

prayer, for twenty years past, none but God and himself rightly know of; but I trust he will live to see a rich reward of all his toil, even here—to say nothing of his crown of rejoicing hereafter.

On Sabbath 11th, Mr. Loelhead, of the united congregations of Osgoode and Gloucester, and I, assisted our dear, interesting, young brother, Mr. Wardrop, in opening the new church, Bytown, which is one of the most elegant and commodious buildings I have seen—capable, when the gallery is completed, of holding 600 people at least.—There could not have been less than 400 present, both forenoon and afternoon,—probably more.

In the arrangement of the services, there happened one of those undesigned but remarkable coincidences of Providence which we cannot help ascribing to the great Master Worker who sitteth behind the scenes, moving all the secret springs, and regulating all human volitions, though still acting according to the freedom of motives and circumstances. Without previous knowledge of each other's subjects, Mr. Loelhead preached a most solemn, eloquent, and impressive sermon, delivered with great earnestness and power, from *Psalms* xlix. 8 v. "For the redemption of their soul," &c.; in the forenoon, by desire of Mr. Wardrop, I preached from the same text of my induction sermon, *Spenserville* (Mat. vii. 13-14)—"Straight is the gate," &c. In the evening Mr. Wardrop preached from these words, "Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation"—*Sud Cor.* vi. 2 v.—forming as much steps of a connected sequel of systematic doctrine as if we had sat down elaborately to lay out our plan.

To say that this last sermon was elegant, evangelical, and impressive, would be saying the truth. But that would be saying the least. There was such a sweet touching Christian simplicity in the whole manner of his address as could not fail to affect, though it is the peculiar prerogative of the Holy Ghost to convert the heart.

You may remember how I ventured to promise favorably of this young man at his first outset.—I venture to say now, that if God spare him, his praise will be in the Church. And why? Because I see that he is growing in grace; that he has no confidence in himself, and that he desires to make himself nothing; his Master Christ all in all. I never have intercourse with him without feeling my spirit refreshed, and without feeling that it is not amount of years, but an out of grace, that makes a minister of Christ. His simplicity of spirit shames my self-seeking and vanity.

On Tuesday, 13th, Mr. Wardrop, Mr. MacDowell, and I inducted Mr. Loelhead into the charge of Osgoode and Gloucester. Mr. Wardrop preached from *Acts* xii. 24 v., preached, addressed the minister and the people. Between 200 and 400 present, I should think. The building is not finished, though we occupied it, but promises to be comfortable. As a great part of the congregation, from want of ordination, joined the Baptist connection, they have had great struggles in erecting this church, and in raising anything like a competent support for the minister, who has been incessant for nine months past in his labours, and has not a little to struggle with in the newness of the country and badness of the roads in summer,—all the more trying to him that he and his large family have always been accustomed to live in places where there was a far advanced state of society. Well do I know the demands on your own wants in Hamilton, but I know also the liberality of the people of Hamilton. Had they anything to spare, I should consider it well applied to assist the people of Osgoode in finishing their church.

Mr. Melville will be obtained over the congregation of Perth; Mr. Johnstone inducted into the charge of Ramsey, about the end of February or beginning of March. Various applications for supplies came before the Presbytery, and, as far as possible, were granted.

The congregations in Kingston are, in outward respects, both increasing and prospering. We wait the answer from the Commission to our reference. A call from the Baptist congregation to Mr. Reid came before us, in which no action could be taken till we had heard from the Commission; but the Presbytery would respectfully recommend to the Commission as little delay as may be in the case. I had not intended to write above a page, but multiplicity of topics occurred, and I write down as fast as my thoughts run.

Home Missions.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE RECORD.

Hamilton, C. W., 24th Feb., 1845.

MY DEAR SIR:—I had scarcely thought of troubling you with any account of my missionary excursion to the districts of Woodstock and London, during the months of November and December last, till it was suggested that the impressions produced on a stranger visiting these places for the first time, might afford some useful hints. I am not aware, in fact, of having met with anything which has not been remarked by others, or which does not characterize many regions in this extensive Province. It were easy to give a narrative of my labours during the period referred to, but that might lead to unnecessary detail; and, as the variety of incidents would by no means keep pace with the number, the report, I fear, would be uninteresting. I shall, therefore, content myself with a few general remarks on what I witnessed during my excursion.

