

## ON MINISTERIAL ASSISTANTSHIPS.

BY AN OCTOGENARIAN.

The subject of Ministerial Assistantships has of late been more or less discussed in the Canadian Presbyterian Church papers, and it seems somewhat strange that the matter has not been taken up more earnestly, and before this time put into general practice. We presume to think that the position of assistant to an experienced minister would be found very beneficial to our young licentiates, who are often hurried into the pastorate in many cases without any experimental knowledge how the business of the Session, or the Board of Managers, or other parts of Church work should be conducted. In all the other learned professions, as they are called, an apprenticeship is considered necessary, and the aspirant to office must pass some time under the direction of an experienced member of the profession he seeks to enter.

With the Church licentiate it is different, and while the professors of Pastoral Theology, Homelitics, and Church Government, may now, in these days, devote some time to the practical work of the pastorate and the Order of Procedure in Church Courts, there are parts of the work of the minister which can only be acquired by actual experience in a regularly organized congregation. It is quite true also, that our students through the knowledge gained in the mission field, have an immense advantage over those entering the ministry in the olden time, for whom no such work was available; in fact they were not permitted to open their lips in public until they had received licence to preach. But after all the advantages attainable in the Divinity Hall and Mission Field, we have met many young ministers who have told us they have never been present at a meeting of Session, had not the least idea how such should be conducted, nor the framing of the minute (which they have often to do), to record the same without even a session book, as they were the first pastors of the congregation to which they had been called.