

whom inquiry had been made by the Society's correspondent at Niagara, had emigrated to that part of North America," and was "harmoniously settled over that society." The exact date of the commencement of Mr. Fraser's labors is not fixed, but it was late in 1826 or early in 1827. He found the Church practically disorganized and very much discouraged. Writing recently in reference to the matter, he says that he made one effort to perfect the organization, but only one woman came forward; and, as he learned afterwards that they desired to be connected with the Church of Scotland, with which he was "not united," he made no subsequent attempt to organize them. After continuing through three temporary engagements of six months each, he says: "As everything about the place was so flat and dull, I lost all interest in it, and so removed to the other side." The business of the town was greatly depressed, and the prospects were, in all respects, gloomy. Mr. Fraser was a native of Scotland; was educated at Glasgow College; licensed, in 1817, by the Glasgow Relief Presbytery, and ordained, in 1819, by the Relief Presbytery in Edinburgh. After leaving Niagara, he officiated six years with the same Scotch congregation at Princeton (formerly Curry's Bush), near Schenectady, N. Y., from which Rev. John Young came, in 1791, to the first pastorate in Montreal; then, for ten years, was connected with the Reformed Dutch Church in the State of New York; then became pastor at Lanark, in the Presbytery of Perth, where he remained until June, 1854, when he retired from the ministry, on his commutation allowance, and now, at the age of eighty-six (May 1st), he is patiently awaiting another and his *last call*, at his home in Montreal.

Under date of 8th January, 1829, John Crooks, Esq., sent, under cover to the Glasgow Colonial Society, a blank call for a minister, addressed to the Moderator of the Glasgow Presbytery. In the accompanying letter, Mr. C. said, "we have the promise from Government of £100 a year during the existence of the Canada Land Company," which, however, was declared to be uncertain in its duration; and that "about twenty persons have become bound to pay the minister to be selected by the Glasgow Presbytery £150 sterling per annum," including the Government grant. Two days after, William Clark, Esq. (who was very busy receiving the taxes collected throughout the district from the several collectors), enclosed a duplicate of the call to Rev. Dr. Russell, of Hamilton, Scotland, for delivery to the Moderator of Presbytery; and by next post a "legal guarantee of £150 a year for a minister" was forwarded. Among other excellencies, Mr. Clark said the people wanted a "gentlemanly preacher," although, he added, "perhaps we ought not to expect a man of very superior talent for the small stipend we offer." In answer to this appeal,

REV. ROBERT MCGILL, early in the following spring, received an appointment by the Glasgow Colonial Society. On the 15th day of July, he was ordained by the Glasgow Presbytery, and on the 16th day of the following October he was inducted to the charge at Niagara by Rev. Mr. Cook of Quebec, and Rev. Mr. Macher of Kingston, with, perhaps, other ministers of the Church of Scotland in Canada, "who agreed to meet for that purpose and carry out the appointment of the Glasgow Presbytery." Mr. McGill found the town and the Church in a much more prosperous and hopeful condition than when Mr. Fraser left, the shipping and other commercial interests having greatly revived. He was "received with open arms by his people, and entered on a most extensive sphere of usefulness, with promising anticipations of success." In a letter "home," written 12th January, 1830, he speaks of being, at length, settled in his own house, and of "our church" as being a "mean and unsuitable building, capable of containing about 300 people," and as being completely filled, "when the roads are good," with "a congregation of respectable appearance," the greater number of whom were of Scotch extraction. April 6th following, he reported the erection of a wing to the church, capable of seating forty persons, and began to solicit aid for a new building, saying that he believed £400 could be raised in Niagara, and that a friend in Montreal had engaged to raise £100. He also gave, from the returns of the assessors made in 1828, a statement of the Presbyterians in the town and township of Niagara, including as members those who were attached to the Church, and classifying the others as "attached towards" it. Of the former there were in the town 272 and in the township 130—in all 402; of the latter, in town 3, and in township 326—in all

329. The grand total, 831, was 69 more than the grand total in the Church of England columns, all others being still lower. In 1831, the improvement in the congregation and the town was so marked that the erection of a new house of worship was undertaken. On the 31st day of May of that year, the corner-stone of "St. Andrew's Church (Established Church of Scotland) at Niagara" was laid, and from that date, the present substantial, large and handsome brick church was pushed rapidly to completion. The same year, on the 8th of June, the first Canadian Synod in connection with the Church of Scotland was organized at Kingston, Mr. McGill acting as Clerk. Soon after, the Presbytery of York was formed by Mr. McGill and four associate ministers, and the congregation of Niagara, for the first time, came into representative and organic connection with "the Kirk." Mr. McGill was an able, earnest, and eloquent preacher, a systematic organizer, and a born leader. One who knew him well adds to this description that "he was one of those rare men who are looked up to for their intellectual superiority, and, at the same time, loved for their warmth of heart and their valuable services in time of trouble or difficulty." He erected a good brick manse early in his ministry, which he was enabled to free from mortgage debt by the "liberal New Year's gift" of £300 pounds from the congregation, in January, 1839. Subsequently the manse was purchased of him by the congregation with a legacy of £750 left by the widow of Mr. John Young, one of the first trustees appointed in 1794, and a successful merchant, who was drowned in 1830. The present pastor now occupies it, and it is still an excellent and commodious structure. During the greater part of Mr. McGill's residence in Niagara the congregation was large and flourishing, the town being prosperous. But after the completion of the Welland Canal, business was gradually diverted to St. Catharines (where the county offices were at length removed), and the "old town" again went into a decline, the congregation suffering proportionably. With the "disruption" in 1844, came also division at Niagara. A new congregation was formed and a new brick church erected; and, for some years, two congregations divided the Presbyterian support which, at the best, was not enough for one strong one. In September, 1845, Mr. McGill accepted a call to the charge of St. Paul's, Montreal, where he officiated successfully during a period of more than ten years. In 1853, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by his alma mater, the University of Glasgow, and on the 4th of February, 1856, death terminated his labors. "Many tears were shed when the tidings of his death reached Niagara, and it is said that one lady became actually sick with grief." The memory of but few ministers has been cherished so affectionately as was that of Dr. McGill by the congregation, which was his first charge, in Niagara.