Woodstock and London, from their rapidly growing population, are very important stations. The Presbyterian Churches are attended by large audiences; but the congregations are by no means consolidated, or well organized. Both of them need, and it is hoped will soon receive, active and faithful ministers, who, with the Divine blessing, may be the means of preserving and extending among the people the knowledge and practice of genuine christianity. Besides, these places are central points, from which, with the increase of population around, new congregations may, by and by, be expected to branch off; and, of course, those who, in the providence of God, may be stationed in them, must lay their account with putting forth their utmost energy, in the meantime, in making frequent visits to the surrounding settlements. It is, indeed, lamentable to find so vast a section of the country, as lies around these important positions, so very destitute of ministerial supply. In a region where twenty or thirty labourers might be constantly and most usefully occupied, there are but two or three in our connection; and these, however diligent and energetic, are never able to meet those increasing necessities which they daily witness and deplore. This mournful situation, characterizing these and other districts, as interesting fields of missionary labour, has often been remarked; but it cannot be too often recorded if it has any tendency to lead christians, with still more earnestness than heretofore, to continue instant in praying, as the Saviour enjoins, to the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

In a great many townships, fully settled, in some of which are rising villages, ministers might be stationed, could they be had, with the certain prospect, through God's blessing, of being the instruments of extensive good. There is the desire, in many of these settlements, for the regular dispensation of the means of grace; and this desire is sometimes most ardent where the destitution is greatest. Nor are the people unwilling, in most cases, to do their part in the way of pecuniary support. It is only where ignorance of the necessity of this prevails, and where the gospel is not sought, that there is any grudging at making the requisite exertion for its maintenance. The people should be taught to consider it no sacrifice, but a privilege and an honour, as well as the law of Christ, to give of their substance for the support of divine ordinances; and they should be encouraged to believe that, instead of being losers, they will be great positive gainers by this service; gainers not merely in the spiritual good they receive, which is the principal thing, but gainers even in a temporal view, by the blessing of him who says—"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

I was much pleased to find at Woodstock a select band of excellent persons who fear the Lord, and speak often one to another. A congregational prayer meeting is held every week. On the one week the exercises are conducted in Gaelic; on the other in English. I cannot judge of the state of religion among the Gaelic population, nor of the efficiency with which their prayer meeting is conducted. But if it proceed with the same life and interest that characterize the English meet-

ing, which I hope it does, there is great encouragement to believe that the parties attending these congregational prayer meetings, will, with the blessing of God, be the means, to some extent, of preserving and promoting vital religion in that place, as well as diffusing a salutary influence on the congregation at large.

The Sabbath School is superintended by able and deeply interested teachers, and conducted with efficiency. It is to be regretted that not above fifty pupils avail themselves of this means of receiving religious instruction; for in the many families I visited I observed a marked superiority among those children who attended this Sabbath School. The teachers would also conduct a Bible Class for more advanced youth; but they have not been able to induce the youth who might most profit by this class to come forward generally, such persons exposing themselves lest by appearing there they should seem to betray their ignorance. I suggested that perhaps the best cure for this would be for some of the teachers, and more intelligent of the congregation, who were known not to need instruction, to take their places spontaneously at the Bible Class, which might lead to at least some of the very persons they wished to strike in. This hint was taken, and I have little doubt would be followed by important results were the practice continued. I have known such an experiment in other places attended with great success. I must not omit mentioning that in connection with this Sabbath School there is a library from which the pupils receive books to read, and also a missionary box into which they put their small pieces of money with great cheerfulness and zeal for advancing the cause of Christ. In connection with the school, likewise, there is a most interesting prayer and fellowship-meeting of its teachers and friends, held weekly, in which the subject to be explained to the children on the following Sabbath is discussed. Such a meeting is not peculiar to this place; but it is a plan which deserves to be recommended for general practice.

I spent a few Sabbaths at London, and made occasional excursions to the congregations and preaching stations in that neighbourhood. I felt some curiosity to see this place. The name of the town, of its river, and of some of its streets and bridges, carried my imagination to the great British metropolis; and perhaps I expected to find here more than I realized. But the great London was once small and insignificant, and it is possible that this its Canadian representative may one day become renowned and metropolitan like the prototype. I was not disappointed with the character, or with the condition of the congregation. It includes some excellent and intelligent christians, some who delight to minister to the least of Christ's servants, and who are exemplary in their liberality and zeal for the prosperity of the church. It would be a matter of much greater regret that the congregation here should be uncared for than the constant labours of a minister were it not that one of its members is both able and willing to lead his aid when necessary in supplying the deficiency. This excellent gentleman, whom I need not name to you, and whose own retiring disposition would make him shrink from being publicly named, though engaged in business during the week, is at great pains in explaining the Scriptures, and conducting other religious exercises on the Sabbath days and other occasions, when no minister is present. With much theological knowledge and a remarkable gift of prayer, he leads the exercises of the flock, both in English and Gaelic, to the satisfaction, and it is hoped to the edification of all; and it is pleasant to understand that the people here of late given public demonstration of their gratitude by a valuable donation, which would have been even more considerable but for the extreme diffidence of him whom it is intended to honour.

I had several other remarks to make, but must draw to a close. I may notice in general that I had sometimes opportunity of discovering most deplorable and irreparable ignorance among the young. In large families, possessing interesting groups of children, where the parents seemed active and intelligent, youths, able to assist in manual labour, are to be found who are totally ignorant of the first principles of religion. In some cases they could not give an answer to the simplest question, so which the sleeping child may be taught and should be taught, to give a prompt reply. But