

churches in this Presbytery, and it is to be hoped that our presbytery, and our people will see to it, that services, which cost the Colonial Committee £3 15 a Sabbath, will be paid, for in full. Our debt to the church last year was about £900. A. P.

Past and Present.

When, in the year 1852, five young ministers, the Rev. Messrs. Maclean, McKay, Sprott, Snodgrass, and Pollok, moved by numerous appeals, resolved to labor in this Province, our church, having passed through a very trying ordeal, was still in a state of great dilapidation. Of our Zion it might have been said: "all her people sigh, they seek bread." Upon the majority of our congregations had fallen times such as were graphically described by Amos of old; "I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor of thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord." For ten years some nine or ten congregations had been vacant. Though much had been done to cheer the hearts of the people—though deputations of able men, men of evangelical power, men breathing a spirit of charity towards all denominations, men whose very presence and character killed a host of malignant calumnies that had poisoned the air for years, and blackened the fair fame of one of the noblest reformed churches of the earth, and the mother of not a few ungrateful children, had given encouragement to the people; and though the late noble-hearted Macgillivray, whose name will never fade from the hearts and memories of those who truly love our Zion, had watched over the footsteps of the flock in many a journey, through many a storm and on many a weary hot day; when alone he broke the sacramental bread on the green carpet of earth and beside the clear streams of this beautiful land—yet many things past and existing were of a discouraging nature. The Synod that ten years before had twenty-four ministers, had now only five. The Synod of New Brunswick had six. Of course the Synods were only a name, as they did not meet for business. There was not a scheme in existence for any purpose whatever, and indeed there does not seem to have been any schemes of active benevolence in the Synod even previous to the secession of 1843. A lay association had been started among the laity, which had a skeleton existence, and which was meant more for keeping the church together than any special purpose of a religious nature. There were only two congregations in the Presbytery of Halifax—St. Matthew's, which was somewhat languid, and St. Andrew's, which was very much decayed. There was no minister in P. E. Island; and Belfast, a large congregation, had enjoyed

no regular services since the much regretted departure of the greatly beloved Mr. MacLennan. Mr. Macnair, who had been in Charlottetown had returned home in May, to make a *viva voce* statement before the General Assembly. There may be a Church without religion, and there may be religion without a church; while the proper state of man is to have both a church and a religion and the cheering feature in all this was that the people retained their religion. They not only remained loyal to their church, which they might have done from party spirit or from sectarian bitterness and not from religion, but they retained the only thing for which a church is valuable,—they retained their faith in divine things and their love of ordinances. The songs of Zion were sung in every home, and pious people sighed and cried for better times. Men of strong faith predicted them, though they were scarcely believed. The piety and patience of the people under the reproach of their situation has seldom been equalled in the history of the church of Christ and forms a lovely feature in an otherwise barren prospect. The lamp of piety burns with a purer ray amid the storms of adversity. The sandal tree when smitten with the severing knife, sends forth a sweeter fragrance; and the pious soul, when earthly props fail, clings more fervently to its God, wrestling and crying, "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me." We have no desire then to exaggerate, and throw nothing into the picture but what blackens it. But having noticed this redeeming feature, we must then admit that the church was a desolation, in which she was daily losing—in which isolated people were lost, and other communions took charge of her scattered sheep.

Now what is our present condition? I shall not detail the history of the last fifteen years, with which we are quite familiar.—There have been great discouragements. The ministerial staff has been several times increased and again reduced. Other four came with me to the Province, of whom only one remains here. In the two synods about 20 new ministers have come and gone in that time. I shall not give a detailed narrative but results. The Synod of Nova Scotia met for the first time since the secession, in 1854, and since that time there has been on the whole a most marked progress.

A Young Men's Scheme was started at a meeting held at McLennan's Brook; to which the subscriptions used, in its early years, to be very large. For the first few years of its existence subscription lists were obtained from our leading congregations, amounting to about \$100 each. Since then it has been sustained by collections on Sabbath day.—But sustained it has been with more or less vigor up to the present time. The idea from which it sprang was the propriety of educating natives for the ministerial supply, and