

Popular Lectures in Pictou.

It must, we should think, be highly gratifying to the friends of our Church in these colonies to learn that the ministers lately sent out by the Colonial Committee are embracing every available opportunity for diffusing useful intelligence throughout the community. Whilst attending diligently and successfully to their ministerial and pastoral duties, we find them also addressing large and attentive audiences on popular and scientific subjects. In this city, in Pictou, in Miramichi and other parts of New Brunswick, and in Canada, excellent and useful lectures have lately been delivered by some of our most talented clergymen, on a number of highly interesting topics. There can be no doubt that from their early training, their collegiate education and theological studies, they are well qualified to examine and discuss a variety of historical and scientific, as well as religious subjects with ability and acceptance. And we know nothing which is more likely to secure the friendship and attachment of the inquiring and ingenuous youth of the Provinces, to direct and instruct the minds of those of maturer years, and exert a healthy and salutary intellectual and moral influence upon the population at large, as lectures of a scientific and useful character, carefully composed and delivered by persons who manifest an intimate acquaintance with the subjects which they undertake to illustrate.

We have witnessed with unmingled satisfaction the beneficial effects of such lectures in this community, and we have no doubt they will produce similar effects in every other community where they are delivered, if proper care is taken to avoid such topics as engender political or religious controversy among friends and brethren.

A Lecture, introductory to a course of lectures on popular and scientific subjects, was delivered at St. Luke's Church, Salt-springs, Pictou, on Thursday the 18th Feb'y., by the Rev. Andrew W. Herdman, of St. Andrew's Church, Pictou. H. H. Ross, Esq., being called to the chair, in introducing the Rev. gentlemen to a numerous and respectable audience, made a few very appropriate remarks. The Reverend lecturer then proceeded to congratulate the meeting on their laudable exertions to advance both the intellectual and moral well-being of the com-

munity, and expressed a fervent wish for the entire success of the proposed course of lectures. He dilated at some length upon the nature and efficiency of the instruction which may be conveyed alike to the young and to those more advanced in years, at meetings such as these, and exhorted the committee under whose auspices he then appeared, to diligence and perseverance in their good work. So striking and sustained was the attention of the audience to the able and spirited address that no one could doubt but that the lecturer's endeavours to edify were appreciated. Indeed, such were the number and the decorum of the meeting, that the committee anticipate a very favourably reception for future lecturers, and congratulate themselves on the amount of useful information which they will thus be enabled to impart to those who are desirous of cultivating their intellectual as well as their bodily faculties. It is intended that the lectures shall be of a purely scientific and instructive nature, and shall as much as possible avoid every topic which might elicit controversy, either political or religious. The subjects are accepted and approved by the committee. The lecturer and subject will always be announced by card.

The Rev. Mr. Talloch consented to give the next of the course on Thursday 4th March. Subject: The Spirit of the Age.

The Rev. Mr. McRae the third lecture of the course on Thursday, 18th March. Subject: Bible in relation to Science.

W. G. SUTHERLAND, Secretary.
West River Committee Room.

Commission of General Assembly.

THE quarterly meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was held on Wednesday, at twelve o'clock—the Rev. Dr. Robertson, Moderator of the Assembly, in the chair.

POPISH SCHOOL-BOOKS.

Dr. Gillan, Glasgow, introduced the following motion on the subject of certain school-books authorised by the Privy Council:—"That a petition be drawn up by this Commission, and presented to both the Houses of Parliament, praying them to institute an immediate inquiry into the whole system pursued by the Honourable the Committee of Council on Education, in regard to their selection of lesson-books and text-books, and their application of the national funds for the purchase of the same." After showing the authority of the Commission, derived from Acts of Assembly, to take measures for the suppression of Popery and superstition, and adverting to the important services which the Scottish Reformation

Society had rendered in indicating the movements of Popery in past years, and, last not least, in exposing a practice which threatened to deluge the country and taint the young with the pollutions of Rome, he said—You are aware that on a complaint from superintendents to the Committee of Privy Council on Education, arising from a scarcity of secular lesson-books and text-books, my Lords issued a list intended to supply the deficiency. It was soon discovered that the catalogue of my Lords was thickly interspersed with productions openly and avowedly Popish. The most flagrant of these are admitted by the Privy Council itself, since an additional note to the list allows that books are there fitted only for the schools of Roman Catholics. The rev. Doctor then referred to the title taken by the authors of some of these books—namely, the "Christian Brothers"—and said that never before had Satan been so disguised as an angel of light. He then read an extract from the *Sunderland Herald*, showing that some of these books had crept into an Episcopal Sunday school there, but had been removed on an editorial notice of their contents having been given. He said there was not one tenet of Romanism, from baptism to extreme unction, that was not inculcated in these books of the "Christian Brothers." Nor was that the worst aspect of the case; for, while many of these books openly propagated Popery, the most dangerous of them all were those which did so indirectly and by a secret bias. These had the greatest tendency to mislead, as they were the least suspected. Passing by the more palpably Popish, let them look, for instance, at the abridged copy of "Lingard's History of England." They knew well what the full work contained, but lest any one should expect that the objectionable matter had been expunged from the abstract, let him read what was there said of Luther. He would find this champion there represented as actuated by pride and selfishness, while he was charged with artful exaggeration, &c. Then they found the following reference to the Bible:—"It was preposterous to imagine that from the perusal of the sacred volume the common people could be enabled to decide those questions which divided the most learned; but the gift flattered their pride." Then the consequences of the Reformation were most notoriously perverted:—"Enough of proof," said this historian, "remains to justify the conclusion that the change of religious polity, by removing many of the former restraints upon vice, and enervating the authority of the spiritual courts, gave a bolder front to licentiousness, and opened a wider scope to the indulgence of criminal passion." Were Protestants, he asked, to give their money to pay for that unblushing lie? The horrible perse-