

ception of applicants from the Roman Catholic Church. The insertion of the word "Protestant" virtually excludes them.

Further, the Act does not recognize, but ignores, and implicitly denies the right of such applicants when received "to discharge the functions of the ministry" by virtue of their previous ordination in another Protestant Church, far less in that of Rome. On the contrary, such men are to be "enrolled on the list of *licentiate*," that is of *unordained preachers*, who before they discharge the functions of the ministry will have to be regularly *authorized* by a Presbytery, that is regularly ordained.

### THE ELDERSHIP.

MR. EDITOR,—I was much pleased with Principal Macvicar's address on "Presbyterianism," in a late number of THE PRESBYTERIAN, but cannot exactly agree with his remarks on the eldership. After many serious thoughts respecting ruling elders and teaching elders, and after carefully examining the New Testament in Greek, Latin, French and English, it appears to me that the teaching elder and the ruling elder are identical, and that the only clearly defined orders in the New Testament Church are elders or ministers, and deacons. Principal Macvicar mentions the parity between teaching and ruling elders. Well, except in the matter of voting in Church Courts, committees, etc., there is very little parity. The ruling elder cannot preside even at a meeting of session, and at a meeting of the congregation, the minister presides *ex officio*. The ruling elder cannot administer the sacraments, or perform the marriage ceremony, and in forming committees, boards of management, etc., there is generally a majority of ministers. The teaching elder, or minister, is by education and training prepared for the duties of the ministry, and in fact it is his profession and he lives by it. The ruling elder is only an assistant and is not expected to preach or perform the duties of a minister in the higher departments, neither does he look for or get any emolument, and the difference is I think all right, but I think that the term elder or *presbuteros* should only be applied to our ministers, and that of Deacon to those now generally called elders in our Presbyterian Church.

A CANADIAN PRESBYTERIAN.

November 4th, 1879.

P.S.—I was enjoined to attend an Assembly Committee on 1st October last, and to act as one of a deputation on missionary work by my Presbytery last week. I was obliged to go to my "Teaching Elder" to get a copy of the Minutes of Assembly to ascertain my duties, as doubtless the printer or distributor, not recognizing the parity of the "ruling elder," had not sent me a copy.

### HOME MISSION FUND.

MR. EDITOR,—It is with no desire for controversy that I ask permission to make a few remarks on Dr. Cochrane's letter in your last. That the Committee has power to rouse the Church to action by deputies as well as by circulars must, I think, be admitted. It has been done before, and it could be done again, so as to secure a return either of money, or good reason for no money, from every congregation.

And notwithstanding the considerations submitted by Dr. Cochrane, it appears to some that such action in this crisis coming after the Assembly's appeal, would have been better than simply waiting to see what may turn up. However, I have no desire to argue the matter. Nor do I doubt that the Committee did most earnestly try to deal with the crisis. But their mode of dealing with it, which may be described as "masterly inactivity" will discourage many friends of the Fund, as well as many of our ill-paid missionaries and ministers.

Already we know the Moderator's appeal has not been read in many congregations. We know also that contrary to the Assembly's instruction a "special appeal for the removal of the present deficits" has been made in several congregations. So in two important particulars the Assembly's injunctions have been contravened.

Now, unless Presbyteries act differently from what they have done in the past, the Moderator's circular will go the way of former circulars—indeed, is already going. A central body like the Committee, can alone secure action, and united, universal action. I have no desire to censure the Committee. I only differ

from them, and think their want of action unfortunate. There is no one in the Church more able or more anxious to sustain our mission work than the Convener. And on this account I would respectfully urge on his attention this matter of following up, in some way that could not fail to rouse the Church, the Assembly's appeal. If this is not done—if the willing congregations again see, as in the past, their special efforts rendered useless by the apathy of others and by the non-action of the Committee, and of Presbyteries, they will be very slow to take any further interest in the Fund. Often matters in this connection call for discussion. Prominently, the singular and un-presbyterian "preferential claims" clause in the Assembly's deliverance. Why one class of missionaries should be preferred to others the Assembly does not say, and many do not see. But not wishing to occupy your space, many things make it manifest that our Home Mission business requires further ventilation.

PRESBYTER.

