

THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND MISSIONARY RECORD.

For the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

"Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and the strength of salvation."

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Original Poetry.

(For the Missionary Record.)

THE STAR OF HOPE.

When my frail weather-beaten bark,
Upon life's stormy ocean,
Is tossed about by rolling waves,
That rage in fierce commotion;
When o'er my sky, in threatening clouds,
The scowling tempests gather,
And I must brave my way against
The angry wind and weather;

When days are dark, and friends are few,
And all my hopes are failing;
When I am left in solitude,
My prospects dark prevailing;
When all around is death-like gloom,
And nought on earth seems cheering,
How sweet through yonder clouds to see
The Star of Hope appearing.

It cheers my spirit even while
The storm around me rages;
For oh! its light reveals to me
My hope—The Rock of Ages.
Blest Star that cheers affliction's night,
And o'er the troubled water,
That marks 'mid dangerous shoals, the path
For Zion's weeping daughter.

How oft thy hallowed beams have broke
Upon my night of sorrow;
How oft thy silver lustre told
Me of a brighter morrow!
Thy radiance oft, the darkest night,
Hath cheered,—each cloud dispelling,
And comforted my drooping soul,
Its doubts and fears oft quelling.

For oh! when all was dark and drear
Across life's pathless ocean,
And when in wild conflicting thought,
Oft broke my heart's emotion;
Oh, then, upon that heaven-lit Star
My eye has fondly rested—
The Star whose sacred lustre has
With hope all round invested.

Jésus! thy promises to me
From that bright orb are streaming,
And through the dark and stormy night
Their cheering light is beaming.
For, save thy promises, no light
Is to my spirit cheering;
For oh, in these alone I see
My Star of Hope appearing.

J. A.

INVERNESS, C. E., Sept., 1848.

NOTICES.

NOTICE TO PRESBYTERY CLERKS.

Minutes of Synod have been sent to the various Agents, according to the notification in the *Record* for August, (see page 145).

It is requested that measures be taken for having these put into the hands of Elders, Deacons and Managers, in every Congregation and Mission Station, and that remittances be made for them to the Treasurer of the Synod Fund.

We are sorry to have to complain of receiving so few accounts of the proceedings of Presbyteries. The whole church is interested in the licensing of Probationers, ordination and induction of Ministers, and other Presbyterial acts; but of late few, if any, think of sending us information concerning such matters.

The General Home Mission Committee, the College Committee, and the Commission of Synod, will meet (God willing) as under:—

The HOME MISSION COMMITTEE, in Knox's Church, Hamilton, on the 11th October, at 6, p.m.

The COLLEGE COMMITTEE, in the Library of Knox's College, Toronto, on Wednesday, the 18th October, at 4, p.m. It is expected that the Committee will adjourn for its more important business until the evening of the 25th October, the day on which the Commission meets.

The COMMISSION OF SYNOD, in Knox's Church, Toronto, on Wednesday, the 25th of October, at 4, p.m.

¶ The Publisher of the *Record* can supply sets of the 4th Vol., from No. 6. He has also a few copies of some of the earlier numbers. Agents, or others, who have spare copies of the first five numbers, especially of number 1, will confer a favour by returning them.

WIDOWS' FUND.

FERGUS, C. W., 1st Sept., 1848.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—According to instructions of Synod regarding the Widows' Fund Scheme, which was generally approved of at Toronto in June last, and which you will find published in the number of the *Record* for that month, I have prepared the following, as a list of Queries to be sent down to Presbyteries, with the view of ascertaining the mind of the church on the provisions of said scheme, and especially of obtaining information respecting the disposition of ministers to enter upon it. I have therefore to request that you will bring these Queries before your Presbytery at its earliest meeting, and favour me with answers to them within three months from this date, if possible.

1. Do the members of your Presbytery approve of excluding from the Widows' Fund Scheme all provision for aged and infirm ministers of our church?

2. Do the members of your Presbytery approve of connecting with the Widows' Scheme proper, a subordinate one for making provision to the children of deceased ministers and professors of our church?

3. Do the members of your Presbytery approve of annual collections by their congregations in support of the Fund; and do they agree to carry out their part of the scheme, if required?

4. Do the members of your Presbytery think that the sum of £2 10s. or £3 respectively, with the addition of £1 for the Orphans' Scheme, proposed as the annual rate payable by ministers and professors to the Fund, can be regularly paid by them? Do they agree to pay the same, if the scheme be adopted by the church? Or, in the event of collections being generally disapproved of and dispensed with, do they think that a higher rate than that proposed in connection with collections—say one nearly double—could be collected by them?

5. Will the members of your Presbytery and their congregations consent to the annual rate to be fixed by the Synod, as payable to this Fund, being deducted from the dividend payable to each minister out of the Sustentation Fund?

6. Do the members of your Presbytery approve of retaining and accumulating the entire proceeds of the Fund for the first five years of its operation, without respect to any claims for annuities which may arise within that period?

7. Do the members of your Presbytery approve of requiring future entrants into this church to pay for five years into the Fund; or, in the event of their demise within that time, that the term of their fifth annual payment shall have passed before their widows become entitled to draw any annuity?

8. Do the members of your Presbytery approve of re-admitting to the benefits of the scheme, upon any condition, those who may have forfeited their right?

9. What principle involved in the scheme, or what part of its calculations, or which of its regulations, does any member of your Presbytery object to, or propose an alteration of; and what addition to, or improvement of, any part of the scheme has any member of your Presbytery to suggest?

10. Bearing in mind that all minute considerations, based upon the respective ages of contributors, and the relative age of husband and wife at marriage,—the increase of Fund, arising from entry-money and marriage-tax,—the probability of a greater or smaller proportion of married to single contributors,—the chance of life in this country as differing from that in other countries,—and the possible incorrectness of data furnished by a limited number of cases, &c., are purposely kept out of view, because fitted as likely to embarrass or mislead, as to direct to a true result.—How many of the ministers and professors in your Presbytery approve generally of the scheme; and, after it has been carefully revised and corrected, are disposed— notwithstanding possible defects in it as minor objections on their part—to enter upon it?

Will you also obtain and favour me with information on the following points:

I. What is the age of each minister and professor in your Presbytery; if married, what is the age of his wife, and how long have they been married; and if not married, whether he is bachelor or widower?

II. How many children has each minister and professor in your Presbytery, and what are their respective ages?