we cannot now speak particularly.

I close with an earnest protest against Dr. Cochrane's attempt to convey the impression that the Committee are in this matter ranged with him, and that he is simply the champion of their cause. With them I have no controversy. I entertain for every one of them feelings of affection and respect, and many of them are my warm personal friends; and I regard any attempt to alienate their friendship from me the reverse of kind.

P. WRIGHT,

Pastor of Chalmers' Church.

Montreal, May 20, 1878.

#### PROBATIONERS' PAY AND TREATMENT.

MR. EDITOR, A great deal has been said in your columns about the pay and treatment of Probationers, and as the illustrious "Thirty-one" have resolved to organize and agitate the question, I trust you will allow something to be said on the other side. Complaint is made that during last quarter fifteen vacancies have been removed from the list by calling ministers who do not belong to the roll of honour. Is this so? I know that in our Presbytery three vacancies were removed from the list because they had been killed by the present scheme, and are now being worked as mission stations as the only way to resuscitate them; and we have now in this Presbytery seven congregations, (five were formally settled) that have dwindled down to be mission stations through the present system. Another complaint is that the congregations do not "pay up to the average, that they were formerly paying their pastors" as required by the law of the Church. Would it not be justice to the congregations to have added to this rule "and Probationers are required to preach sermons up to the average formerly furnished the congregation, and Presbyteries are required to see that they do so." How would this work? An honest day's work for an honest day's pay. Another complaint is that they are badly billeted—perhaps "A.P." would suggest a bill of fare that would be suited to all parties and graded "in proportion to the salaries formerly paid their pastor." "Equity" proposes that the supply be stopped from all congregations who do not pay as required by law. I think a large proportion of the congregations would be glad to have supplies from the Scheme stopped as they would then be able to supply their own pulpits without the trouble of getting the consent of Presbytery or having often to pay two ministers for one day's work. From the number of applications to Presbyteries for this leave, (although many Presbyteries always refuse) this rule would be a success to the congregations, but it would be death to the present system. Is it then an advantage to be off this list? It appears so. The largest congregations in the Church get leave to obtain their own supply,

and many Probationers procure hearings without going on the list, and all Probationers are allowed to leave the list whenever they wish. Why not allow all congregations the same privilege? Congregations must remain on the list; if it kills them no matter. We are a vacant congregation who require Gaelic as well as English, and there are three ministers on the list who might be candidates for our pulpit. Two of these we have heard. We have the other one allotted to us this quarter and he declines coming. What is our chance of ever getting a settlement out of the "Thirty-one," and yet we have sent to us for eight Sabbaths in this quarter men who have no chance of ever being our pastor, some of whom we have already heard four times and who are so well known by us that we do not announce their names, knowing well, that if it was intimated that they were to preach, the church would be not only vacant but empty. And there is no remedy for this but *increased pay and better billets!* Can these Probationers expect as warm a welcome as if they were likely to be our coming pastor? No, they cannot but feel that they are not desired and that we feel that they are merely delaying our chance of settlement. What respect can a congregation have for a Probationer, who, having accepted a call but continuing to fill his appointments, finding the congregation to which he is sent have asked another minister to preach as a candidate for their pulpit, refuses to give way (even with the offer of his pay for doing nothing), but insists on his right to preach, and prevents the congregation from hearing the man they wanted? and what respect can they have for a scheme that justifies such acts? How it raises the Probationers in the eyes of the congregation when one of them comes late on Saturday night and goes away early on Monday morning, and asks the Treasurer for two dollars extra, "because you will save it by not having to pay so much for board."

To say nothing of serious charges which congregations do not take the trouble to report, as the prosecution would be far more expensive, than the advantage to them; it is quite certain that the present scheme is anything but a success, and although most of the complaints come from probationers, yet congregations have as much cause for complaint. I have had a good deal of experience with probationers in other congregations, and know that merely altering details in the working of this scheme will never bring the remedy. The objections to this scheme are that it generates an entire want of sympathy between the probationers and the congregations, and that it causes a great waste of means in working; waste to the congregations in paying board, with a manse standing idle, and waste to the probationers in paying unnecessary travelling expenses. The sympathy is not going to be increased by this discussion, and without it there is little hope of better treatment although in a few instances a dollar or two more may be got out of some vacancy. Is there no remedy? Yes—*A System of Itinerancy in connection with a Sustentation Fund* would be the best, but will not be obtainable for many years, and something must be done at once. Try this. Let all Sessions who wish to procure their own supply do so—this would remove about one-fourth, perhaps, of the present number of vacancies (48), and leave the thirty-six probationers each with a vacant congregation over which he would be settled for, say three months, and at the request of the Session might be allowed to remain another term or longer if mutually agreeable, but if petitioned against for inefficiency might be removed at the end of six weeks, and after three or five complaints for this cause to be removed altogether. The probationer to be paid nearly the same as the pastor, occupy the manse and perform all the pastoral duties (except being Moderator of Session); while congregations would have a better chance of becoming acquainted with the pastoral ability of the probationer, and would perhaps make better selections and the result be longer and more satisfactory pastorates than our present system of calling a man entirely on his preaching ability.