COMPENSATION FOR CHURCH BURNED.

In 1837, after twenty years of negotiation and perplexing delay, the congregation received from Government the sum of £400, without interest, as compensation for the destruction of their church building when used as a military hospital in 1813. All other "buildings destroyed while given up to the King's use, were paid in full out of the military chest; but from some malign influence, our just claim was refused from this source." After Mr. McGill came, the contest for compensation was sharp and vigorous, the venerable Archdeacon Strachan opposing, through the public prints and otherwise, and Mr. McGill replying with brilliancy and power. The brief and otherwise unfortunate connection with a Presbytery of the United Synod, seems to have been used by the Archbishop with effect. While the claimants were of the Church of Scotland, he affirmed that "the Church constituting the case of hardship did not belong to a congregation of Presbyterians in connection with the Church of Scotland," and that "it never was occupied by such a congregation," but by "Presbyterians who now form the United Synod or Presbytery of Upper Canada." Mr. McGill labored ably to combat the statement and the argument, but, nevertheless, the original classification of the congregation "among the general sufferers, notwithstanding the speciality of our case," was maintained, although the Episcopal congregation, whose church was damaged but not destroyed, were ranked among the *special* sufferers, and promptly paid £500. The Presbyterians seem to have lost £225 and interest for nearly a quarter of a century on £625, because their church building, when destroyed, did not belong to a congregation then connected either with the Estab-

lished Church of Scotland or the Established Church of England.

THE SESSION RECORDS.

The earliest Session Records which have been preserved commence with a meeting held July 7th, 1833, when the pastor, and elders William D. Miller (father of Richard Miller, Esq., of St. Catharines), and James Lockhart were present, and when James Cooper, senior, the Hon. John Hamilton, Dr. Walter Telfer, and William Clark were ordained "in the public congregation to the office of the eldership," and "took their seats as members of the sessions." Since that date, the records have been kept with considerable system and completeness. The elders comprising the present session are as follows: George Dawson, John Rogers, Robert N. Ball, James Macfarland.

The notice of Mr. McGill's resignation was read to the congregation on the 24th of August, 1845, by

REV. JOHN CRUICKSHANK, of Brockville, "who is here in the providence of God," and on the 16th day of October following, he "was inducted to St. Andrew's Church, Niagara, by the Presbytery of Hamilton." His last session record bears date June 5th, 1848, when he asked the session to concur in the leave he had obtained from Presbytery to visit Scotland, for the benefit of his health chiefly." Leave was granted, and arrangements were made with Rev. J. W. Baynes, then recently of the first Presbyterian Church, St. Catharines, temporarily to supply the pulpit. On the 11th of April, 1849, Mr. Cruickshank finally terminated his connection with the congregation, and became, soon after, parish minister of Turnrif, in Banffshire, Scotland. On the 2nd day of May, 1850,

REV. JOHN BOWER MOWAT, A.M., "late missionary in Kingston," was ordained and inducted by the Presbytery of Hamilton, with which, by reason of division of territory, the congregation was then connected. He remained until 1857, discharging his duties faithfully and acceptably, and enjoying the confidence and esteem of his people. He then accepted the professorship of Oriental Languages and Biblical Criticism in Queen's University, where he still remains. His successor,

REV. CHARLES CAMPBELL, is the present incumbent, a native of Scotland, who was ordained by the Presbytery of Ayr on the 29th of April, 1858, sent to Canada as an ordained missionary, and inducted to this charge by the Presbytery of Hamilton on the 25th day of the following August. After twenty years of faithful service, vigorous in mind and body, he seems good for another twenty years of active labor with a people by whom he appears to be greatly beloved.

NOTHING TO GIVE.

MR. EDITOR.—Having been away from home most of the winter, some back numbers of your paper escaped my notice. But looking them over to-day I found in the paper for Feb. 8th a criticism by "A Presbyterian," which I consider is likely to injure or hinder that liberality and self-denial which ought to exist in every Christian.

Your correspondent criticises an article, "Nothing to Give," which appeared in the "Presbyterian Record" for June 1876.

He overlooks the chief object of that article, which is this: "There are some (yea many) of our members who give nothing to some of the schemes of our Church; but who might give something, if they exercised that Christian self-denial which Jesus asks and expects of His disciples."

Your correspondent considers that article as being very discouraging to the poor. I am well acquainted, and have had much to do with the poor of the flock. I have often been grieved at the selfishness of many among them. Hence, I felt that article, "Nothing to Give," was opportune.

Allow me to quote one of many instances to which this well applies. I have met many who can readily spend from twelve to twenty dollars a year for tobacco; and yet these people have *nothing to give* to missions. Surely this is not as it should be? It appears to me that in such a case tobacco is loved more than Jesus. I am persuaded, that as a rule, every church member should give something to every scheme of the Church. The widows' mite is more acceptable to God than the abundance of the rich, and is a greater evidence of self-denial. Allow me to quote an illustration from the address given by Rev. C. Pickson, D.D., before the General Presbyterian Council at Edinburgh. (See Report of Proceedings, p. 125).