

Editorial Articles.

"CHURCHES" AND "PREACHING STATIONS."

A writer in a recent number of our respected contemporary, *The Canada Presbyterian*, urges that congregations receiving aid from Home Missionary funds should be considered merely as preaching stations; and be supplied by the Executive Committee with preaching, as that Committee judges best: the preachers appointed staying, say two years, on the station.

The plan has very much to recommend it, in our own operations. Our young men, as a general rule, won't settle in small weak churches. They want something "better;" and if they can't get it, they go off to the States. The prospect is, we admit, dreary for a long and indefinite settlement. But the same young men would, we are convinced, think it no more than a reasonable test of their modesty, to take one of these fields, under the name of a "station," at the choice and direction of the Missionary Society, and serve it for the fixed period of two years. By that time a young man would have a chance to show whether there was "anything in him"; and have gathered experience enough to take charge of an independent and self-supporting church.

And older men, for whom it is often difficult to find a field, could thus, for a like fixed period, have suitable work to do. And still more important, the "stations" themselves would be constantly and continuously provided.

And let it be a "cast-iron rule," that *every* church or station aided, shall have at least *one* Sabbath preaching place beside itself! And from next June withdraw all grants, where there is no outside Sabbath preaching done. One good effected by such a rule—and seldom thought of—is this: if there is but the one place to preach in, the young minister is squeezed in to be Sunday school superintendent, in the afternoon—a position that should be assumed (and the work done,) by one of the "members." The church will always put that duty on the preacher, if it can! And the young man feels that he cannot be so lazy as to sit at home, while the Sunday school is meeting. True, he can teach a "Bible Class" of young people:

but true again—he can do that on a week evening just as well. Let him go out every Sunday afternoon, to an outside station: taking always a young man with him, whom he can cautiously and gradually train to help.

The great objection will be from the mission churches themselves. They will want, as hitherto, to choose their own man, and settle how much the Missionary Society is to give toward his support! Under the proposed system that will be changed. The choosing of a man, and *paying* him, must go together: and as soon as a station wants to assume the duties and privileges of a church—conspicuous among which are choosing and settling a minister, and then *supporting* him—nobody will object.

Let it be ever remembered that the funds of the Home Missionary Society are contributed in dollars and half-dollars, for the *poor and weak* causes: and that just now, a dozen or two of these are at the point of extinction for want of *men and means*. Rightly reasoned with, they would be willing that the Missionary Society should do for them what they had been unable to do for themselves—retain a minister among them.

"HECKLING."

In Scotland, every parliamentary candidate, at every meeting, has to stand a deal of questioning at the end of his "address." This is called "heckling." Generally done by the opposing party. It is a trying ordeal—not only as concerns readiness and information, but temper as well.

But the underlying principle is good. Something has been said, on a certain subject. Thought has been awakened in the hearers. They want to have some points better explained. And so they ask questions. We saw a very excellent use of "questioning" made at a "Farmers' Institute." Two Professors from the Agricultural College at Guelph were present. They had got a list of eminent farmers in the neighborhood; one noted for sheep; another for clover; another for barley; another for cattle; and so on. One of the Professors would say, "Now Mr. John Greenfield will be kind enough to give the meeting some information about clover: I understand he makes clover a specialty." Mr. Greenfield, quite unprepared for a speech, and having never said a word in public, further than