

in July last—spent about ten days in the place, and preached on two successive sabbaths to pretty numerous and attentive audiences. The church, on both occasions, was well nigh filled. I am satisfied that Guelph, with its vicinity to the extent of six miles round, ought, as a field of pastoral superintendence, if cultivated with but an ordinary degree of faithfulness and zeal, to turn out more Presbyterians than the church at Guelph, in its present state, could possibly accommodate; and as many as could easily sustain a stated ministry in an adequate manner, if they contributed according to their means and prosperity. A considerable majority of them, I have been informed, adhere to the Free Church, and value the ordinances of religion, but, so far as I could learn, are not disposed to enter into any arrangements with a view to the immediate settlement of a clergyman among them.

In Guelph, there is an episcopal, a congregational, and a secession church; and several of the Presbyterians, formerly in connection with the Church of Scotland, go, when they have no services in their own church, to one or other of these places of worship; while there are others, I fear, who care little about religion, and remain at home,—profaning the sabbath by working, recreation, or idleness, and are sinking into ignorance and heathenism, without any to cure for their souls or to enquire after them. It is a circumstance that ought not to pass unheeded, or without even pointed animadversion, that while Scotland throughout its wide extent is studded with settled ministers and preachers, the spiritual interests of Canada should be so much overlooked and neglected, as if the claims of country and of kindred, and even of religion itself, had sunk into insignificance, or were altogether annihilated in the distance. One cannot travel far in this country, and see the carelessness and utter apathy of some about religion, and the strongly felt and expressed desires of others to have its ordinances dispensed among them by ministers of their own denomination, and according to the doctrine and order to which they have been accustomed from their youth, and to which they are deeply and conscientiously attached, when the words of the Saviour must suggest themselves—"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few, pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."

From Guelph I went to London, where I spent six weeks. London is a town of considerable extent, containing upwards of three thousand people. It is beautifully situated on the River Thames. It is a military station, and surrounded by a rich, beautiful, and well cultivated country, with good roads leading to it from all quarters, especially from the east and south. Here the body of Presbyterians formerly in connection with the Church of Scotland is neither large nor wealthy, but in both these respects it considerably exceeds Guelph. The Presbyterian church at London stands on a commanding eminence on the north side of the town, and arrests the eye of the traveller as he passes along, as the most elegant building in sight. It bears testimony to the liberality and christian character of the people of London. Its nice proportions and substantial workmanship do credit to the builder, and deserve to be imitated throughout the country. The interior is not yet fitted up, but temporary benches are placed to accommodate the congregation for the time being. When seated, it will hold on the ground floor about 460 people, with a gallery it will hold about 600. So far as I could learn when there in August, the congregation numbered something above 300 when all assembled, although I do not believe that anything like that number could be expected to attend regularly there till they had public worship established for a time among them, when it might amount to 400 or even more, did the clergyman act sufficiently and judiciously upon the aggressive system, which is so necessary in the old country to train the people to church going habits, and still more

so in this. More than half the congregation that assemble in this place are from the country, and some of them come a distance of eight miles, and a few, when the weather is fine and the roads are good, come even ten miles. About a fourth of the people come from the township of Westminster, in the immediate vicinity of London, and about a fourth from the windward part of the township of London itself. Here I preached twice every sabbath, for six weeks, in August and September, with the exception of one sabbath, when I was called upon to preach for the minister at Williams, who had then been in bad health. And the attendance and attention were both such as might be expected in such a locality, and from a people desirous of profiting by the means of grace. A considerable proportion of those belonging to this congregation have taken seats in other places of worship in London, and are anxiously waiting till they have a minister settled among them in connection with their own denomination, while a few, despairing of such an event, are now in full communion with other bodies.

London and its vicinity form an interesting part of the colonist vineyard, and there should have been a clergyman settled there years ago. This most desirable consummation has been somewhat retarded by a difference which has existed in the congregation respecting the necessity and propriety of obtaining a minister who should conduct the services partly in the Gaelic language. This difference, however, is now removed, through spiritual christian forbearance and concession; and as the congregation, with very few exceptions, adhere to the Presbyterian Church of Canada, the settlement of a minister will doubtless soon be accomplished.

