

number, containing much interesting and useful intelligence, and an unusual quantity of original matter. It seems to have awakened anew into the consciousness of living in an age of improvement, and to the determination of keeping pace with it. Better paper, better printing, every thing better—why, you take the shine out of *The Presbyterian* completely. You are such politicians in Nova Scotia, printers, ministers, merchants all alike—I suppose the effect must be attributed to the greater leisure consequent upon the prorogation of Parliament.

The spring is exceedingly backward—the weather cold and raw. The memory of man, I hear it said, can recall nothing like it. However, heavy rains have fallen lately, and vegetation has taken a fresh start. The stream of emigration has commenced, and every week increases it.

18th May, 1857.

Colonial Churches.

REPORT FROM THE PRESBYTERY OF PICTOU.

With the view of keeping your Committee thoroughly well-informed as to the condition of the Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia a committee, consisting of the Rev. Messrs. Macgillivray, Pollok, and Macrae, was appointed at the last meeting of the Presbytery to report upon the state of their affairs, and to shew to what extent they are endeavouring to foster the interests of the Established Church of Scotland in the colonies. The following is the result of their labours, presenting a brief view of the Church's progress from the year 1852:—

During that year, there were but two ministers connected with the Church of Scotland, within the bounds of the Presbytery of Pictou, to discharge the pastoral duties of sixteen congregations. In other words, within the compass of a country 100 miles long by 30 broad and containing about 12,000 adherents of the Established Church there were fourteen vacant charges. (This is, of course, exclusive of Cape Breton, where there are also no small number of adherents.) To supply the spiritual necessities of this large population, Messrs. Macgillivray and Herdman, the ministers referred to laboured with the most unremitting assiduity, not only preaching among them, but dispensing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper very frequently, and holding numerous diots of catechising.

During this and some preceding years, Mr. Macgillivray preached successively and regularly at eight places of worship, and also visited as frequently as possible the other vacant country congregations,—occasionally preaching on three, four, or even five weeks-days, in addition to the ordinary Sabbath duties. The services of Mr. Herdman were confined more exclusively to Pictou and New Glasgow; but he also visited the country congregations as often as he was called upon, and as often as he could be spared from his usual duties. It may be easily supposed, that periods sometimes,

occurred in the experience of these servants of Christ, when they were ready to faint under their burdens, and to forsake the field in despair. They were successful, however, in keeping the people together; so much so, that it may be confidently asserted, not an individual of these congregations was lost to the Established Church through dissent, after the Secession of 1843.

At length, towards the close of 1852, their hearts were cheered by the arrival of Mr. Mackay, who after acting as a missionary within the bounds of this Presbytery for about two and a half years, afterwards settled in Belfast, Prince Edward's Island where he is now residing.

Early in the beginning of the year 1853, their hands were greatly strengthened by the arrival of Messrs. Pollock and Maclean, additional missionaries sent out by your Committee. The congregation at New Glasgow instantly presented Mr. Pollock with a call, which he accepted; and he has since continued labouring in that town, together with the extensive landward districts connected with it. Mr. Maclean was, shortly thereafter, settled as minister of the large and populous districts of Gareloch and Salt Springs, where he has two churches, six miles apart, in which he preaches alternately. But his work is too laborious. There is ample room within his bounds for the services of two active ministers, and, we hope, the day is not distant when his congregation will be divided.

At the same time, Mr. Herdman, to whose labours I have already alluded, was settled as minister of Pictou.

During the two following years, no change took place in the number of labourers. And here it may be proper to notice the regular duties fulfilled by those actually engaged. During the summer months they held eight sacramental services in different parts of the country; nor was it often practicable to dispense this ordinance in two places at the same time. One reason of this was the necessity for holding the services in two languages, Gaelic and English. Another was, the pertinacity with which the people adhered to the customs of their forefathers; in particular demanding that five days be set apart for each communion season.

In addition to the above labours, the ministers of this Presbytery assisted at the dispensation of the Lord's Supper in Prince Edward Island, at the expense of no small time and trouble. They were in the habit, also, of aiding Mr. Snodgrass, the solitary representative of the Established Church in that island, during these years, at meetings of presbytery, &c., all which trifling additional burden to their already numerous duties. Indeed, it was by no means easy for them to hold their own presbytery meetings, on account of the paucity of their numbers, and the distances (especially when measured by the state of the roads) at which they resided from each other, or from any cen-

tral point; at the same time that, feeling how essential such meetings are to the well-being of the Church, they met with great regularity. Nor did they consult their own comfort, by selecting a central point for the purpose. On the contrary, with the threefold view of animating the people by their presence, of transacting congregational business of various kinds, and of supporting Sunday schemes which were put in operation during those years, the meetings of presbytery were held in different parts of the country in regular rotation. Each minister devoted six Sabbaths in the year to missionary labours (in addition to the eight communion services already alluded to, and on these occasions, from the largeness of the districts to be traversed, from the state of the roads in winter, and consequent inability of the people to assemble in large numbers in any one locality, and from their own anxiety to dispense the bread of life as frequently as possible, week-day preaching became absolutely necessary.

But it is time to make a few remarks upon the schemes which have been attempted, amid many discouraging circumstances, in this presbytery, and which are now being supported with considerable success. The first of these, in point of time, and also of importance at present, is the "Young Men's Scheme." Its object is to assist young men, natives of the province in being educated in Scotland or Canada, for labour in the Colonial field—in short, of raising up a native ministry. This scheme has hitherto been very successful—the sum of upwards of £ 700 currency having been raised partly by subscription, and partly by collections at the church doors, during the past four years, of which a considerable portion has been entrusted to the kindy offered care of your Committee; and six young men assisted from its funds, four being now in course of training at Glasgow, and two in Canada.

Next in importance is the Home Mission Scheme, which with the following, was begun in 1855. This has not yet come fully into operation; but hereafter, we contemplate supplementing small stipends, and supporting a staff of missionaries from its funds. For this scheme, between £ 70 and £ 80 have been collected; and lastly, there is the Synod Fund, the object of which is to pay the expenses of members attending the ecclesiastical court. For this scheme about £ 40 have been realised. In addition, there have been several collections made for other purposes connected with the propagation of the Gospel. But as these are only partial, and not formally enjoined, they do not call so pressing for notice, in a sketch of our regular transactions to be placed before your Committee.

The exertions of the people to enlarge their Church accommodation ought to be mentioned, as betokening their zeal, and the increasing prosperity of the Church in this Presbytery. Since the year 1853, four new churches have been erected within our bounds.