

OUR PROPOSED SCHEME FOR HOME MISSIONS—WHAT OTHERS THINK OF IT.

We published in the October number of the *RECORD* the proposed scheme for Home Mission operations, as drawn up by the special committee appointed by the Synod. The scheme is now before the Presbyteries of the Church. The matter has attracted the attention of members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and the proposed scheme has been very favourably noticed in some quarters. We subjoin an article on the subject from the Philadelphia "Presbyterian":—

The Canada Presbyterian Church has entered upon the work of Home Missions with that wise consideration of the whole field to be occupied, and of the means of overtaking the work to be done, which indicates that it is meant to be a permanent and progressive work. The Synod appointed a committee to draw up a scheme for Home Missions, to be presented to the Presbyteries for their consideration. The report of this committee is published in the last number of the "Home and Foreign Record" of the Canada Presbyterian Church, and while its general principles are the same as those on which our own Church conducts Domestic Missions, there are some special regulations which differ widely from our own, and are not unworthy of attention.

The main points of agreement are those of a General Committee and a Central Fund. In the wide fields occupied by both Churches, these points must undoubtedly be made part of any scheme which will reach every part of the land. It is with regret, therefore, that we see some of our Presbyteries withdrawing their contributions from the General Fund, and directing missionary operations within their own bounds through Presbyterian Committees. This may result in local enlargement and success, but it will materially affect the general progress of the Church. It is, so far as it goes, an act of secession, and tends to hinder that union in effort which is so essential to success.

In particular points, as we have said, the scheme submitted to the Canada Church, differs from our own. For example, the following regulation would be very novel in our practice:—"That for the purpose of efficiently carrying on the work entrusted to the Committee, all the probationers and ordained ministers of the Church, not in charges, but open to a call, shall be at the disposal of the Committee." We imagine that such a proposition, made in our Assembly, would be met with some vigorous protests. Our unemployed ministers and licentiates, as a general thing do not wish to be at the disposal of any one but themselves. And we suspect that our Domestic Missionary Committee would feel somewhat burdened by the mass of men thus placed at their command. Obviously, however, such an arrangement would hinder much of the waste of ministerial talent and qualifications which is now going on in our Church, and which every lover of the Church must deplore. It would also give guidance to a class of men in our Church who feel themselves sometimes very much at a loss what to do, and often feel that they are neglected or forgotten—we mean licentiates, or, as the Canadian brethren rightly call them, "probationers for the Holy Ministry." Our Presbyteries, too generally, dismiss the young men when they have licensed them, to hunt fields of labour for themselves. They turn to some member of the Presbytery, perhaps their former pastor, and solicit his influence: or to a professor of a seminary they have just left, and make him their patron; and so after much correspondence, and sometimes a weary waiting of months or years, a church is reached, and the young pastor ordained and installed. The consequence of this is, that young men are disheartened—the Professors in our Seminaries, who are constantly found introducing their students into places where, it may be, a number of pastors are also candidates, incur a degree of odium; and the churches who are induced to accept pastors through pressing recommendations of distinguished men, are disappointed, as deficiencies are revealed in the actual trial of the chosen