

lished in Glasgow, called, "The Congregational Miscellany." If "The Miscellany" is on your exchange list, a clipping from it now and again would prove a welcome morsel to many of your readers, who, in their adopted homes, retain a lively interest in their native land. In the light of how things shape themselves in our midst, of late, I regard what follows, as words "*fully spoken*."

Yours faithfully,

ONE OF US.

A GREAT DEARTH.

Looking over the pages of a very interesting magazine the other day, we lighted on the *quarterly record* of the COLONIAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY. The following sentence particularly attracted our notice:—

The Committee are using their utmost effort to aid the deputation, (a deputation which had come to this country to seek a minister for a large Colonial Church); but down to this time they have been able to do nothing definite, and they are forced to make public confession that in their experience it is becoming increasingly difficult to fill up the more important spheres of pastoral labour when they fall vacant.

The Italics are ours. A statement to a similar effect was made by the Rev. R. W. Dale, M.A., at the last annual meetings of the Scottish Congregational Union. We have also seen a letter from one of our most popular London ministers to a despairing deacon, in which the good man is assured, with the utmost complacency, that it has really become a very difficult thing to find men for the higher parts of the field—i.e., to minister to our wealthy but humble brother, and such like.

Now, people do sometimes say queer things in private letters which it would be unkind to lay great stress upon; and in the excitement of a large public meeting, glowing speakers cannot be expected to be always strictly accurate. But when such a confession as the above appears in an influential magazine as proceeding from a very influential society, the sooner it is seriously discussed the better.

For our part, we are deeply concerned about the effect which it is likely to have upon our own people and the public at large. It cannot have a good effect. If it be strictly true that many of our largest churches cannot find competent pastors, we have been misinterpreting the signs of the times, and are forced to the conclusion that the former days were better than these.

Besides, we had gathered from the discussions at our annual Assemblies that small churches injured the Ministry and weakened the body. "Let small and feeble churches unite so as to become one large and efficient church, self-supporting and aggressive." This has been the burden of many eloquent epistles and addresses for some time back. We remember when college professors used to lament that they could not supply the small country charges with pastors. Their thorough-bred students found more promising fields in the larger centres. Any number of men could be found to fill a city pulpit. But the times are changed—changed terribly, for the worse surely,—since Jay went to Bath, and Spencer to Liverpool, and Spurgeon, in his raw youth, to London.

This, perhaps, is not the way to put the case. What is wanted, it will