

to the conclusion that it would be better to seek a more limited sphere of duty. In consequence of this an attempt was made to retain the services of Mr. McLean in Gairloch alone, which, we are sorry to say, has signally failed. That Mr. McLean has resigned his connexion with us, which has caused the present application, which we submit to your generous and kind sympathy, praying your aid and support in our present destitute and forlorn position; trusting and sincerely hoping that we will always be worthy recipients of your kindness and benevolence.

Our parish has two new and commodious churches: Saltsprings, seating 800, finished some years ago, and paid for; Gairloch, in course of erection, seating 1,200, which will be ready for service early in the spring, free of any encumbrance.

We also inform your Committee that we have applied to the Rev. Norman McLeod, Barmy, Parish, Glasgow, and the Rev. Dr. Dewar, Aberdeen, which, we trust, will meet your approbation.

As also you will find by the enclosed, that we have the sanction of your Presbytery in this county, to this our application.

A call will be forwarded to you immediately, which is now in course of signature.

JOHN M'KAY.  
JOHN M'LEOD.  
ANGUS M'LEOD.  
GEORGE M'LEOD.  
W. G. SUTHERLAND.  
ALEXANDER MACKAY.

To the Colonial Committee of the General Assembly.

[To the Editor of the Monthly Record]

DEAR SIR:

The interest you are ever seen to take in what is for the advancement of the cause of Christ, leads me to send you a few remarks on a subject well worth the attention of all—the singing in our Churches—or to speak learnedly, Church Psalmody. On this subject congregations and churches have been now bestirring themselves and now becoming listless ever since the good old times, when each worshipper sung his own melody to his own tune, have passed away.

By papers from the mother country I see that for the last few years our friends in Scotland have been making gigantic efforts to produce, in their worshipping assemblies, something like praising God with one heart and with one voice. This is so far good, but it can do us no good except we follow their example. Now I am no singer myself, but my ear and my eye conjoined are as good as to enable me to know when a person is singing, and when he is not—and I never sing so loud myself but that I can hear another. Now I believe that you, and every other person who dares to speak plainly, will bear me out when I say that the singing in almost every one of the Presbyterian churches in this Province has need of a thorough remodeling. For generally not one third of the congregation lift up their voice to praise the Lord. It ought not to be so, and except our singing is to dwindle away into something like a miniature panorama exhibition, it were time that the strong hand of a zealous reformer were applied. Often in church I am forcibly reminded of a question asked by a young minister on his return from worship, of the minister of the parish for whom he had been officiating: "whether his choir had set the anthem to the Scotch ballad tune of 'Heather Jock's come back again.'" I don't know the tune, but it looks queer. I have often looked into the "Harmonicon"

thinking I might get some insight into the art of music. but there were so many dots and o's, sometimes with tails at them, and sometimes not, sometimes tied together like a gang of slaves, and sometimes single, that I got quite bewildered.

Now I hear they have got a new system in Scotland—the "tonic sol fa" system, as I have heard, which is doing wonders. We have a system here, too, in Pictou—yes, in Pictou we have a system producing like wonders. I am almost confident it is the same system as the one I have spoken of being in Scotland. But I saw in a paper of our own the other day a sly hint that perhaps the Rev. Mr. Christie (who by the bye has introduced the system here) did not know what system he was speaking about. I thought every body heard of what was doing on the other side of the Atlantic, and if what that paper hinted at be true surely it cannot be the "tonic sol fa" system.

Be that as it may, musical systems and musical theories do not please me, its good singing I like—and good singing I heard in the Assembly Hall here on the evening of the 4th March, when Mr. Christie delivered a lecture to the Young Men's Christian Association, on Church Psalmody, and brought some young friends whom he had been teaching to show us how we ought to sing. Now, I'll tell you how I, who am no judge of music, was led to think the singing good. I just felt the same as I have often done when listening to one who is called a powerful orator. I am no judge of grammar, and sometimes a long word may puzzle me: but when I feel myself and my neighbors all drawn as by a magnet to the speaker, I am sure he is a good speaker. Just the same feeling was in me and seemed to be in all the large assembly while this choir were singing—I felt drawn so much into the spirit of the music that I had great ado to keep down my voice—I knew well it would spoil the harmony—and I kept it down. I am confident, Mr. Editor, that if we had twenty or thirty, yes, even ten or twelve such singers in each of our congregations, every worshipper would become so enamoured of the beauties of praise that he would give himself no rest until he could join and praise God from the heart with the voice and the understanding.

But the music was not the only treat that night, we got an excellent lecture from Mr. Christie. In it there were so many good things that I asked him to print it, and I hope he will. He told us that in our congregations the singing was all confined to "the singers." I forget the words he used: they were tellingly sarcastic. If I had been one of the singers, I should have thought such sarcasm very ill-timed. Every one said it was good and true. He told us what kind of tunes a whole congregation could keep time in singing—in melodious, steady tunes (I really don't know music terms, and forget what he called them)—but he said a congregation could never all join in jaunty, flippant tunes, like those becoming fashionable now-a-days. He spoke of repeating tones often, making nonsense of the psalm by beginning anew in the middle of the sentence, or sometimes in the middle of a word.

But I have no time to night to say more about it. I could say a great deal, for he spoke about an hour and a half, telling us of the errors in our singing, and how to correct them,—of the use of music, and of the lasting effect it was calculated to produce on the mind, especially of the young.

Mr. Christie deserves great praise and encouragement for his zealous and gratuitous exertions to make us good singers. And my

hope is that the improvements may not stop here, but that they may spread through the country and make all our congregations congregations that can praise the Lord.

Of the Lay Association of our church, I may say, I hear very gratifying accounts from every quarter—the people rousing themselves to active exertions to wipe from them the stain of being burdensome to the church at home. We have a great addition in the return of the Rev. Mr. Pollok to New Glasgow, who is a zealous labourer in the cause of Christ, and I believe an invaluable member of our church courts.

I am,

Yours, &c.

Pictou, 22nd March, 1858.

### Information to be furnished.

THE Editor of this Journal has lately received the following letter from the excellent Secretary of the Board of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund of the Synod of Canada, requesting information on a number of important points necessary to be known before the Ministers of our Church in the Lower Colonies can participate in their Widows' Fund. As the Editor feels himself unable to furnish the desired information without communicating personally with each of our clergymen, he has thought it advisable, after acknowledging the receipt of the letter, to publish it at length in the columns of the Journal, in the hope that at the ensuing meeting of the Synod, an accurate and authentic answer will then be given to each of these enquiries by every member of the Synod, should it be decided that arrangements ought to be made as our ministers and congregations for collecting subscriptions, to enjoy the benefits of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund of the Synod of Canada.

Montreal, 6th March, 1858

Rev. Sir,—

As Secretary of the Board of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, I address you in accordance with the instructions of our Synod to obtain, at your hands, the following information relative to the very desirable proposal, to admit the clergy of the Lower Provinces, to the benefits of the Fund.

1st. What is the number of your Ministers—their ages and the period of their original inductions?

2nd. How many of them are married and have families?

3rd. Would they, in your opinion, contribute the annual rate of £3?

4th. Would the congregations become contributors in your opinion? and that liberally?

You will oblige by furnishing the information indicated by these questions, and such other information as may be deemed by you as of importance.

The Board are very favorable to the proposal if it can be effected on a liberal and equitable basis. Our Fund has proved of real benefit to our Church.

Yours, with respect,

ALEX. MORRIS.

Editor of the  
Monthly Record