A MEMBER OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

#### THE METIS GRANT.

MR. EDITOR,—It is a long time since I read the Iliad, but—if I rightly remember—there is a passage in it where Achilles and Hector are represented as fighting about the dead body of Patroclus. Well, for some time past Brothers Cochrane and Wright have been crossing swords about your humble servant. I

have all the while been motionless like Patroclus. I cannot, however, be so any longer. To drop figure, there is a part of Dr. Cochrane's letter in the PRESBYTERIAN of May 17th, which, in justice to myself, I must notice. It is where he speaks as follows regarding the Home Mission Committee's discontinuing the grant to Metis: "When the case came up, Mr. Wright said that he hardly knew what to say about this station; that the Presbytery had been endeavoring for some time past to effect a change which they felt necessary for its greater success; that it was reported that many Presbyterians who lived a portion of the year in the locality passed the Presbyterian Church and attended other denominations; and that probably the best thing the Committee could do was to withhold the grant for a time, in the hope that such action, on the part of the Committee would bring about the change that seemed to the Presbytery so desirable."

Well, with regard to the report that "many Presbyterians who lived a portion of the year in the locality passed the Presbyterian Church and attended other denominations," I unhesitatingly term it a *downright falsehood*. There is not one word of truth in it from beginning to end. I defy any person to give the name of even one Presbyterian visitor who has ever gone past my church to go to the other. There is only one other Protestant church in the place.

The statement which I am now reviewing is also *absurd* as it is false. Where the far greater number of the visitors live, is from three to four-and-a-half miles from my church. The other one is close to the near end, between it and us. The fact, then, that the Presbyterian church is three miles further from the mass of the strangers than the other is, very readily accounts for so few attending the former. For one to pass my church to go to the other, he must first come up and go past the former, though it should be but one step, and then go back to the latter, thus travelling at least six miles for nothing. Any one doing so, would prove himself to be highly qualified for a place as a patient under the care of my old friend Dr. Clark, of the Toronto Lunatic Asylum. He would be like one living in Toronto, who should, in order to go to Kingston, pass Montreal. I am well acquainted with the history of the other Protestant church here, and from what I know of it, I have no doubt that *one reason* why those who placed the other church where it now stands, did so, was to draw the visitors to it. The whole of the Protestants here could not, together, raise a great deal for a minister. A part can, of course, do less. If, then, help from the visitors could be cut off from the Presbyterians, there was ground to hope that by and by Presbyterianism would be starved out of the place, and then the other church would get the field all to itself. I can give proofs that the younger Protestant church here was founded as an anti-Presbyterian one, which I defy any one in Metis or out of it to refute.

Even though some Presbyterian visitors who could attend our church should not, it does not necessarily follow that I am to be blamed for it. There are lukewarm persons in the Presbyterian as there are in other churches. Now, those to whom I refer might attend the other church just because they would see more of their acquaintances and other visitors there than at mine. There are many like the servant girl who said that she "wadna gie the crack i' the kirk-yard for a' the sermon." Or again, fugitives from discipline may have told those referred to great lies about me, and thereby poisoned their minds. I am used to "this sort of thing."

At different times, Presbyterian visitors have gone past the Little Metis church, and come to ours. On Sabbath afternoons, during the visiting season, I have a station in a temperance hotel four-and-a-half miles from here. We have good attendances, representing different denominations. At times, ministers of other evangelical bodies have taken my place, or assisted me. Several of the visitors have said to me that they wished that our church had been nearer them. If the intended church at Little Metis were built, it would be in a more central part than the other place is, and, therefore, the attendance in summer would be increased. While the strangers are here, we have visits at the manse from several of them, which seem to afford the visitors much pleasure, as I know they do the visited. Were it not for the fact already stated, we would have more callers. I mention these things simply in opposition to the report already referred to, which is fitted to do me harm. I again say that it is not true. Had I kept silence, I would, in effect, have