Having ascertained the cause of this difference above referred to in this congregation, I had the curiosity, in my rounds among the people and in my intercourse with them, to make particular inquiry into it. And I found that there are some who understand Gaelic better than English, and greatly prefer it; and a few understand very little of English and hardly speak any. Gaelic however is fast wearing out. The grandmother sometimes speaks Gaelic exclusively, and understands some English; the children speak Gaelic and English alike; and the grandchildren, though they understand some Gaelic, speak English entirely. So that the concession the Highlanders made is a consistent and a christian one. The interest of the few should not be neglected, but it is of more importance to attend to the interest of the many when that of the whole cannot be secured.

In London I found a sabbath school in operation, but not in a very prosperous state. It was very thinly attended, although taught by a number of respectable individuals, who are well qualified to instruct the young in the principles of the christian religion. I adverted to this circumstance in church one sabbath after sermon, and urged upon the people their duty in regard to this matter, and the obligations which lay upon them to avail themselves of the means and opportunities within their reach, of instructing their children and the young of their households in the knowledge of divine truth. My remarks were attended to, and at the next meeting there were few or no absentees amongst the children attending the school. Sabbath schools appear much neglected in this country. I have heard ministers tell, and apparently tell with an air of boasting, that they preach on sabbath sometimes three times—probably it would be better for them to preach less and teach more. When the youthful mind is not preoccupied by the truth of God, the public ministrations of the gospel cannot be brought to bear upon it afterwards so successfully. When the religious instruction of the young is neglected, the minister in his preaching is in a great measure sowing the seed of the word among thorns: his preaching is either lost through lack of knowledge, or paralyzed through strength of prejudice.

From London I went to St. Thomas—spent one

sabbath there, and preached to a congregation of about 300. There is a large settlement of Presbyterians in St. Thomas and around it, and they are nearly all attached to the Free Church. Having spent only two days here, I am unable to say anything about the character and circumstances of the people.

From St. Thomas I went to Nassagaweya and Esqueping, in both of which places I preached the same day. In the former place there is a church, though not well fitted up, and the number of people that attended public worship there might be between 100 and 125. They are chiefly Highlanders, and are desirous to have a minister that can preach to them in Gaelic. In Esqueping, the people meet in a school house, and they intend soon to build a place of worship. The house was then crowded, and all that came did not get seats. It is proposed, I understand, to join this station to Nassagaweya, under the charge of one minister. About the same time I preached at Oakville and the sixteen mile creek, on a weekday evening, but in both these places the attendance was small. I afterwards preached there on a sabbath, and the attendance in neither place was large, although larger than on the former occasion. They are also desirous to have a minister to labour among themselves exclusively, and they have already shown their deep interest in the prosperity of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, by subscribing liberally to the Home Mission Fund.

The last few weeks I spent in Darlington, amongst a congregation of Presbyterians that assembled for public worship at Bonanville. Here a small church has been erected lately, by the united efforts of the whole congregation. It contains something like 230 people without a gallery; but, like many other churches, it is in dispute at present between the two parties into which the Church question has divided the congregation. A small portion seem disposed to remain in connection with the establishment in Scotland; and some few are firmly resolved to do so, although they cannot vindicate their principles. These claim the church for themselves, if the rest remain not with them, although they have contributed but a miserable pittance towards its erection, and they will not accept the proposal of the rest, to let the church remain in the possession of the majority, and to receive back their contributions toward the building. But some circumstances of a providential nature seem not only hostile to their views, but entirely destructive of their unreasonable claims. Undue influence has been used with individuals totally ignorant of the question, to prejudice them against any movement in the matter; but these prejudices are greatly diminished, if not altogether removed, by a little explanation of the Church question. It is sufficiently obvious that the more the Church question is examined and understood, the more ground the Free Church principle gains, and the more it commends itself to every man's conscience.

I preached four Sabbaths and once a week-day in Bonanville, on all which occasions there was a good congregation; when, owing to the state of the roads, few might have been expected to attend, and that though nearly all our opponents thought proper to absent themselves, one meeting excepted. There is abundant work in Darlington for a settled Minister, and the people are in circumstances to enable them to give him a suitable support. I have travelled over a considerable portion of Darlington, and I have seen the greater part of the people belonging to the Presbyterian Church there in their own houses, and met with the warmest reception every where. A considerable proportion of them are in comfortable circumstances, and the rest are getting fast over their difficulties, and with very few exceptions among the enemies of the Free Church, all of them are desirous of having it in their power to attend the public ordinances of religion in their own church; a desire in which they give evidence of their sincerity in the length and badness of the roads by which they come to church when they hear there is to be