### REPORT OF REV. MR. SPROAT.

It will be remembered that the Rev. G. W. Sproat visited this country last summer as a deputation from the Church of Scotland. The report which Mr. Sproat gave to the Colonial Committee has come to hand. It is rather long, but its importance is such that we give it in full—the first instalment this week, and the rest afterwards.

In accordance with the commission intrusted to me by the Church, I sailed from Liverpool, in company with Mr. G. I. Deputy from the Canadian Assembly, on the 5th of June, and after a singularly prosperous voyage across the Atlantic, landed at Quebec on the morning of the 14th. I there called upon the Rev. Dr. Cook, and, under his guidance, visited Mount College, St. Andrew's Church, and the principal objects of interest in the city. We also went to the Viceregal Lodge, the temporary residence of the Governor-General to pay our respects to his Excellency, but did not find him in. The same evening I took the boat for Montreal, and the next day being Sunday, officiated there for the Rev. Dr. Jenkins in St. Paul's Church, a large handsome building erected some years ago at a cost of £20,000. I also called for the Rev. Gavin Lang, who was not at home, but I received a letter from him which he had forwarded from Toronto, intimating that the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, had closed, but the Correspondence Committee, of which he was Convener, had been authorized to arrange for a meeting with me, at such time and place as would be most convenient. On Monday I went to Ottawa, where I was welcomed by Mr. Forsyth, formerly one of my Ceylon flock, whose kind offers of hospitality had been intimated to those who were arranging to receive me as the guest of the Church.

The same evening I presented my commission to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, met in St. Andrew's Church, under the presidency of the Rev. Dr. Reid, and, as the Deputy of the Church of Scotland, received a most hearty welcome. After addressing the House in accordance with my instructions, the thanks of the Assembly were tendered to me by the Moderator, who took occasion to express their high respect for the Church of Scotland, their gratitude for the aid received from the Colonial Committee, and for the prospect of this being continued in some of the more necessitous fields. For several days I was in close attendance on the Assembly, and in my representative capacity received every attention by which regard for the Church of Scotland could be manifested.

The Assembly had among its members many eminent ministers and laymen from all parts of Canada—the homes of some of them being at least 3,000 miles apart. The attendance of the most distinguished clergymen is always secured, as Presbyteries send only part of their representatives by rotation, electing the rest by ballot. The old lines of distinction seemed to be in a great measure effaced, and the ability shown in debate, the liberality of sentiment displayed, and the excellence of the business arrangements, would all have done credit to any ecclesiastical assembly in the world.

The Church numbers 857 pastoral charges and 637 ministers, an increase of 19 during last year.

I made it my business to gather as much information as possible about its missionary operations at home and abroad, and I now proceed to give a summary of the facts as to its principal schemes.

#### THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES.

Of these, the Church maintains six, situated at Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Toronto, Kingston, and Winnipeg. These institutions, all of which were in existence at the time of the Union, extend over nearly 3,000 miles, and besides training a native ministry, serve a most important purpose as centres of evangelistic effort. The Church could not have enjoyed anything like its present prosperity had it not been for the labours of professors and students in the Home Mission fields during the summer months. For many years the students have been pioneers in the new districts, and have volunteered for posts along the frontier which the Home Mission would otherwise have been wholly unable to occupy. The fruit of their labours is now to be seen in many flourishing congregations, where the ordained minister very often carries on the same work which as a student he had begun.

#### FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

I pass next to the Mission to the French-speaking Roman Catholics, who number 1,250,000. The Montreal Theolo-

gical College trains both French and English-speaking students, and has a very close connection with this Mission, which employs at the present time 39 agents, 17 of them ordained ministers, several of whom are ex-priests of the Church of Rome. This is probably the most successful Mission to Roman Catholics in the world, and the reason of its success may be due to the fact that the French Canadians are a remarkably sober, industrious, moral, and, in their own way, religious people. The work of the Mission is by no means wholly aggressive, it is defensive as well; and this is its justification in the eyes of some who might not otherwise heartily sympathize with it. There are scattered English-speaking families belonging to the Church in many French districts, and fifteen agents of the Mission conduct services in both languages. In former days these little Protestant communities were too often neglected, and the consequence is that you now come upon settlements in Lower Canada where there are numbers of people with Scottish names who are all Roman Catholics, and cannot speak a word of English. On inquiry you find that they are the descendants of Scottish Churchmen.

