

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

The correspondence on this subject which has for months been carried on in the Toronto "Globe," seems to have exhausted itself. Rome, Canterbury, and Geneva, has each had its say. The bishop-presbyter view has been well maintained; and where the intelligent reader has felt an interest in the subject, the Presbyterian view cannot fail to have commended itself as in accordance with scripture and apostolic practice. Dean Stanley in a sermon lately preached by him, refers to Bishop Lightfoot, "the most learned of all the living bishops of England," as having "proved beyond dispute that the early constitution of the apostolic churches of the first century was not that of a single pastor, but of a body of pastors indifferently styled 'bishops' or 'presbyters,' that it was not till the very end of the apostolic age that the office which we (Episcopalians) now call the Episcopate, gradually and slowly made its way in the churches of Asia Minor: that Presbytery was not a later growth out of Episcopacy, but that Episcopacy was a later growth out of Presbytery; that the office which the apostles adopted was a *rule* not of bishops but of presbyters. This frank, manly sentence is a sledge hammer blow at the very underpinning of High Church Episcopacy."

It may not be amiss for our Presbyterian friends to clip the above extract from the pen of Dean Stanley and to use it when assailed by the unscriptural arrogance of their High Church neighbours. It will always deal a heavy blow to ignorant assumption. It may also serve a good purpose to ask why in the Book of Common Prayer, the prayer for the clergy and people does not refer to *prelates* but to *bishops* and curates; meaning beyond question *priests* and curates in charge of congregations and not the *rulers of the clergy*? And again in the prayer for Easter Week, it is said, "So guide and govern the hearts of thy servants the bishops and pastors of this flock that they may lay hands suddenly," etc., does not this imply that to *pastors of flocks* belongs the laying on of hands and not to *prelates exclusively*? (1 Tim. v. 22). Notwithstanding statements in the Prayer Book which assert the three orders and prelacy, the above and other passages show that even in the time of Queen Elizabeth there were *bishops* who had power to ordain by laying on of hands and were not *prelates* but *priests* or *presbyters*.

HOME MISSION FUND—"A SERIOUS CRISIS."

MR. EDITOR,—I was deeply grieved on reading your article in the last PRESBYTERIAN on result of the appeal to the Presbyterians of this Dominion on the "Home Mission Fund." Can it be possible that the ministers of our Church are indifferent to the progress of the Gospel? Do they care nothing about the missionaries we send out to the distant parts of the Dominion? or whether their salaries are paid or not? If they care nothing for the missionaries and the Gospel, have they no regard for the ministers and elders who compose the Home Mission Committee? Surely they cannot expect these Christian ministers and elders to meet from time to time, and appoint men to go to the distant parts of the Dominion to labour amongst the poor and scattered settlers of the land, and to have no regard to the promises they make. If they have any regard for the Committee, or the missionaries, or for our common Christianity, I implore the members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church, to awake to a sense of their position and responsibility. This state of things cannot last long. It will recoil upon our Church with a terrible effect, and in a manner we little expect. We must either *grow* or *die*. We cannot stand still. God's work must be carried on. If our Church does not do it, others will. Is there a Presbyterian minister or elder in the Church who has taken any part in the Church Courts these last thirty years, who has had not to mourn over the want of attention of our Church to the back settlements in Ontario, and thereby allowing our people to become absorbed into other churches? And much as we have condemned our early pioneers of the Church, we are just going to do the same thing. Well I remember the Rev. Dr. Burns pleading with, yes imploring, the Synod in Kingston, to send the Rev. John Black to the Red River. And was he sent too soon? We all know

we should have sent a minister long before. And are we now going to draw back? Never! We must go forward, we cannot allow our countrymen to perish for lack of spiritual knowledge. Money must be had. The missionaries must be paid. The people have the means, and if those at the helm of affairs cannot devise a plan to get it, I beg of them to step down and out, and let some others take their place. You say one hundred and ten congregations, and one hundred mission stations did not last year contribute to the fund, and after the Moderator issued his address to be read in all the churches, some ministers did not read it (our minister did not read it). Is it any wonder the people do not contribute to the fund? There is a cause why the people do not respond to the calls of the Church. Too many of our ministers never bring the claims of missions before the people. If a service each month were spent in laying missionary news and the claims of missions before the congregations, the people would take more interest in the work. If at the next meeting of the different Presbyteries, they would just take up the question and find out who read the Moderator's circular, and who did not, I am persuaded they would find out there were a good many delinquents. I agree with you, "the remedy lies largely in the hands of ministers and Sessions." If the Session Records at the meeting of Presbyteries were carefully examined, I doubt if we would have one hundred and ten congregations neglecting to attend to the schemes of the Church. Excuse me for trespassing on your space. I may again, if permitted, point out some of the reasons why this and other funds of the Church are not attended to. I can only say the scene which took place at the Home Mission meeting in Toronto at its last meeting, was well calculated to humble the pride of every Presbyterian in the land. As one who has done a little to help on our Church during a sojourn in Canada of over forty-five years, I implore both ministers and people to see that God's servants are paid what is their due, who are sent into distant fields to preach the precious truth.

