

of any man in Nova Scotia may be considered public property without the public having given him one shilling, it is the Rev. John Sprott. It was exceedingly pleasant to meet with a man of his sagacity and experience, especially as there are now so few of the old fathers left who first broke ground in this Province. And I would advise any of the brethren who may be wandering from home, and who desire abundant hospitality without any fuss made about it, set off with old stories, dry humour, and telling hits, to steer for the manse of Tullochgorum, even though it takes them a few miles out of their way. The manse is prettily situated on a rising ground above the river, with an avenue lined with young trees leading to it from the road. The trees were all planted by himself; in fact, I believe the whole farm was delved, ditched, and enclosed by his own hands. And just as well for him that he was able to do it; for I do not think that his old congregation gives him one farthing of retiring allowance. He is an instance—not, I am sorry to say, the only one I know—of the inherent curse of Voluntarism. His people had thought that they had pinched off the meat, and they wished even to throw away the bones. They were mistaken on one point, certainly; for there is still meat of finer quality than you would get off the bones of perhaps a whole Presbytery. “We want a change”—“something new”—is the cry of our modern Athenians in almost every congregation; and in this case, I believe, from all that I have heard from disinterested outsiders, the only reason is that the old minister was too honest and truthful—that he could not disguise his contempt for humbug and hypocrisy—that he would not stoop to dodges, and would not talk always as if eggs were under his feet. It is enough of this.—I arrived at the manse, and was introduced to its head, and soon found that he was abreast of the current literature of the day,—in this respect an example to many of the younger country ministers in Nova Scotia that I am afraid all of them will follow. He is now below the ordinary height, stout, but not corpulent. In his prime must have been a strong, firm-set, well-learned man. His countenance and bust still show no diminution of health and power. His voice is still round and firm, and his eye clear and penetrating. His manner in conversation is curt, but cherry; and every now and then there comes forth a quaint simile or a planted hit that reminds you of those characteristic saws of his which are household words in many parts of the Province. You can imagine how such a man would be apt to provoke enmity, especially among parishioners who would be patrons, and who, when brought inferior produce in payment of a rent, received only an expressive nod, or a sarcasm that would cut like a knife and sting like a burr;—for he did not insist on being paid hard cash. He would take anything;

and queer things he did get: “hams and old harrows, buckwheat and broomsticks.”

But I had to leave the hospitable manse, after promising another visit, and proceed down the river four or five miles to the residence of our excellent missionary, the Rev. G. W. Stewart. The principal portion of his people are on an affluent of the Musquodoboit, called Little River. At this place he has a neat Church which is about free from debt, and a respectable congregation. He has organized a Kirk-Session, has 80 communicants, and, in the summer, a flourishing Sabbath School. He preaches at three other places besides Little River,—viz., at Antrim, which is eight miles nearer Halifax; at Upper Musquodoboit, twenty miles further up the river, where he has the use of Rev. Mr. Sedgwick’s Church; and at the Dean Settlement, which is seven miles further up still. There is no Church erected for any denomination either at Antrim or Dean Settlement. On the evening of my arrival, I went with Mr. Stewart to his prayer meeting, which was well attended, and which I conducted—certainly with great pleasure to myself. On the Sabbath, I conducted service in Little River Church,—Mr. Stewart being absent at Upper Musquodoboit; and on the Monday evening, we met the people again, and explained to them the various Schemes of the Church, seeking to interest them particularly in the College Endowment Fund. On the following day I left for Truro.

I have here to express my warm gratitude for the kindness I received from all the Little River people that I fell in with. They are a young congregation, and have had their difficulties, as is usual with younglings; but I think that the heaviest of these are past, and that, with a very little more nursing, they will take their place on the list of our self-supporting congregations. They have energetic men among them, warmly attached to the Church, and capable of managing their affairs in a business-like way. I hope to see more of them; and if my visit tended in any way to quicken their zeal and minister to their piety, I will feel abundantly recompensed. I cannot speak too highly of the self-denying labours of their missionary.

I am not going to say one word about the scenery—the natural beauties of Musquodoboit. Everything had a wintry look: the roads chopped up into half-frozen mud, the fields russet and bare, the woods disrowned and chilly. I will wait till I pay my summer visit before entering on such a subject, and even then I will write a description only if in the vein.

PRESBYTER.

It is announced that Dr. Pirie of Aberdeen is to be Moderator of next General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and Principal Fairbairn Moderator of next General Assembly of the Free Church.