

can be no doubt, however, that the 'quantity of Coal buried under its soil is immense; and its insular position and extent of seaboard secure for it facilities of transport that cannot easily be over-estimated. There is some ground, therefore, for the hope entertained by many, that it will ere long attain to great importance.

But there is another subject connected with Cape Breton, which many of the readers of the *Record* will consider fully as interesting as its incalculable wealth and beautiful scenery; and that is, the religious condition of its inhabitants. I propose to offer a few remarks on this subject.

The population of Cape Breton is about 63,000. As I have not the statistical account at hand, I cannot give the exact number belonging to each of the religious bodies in the Island. I believe I am sufficiently near the mark, however, in saying, that a little more than the half of the people are Roman Catholics. The remaining smaller half, if I may use the expression, is divided into a number of sects, viz.: Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, &c. And the Presbyterians, again, are sub-divided into the United Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces, the Church of Scotland, and a body known by the name of Normanites. Of these three, the United Presbyterians are by far the most numerous.

It must be observed, however, that the strength of the Church of Scotland in the Island is apt to be under-estimated. We have two ministers there, but that is no index of the number of our people. Most of the readers of the *Record* remember the time when we had only one minister in the County of Pictou. It would have been a ridiculous mistake to infer from that, that there were but few Kirk people in the county. The result shows that there were, even then, enough to form many congregations; but they had not an opportunity of showing their strength till a sufficient number of ministers arrived to labour amongst them. As the people of Cape Breton were poorer, their wants were longer in being supplied. Even at the present day, many of them have to look for services from deputations from the Presbytery of Pictou, just as Pictou itself had, some fifteen or twenty years ago, to depend, in a measure, upon the services of the deputations sent out from Scotland. When we compare the present state of our Church in Nova Scotia with the past, there is good hope that the efforts now made to build up the walls of our Zion in Cape Breton will be crowned with success. The vacant charges here being mostly filled up now, it may be expected that some of the young ministers who are looked for next summer will find their way across the Gut of Canso.

The reader may form some idea of the present state of the Church, if he will take the trouble to read the following brief sketch

of the various stations visited by the deputation sent there in August last:—

At Baddeck, there is a promising congregation, though but small. They are, as yet, without a proper place of worship; but it is to be hoped that things will not continue long in that condition. There are some very energetic and wealthy members amongst them, and we understand that they contemplate building a Church soon.

Baddeck is a very important place, and is fast rising to eminence. There is a steamer plying regularly between it and Sydney twice a week; that, with other natural advantages is calculated to make it a flourishing town, and a good field for a rising Church.

Middle River Church is about 12 miles to the northwest of Baddeck. The Sacrament having been dispensed while we were there, we saw a large concourse of people, on each of the sacramental days. On Sabbath, the Church was crowded: and outside, where the Gaelic services were conducted, the audience was, of course, far larger. We were informed that nearly the half of the people in this district adhere to the Church of Scotland, and the congregation seems to be flourishing. The people are warmly attached to their minister, Mr. Brodie, as is evinced by the present of an excellent waggon which he received from them last summer. The Church, with about 100 acres of land, is deeded to the Church of Scotland.

There is a thriving congregation at Broad Cove. During the whole of the sacramental services, there was a large number of people in attendance. Friday was observed as a *Ceist* day, as was also the case at Middle River; and it was very pleasing, as well as instructive, to see the earnestness, modesty, and good sense with which the men spoke. One of the elders of the United Church, who was present, spoke also "on the question"—thus showing the good feeling that exists there between the two bodies. A very handsome and commodious Church, which was being erected while we were there in August, is now ready for the use of the congregation.

On the week following that at Broad Cove, the Sacrament was held at River Inhabitants. That was the first time that our people in that district enjoyed such a privilege since the Disruption; not, certainly, for any lukewarmness on their part, but for the lack of ministers hitherto. We did not expect a large gathering there on that occasion, for the people were in the midst of their hay harvest; besides, in the neighborhood of the Church, the Protestant population is not numerous. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, there was a goodly attendance at the week day services; and on Sabbath, there was a large Gaelic congregation outside, while the Church was well nigh filled with those worshipping in the English language.