Ontario, Sept. 21st, 1879.

AN ELDER.

HOME MISSION COMMITTEE.

MR. EDITOR,—In your issue of the 24th Oct. "Presbyter" criticises the action of the Home Mission Committee at their recent meeting, and expresses regret that they "separated without proposing some course for the adoption of the Church in order to overcome the present difficulty." "Another Presbyter" writes in the issue of 31st Oct., in much the same strain, and hopes "the Committee will attempt something without delay."

I confess I do not see what the Committee could have proposed or done. They could not have proposed a special effort being made to wipe out the debt. The General Assembly by its action in June last forbade any movement in that direction.

It was quite unnecessary for the Committee to urge upon the Church increased liberality for Home Missions, for that had already been done by the Assembly. And, if an appeal from the Assembly, backed by a Pastoral Letter which all ministers were enjoined to read from the pulpit, would not secure the desired end, an appeal from the Committee was not likely to be more successful. Then how could such an appeal have been made? "Presbyter" says there have been circulars enough sent out in the past. That is true. The Committee have long since found out that circulars issued by them, setting forth the urgent needs of the fund, have been treated with indifference, almost with contempt.

Sending deputations to stir up Presbyteries was not to be thought of. The Committee has been found fault with for doing so on former occasions. Even if deputations had been sent, what was the probability of their doing much good? It has been said again and again, that there are Presbyteries in which, if a member interested in Home Missions introduces the subject and urges the importance and claims of that scheme, he soon finds himself speaking to an audience little larger than the moderator and the clerk. Deputations to deal with the large number of defaulting congregations could not be sent. Had the Committee proposed such a course they would have been met with an outcry about interference with the rights of Presbyteries. Even if such deputations could, without objection, have been sent, would they have effected any good? After earnest effort on the part of the deputation to arouse the people to a sense

of their duty, the extreme probability is that the minister of the congregation would get up and tell his people that they had been doing very well, doing quite as much as could be expected of them. It was vain for the Committee to ask Presbyteries to deal with such defaulting congregations. The Assembly has again and again, enjoined Presbyteries to deal with them. Have they generally done so? If Presbyteries in this matter systematically disobey the express command of the Supreme Court of the Church, were they likely to undertake the duty at the request of the Committee? Whatever might be the feeling of some individual members, I do not think the Committee, as a Committee looked on the situation with despair. There was, however, under the circumstances only one course open to them and they took it. The Church had in the past failed to provide sufficient funds, and on the most reliable data at the command of the Committee, the prospects of there being sufficient funds in April seemed exceedingly doubtful. Had the Committee then gone on to make grants for the coming six months, they would have been doing what, if done by a business man, in the ordinary business of life, is a fraudulent act, they would have been incurring liabilities without reasonable expectation of paying them.

The only remedy for the present state of things is that every minister should bring before his own congregation the importance of the Home Mission work, and urge its claims. The present lamentable state of things will continue just so long as a large number of the ministers, afraid lest their own interests should suffer, neglect to do this, even where they do not, as is too often the case, positively discourage their people from contributing.

T. W. TAYLOR.

HOME MISSION DEBT.

MR. EDITOR, Having read Dr. Cochrane's reply to the strictures of "Presbyter" and "Another Presbyter" on the management of our Home Mission Committee's work, I think it is as clear as daylight, that like a man living beyond his means for a series of years, finding himself at length a bankrupt, so the Committee at the last meeting could no longer shut their eyes to the inevitable. No matter how urgent the appeal, or how clamant the case, they should long ere this have taken the stand which they are now taking, and have ceased to vote away funds which the Church was not placing at their disposal. Had they taken such a stand some years ago, individual localities might have suffered, but a denominational crash and calamity would have been avoided. But the General Assembly is not faultless in this matter either, in allowing itself to be led to its decisions by the eloquence of those who devote so little of their energies to the schemes of the Church, beyond what they expend on the floor of the house. A vigorous attempt was made last year to reduce the expenses of Knox College, and the attempt was eloquently and successfully resisted by a minister of a prominent town congregation, of nearly three hundred members, whose contribution to college purposes for the year amounted to the magnificent sum of six dollars! At the same time I do not think that the case is so hopeless as the Committee seem to regard it; it is only a little worse than it has been for some considerable time past. The General Assembly's decision did not require that every congregation's contribution for the year should be in Toronto by this time, but "as early as possible," and as most congregations have a Missionary Association and take up monthly contributions for the schemes of the Church, and divide their funds at the end of the year, clearly they cannot and will not send it before it is collected and appropriated, but are no doubt intending to send it "as early as possible." And when the time has arrived for such congregations to hold their annual missionary meetings, liberal appropriations will no doubt be made for Home Missions. Congregations of this class understand themselves as complying with the Assembly's directions, although the Committee may think otherwise. If the Assembly's meaning was that every congregation send its contribution by the 1st of October, then the Assembly repealed and reversed the constitution and rules of probably every Missionary Association in the Church. But this the Assembly did not do, I hold, and the effect of the Assembly's action will not be known till the end of March next.

Nov. 7, 1879.

MINISTER.