#### MISSIONS TO THE HEATHEN.

The Church has extensive and widely-spread Foreign Missions, having agents at work in China, India, the South Seas, among the Hindoo coolies on the sugar plantations of Trinidad, and among several tribes of Indians in the north-west of the Dominion. I heard much of the ability and zeal of one of the Chinese missionaries—the Rev. Mr. McKay—and of the great success of his labours in the Island of Formosa; and one of the most interesting features in the Assembly's proceedings was an address delivered by a missionary from Trinidad, the Rev. Mr. Christie. This Mission, which has been remarkably prosperous, receives much aid from the owners of estates, many of whom are resident in this country. I listened to the address with the more interest that the facts mentioned had an important bearing on the work of the Colonial Committee in our tropical colonies.

#### THE HOME MISSION.

I come next to Home Mission work, which is carried on on a most extensive scale. Last year the Church spent about £8000 in supplementing salaries in 131 weak charges, and in sending ministers, licentiate, and students to conduct services in 221 groups of stations. The weak charges are for the most part in poor or new settlements; but aid is only given on the following conditions—that the people contribute to all the schemes of the Church, furnish full statistics, and pay towards the salary of their minister at the average rate of seven dollars a family.

The stipends of these charges are only supplemented up to \$700 dollars per annum from all sources.

I considered it my duty to get information particularly as to the stations not yet organized into congregations in the newer mission fields, and to visit one or more of these fields.

The principal Home Mission Districts in Ontario are the Ottawa Valley, Madoc to the north of Kingston, Muskoka to the north of Toronto, Parry Sound, and Manitoulin Island in Lake Huron. I had the pleasure of meeting with two members of Assembly whose names are everywhere in Canada associated with two of these districts, and who, from the nature and extent of their labours, are known respectively as Bishop Wishart and Bishop Findlay.

**Madoc**—Mr. Wishart has been twenty-two years in Madoc, a district 100 miles long by 30 wide, the whole of which he visits several times annually, besides attending to the duties of his own charge. With the assistance of two ordained missionaries and six students, two from each of three colleges during summer, services are kept at thirty-five preaching stations. Throughout the district Mr. Wishart has done a great work, in laying the foundations of congregations, purchasing glebe lands, and building churches, St. John's, St. Paul's, St. Columba's, St. Peter's, and so on. His own parish church, which is quite a cathedral in the wilderness, when finished, will cost from four to five thousand pounds. Four-fifths of the people throughout the district are connected with the Mission more or less closely, and it is Mr. Wishart's ardent wish that they should all be good Christians and good Presbyterians.

**Muskoka**—Fifteen years ago work was begun in this district, which is 150 miles long by 100 wide. When Mr. Findlay entered it as the only ordained missionary in 1875, there were twelve preaching stations. There are now fifty, thirty-eight of which are organized, and in connection with these there are 1000 members. Mr. Findlay is now pastor of a settled charge, but continues to visit the whole field, in which he is assisted by two ordained missionaries, and in summer by a number of students. Further settlements would be occupied but for want of means and agents.

Both Mr. Wishart and Mr. Findlay were anxious that I should visit their districts, as being the fields referred to in the resolution of the last General Assembly, where emigrants are struggling with peculiar difficulties, and where, in their opinion, a little aid from the Colonial Committee would go almost further than anywhere else.

I met, however, at the Assembly, Professors Hart and Bryce of Manitoba College, and the Hon. Alex. Morris, late Governor of Manitoba, who was present as an elder, and they urged me by all means to visit that region, as by far the largest and most necessitous of the Home Mission fields. Many others gave me the same advice; and as my host held out the prospect of procuring passes for part of the journey which would lessen the expense, I decided to pay a flying visit to the North-West, as the best use I could make of part of my time in Canada.

(Continued in our next).

If there be any true religion in us, it is much more likely to be discovered and drawn into actual exercise by an exhibition of the glory and grace of Christ, than by searching for it in the rubbish of our past feelings. To discover the small grains of steel mixed among a quantity of dust, it were much better to make use of a magnet than a microscope.—*Andrew Fuller*.