

In the bounds of this Presbytery for the remainder of the season."

"Though there may not be many new stations growing up within the still wide boundaries of the Presbytery of Hamilton, yet there are new applications for a supply of preaching coming in to the Presbytery at almost every meeting; while only one section, comparatively small, has been cut off from their mission field since last year, by the settlement of Mr. McKinnon at Sydenham, large as his sphere of duty is. At the same time the importance and strength of the stations are rapidly increasing, and the calls upon the Presbytery for supply becoming consequently the more urgent. They have cause, however, they think, to hope that the Lord has been watering the field, and that the fruit will appear in due time."

The report concludes with the following account of financial arrangements:—

"The amount of the contributions to the Home Mission fund of the Presbytery, since last report, is £300 1s. 9d. Of this sum no less than £100 is due to the liberality and the indefatigable exertions of the Ladies' Association, Hamilton, as well as other sums to a considerable amount contributed by Associations connected with the other settled congregations of the Presbytery."

"It is satisfactory to know that most of the stations now receiving supply, have engaged to do to the very utmost of their power, to make up the amount of the Catechists' salaries, and that some of the stations have made considerable exertions. The Presbytery has, however, considerable liabilities, and every exertion on the part of the friends of the cause within the bounds, and especially at the mission stations themselves, will be necessary to enable them to meet their engagements."

"The Presbytery have made every exertion so to arrange the services of the Catechists as to give them as little travelling as possible, and also to secure their comfortable accommodation, so that their studies may not be unnecessarily hindered; and it is hoped these arrangements may prove successful."

The portion of the Home Mission field which we have been able thus to review, comprehends no fewer than 85 Mission Stations, at which, with more or less frequency, under the direction of the Presbyteries, the ordinances of the gospel are administered. The Catechists, Students, and other Missionaries at present labouring in this wide field, amount in all only to 27. We would desire to give thanks to the Lord of the harvest, and congratulate the Church that we have been able to send forth so many, but still we have much reason to say, "the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few."

Your Committee would specially invite the attention of the Church to the financial results as presented in the reports we have now been considering. On this department there has no return been made by the Presbytery of Cobourg. In reference to the other three Presbyteries, we would remark, that we have mentioned the number of missionary labourers at present in the field, and that the number this year is somewhat greater than during the past; and we would also remind the Synod, that during the winter months, there were only four labourers in Kingston Presbytery, and that the Presbytery of Hamilton was left entirely destitute. With these remarks we submit the following tabular view of the state of the Home Mission in these three Presbyteries:—

Mission Stations.	Fund raised.	Total.	To each
Kingston...15.....	6.....	£160 0 0	£26 13 4
Toronto...34.....	12.....	250 12 2½	20 17 8
Hamilton. 21.....	7.....	300 1 9	42 17 4

Your committee has reason to believe that in some of those Presbyteries from which no reports have been received, the destitution is still greater than that which we have been considering, and we trust that a vigorous effort will be made by the church to extend to all her adherents throughout the country, the invaluable blessings of a gospel dispensation.

II. In regard to the distribution of missionaries, the Committee have to report that during the session of Knox's College, they had only from six to eight labourers, to distribute over the eight Presbyteries, consequently, some of the Presbyteries were left entirely destitute. It is distressing to think of so many thousands of the members and adherents of our church left for so many months "as sheep without a shepherd," exposed to a thousand dangers and ensnaring influences, without any undershepherd to warn and defend them, or to lead them to the green pastures, and the streams of living waters which Christ has so abundantly provided for his Church. And that this was the condition of persons, many of whom had come to our shores, as emigrants, to provide for themselves and families the bread that perisheth, driven by famine from the land of their birth, and have here been subjected to a still more dreadful famine, of the bread and water of life.—It is, however, consolatory to think that in many cases, in the absence of a missionary, the people assembled on the Sabbath,—the precious word of God was read,—united prayers were offered up to heaven,—and the sound of sacred melody was heard coming from hearts that could so deeply sympathize with the feelings and desires of the sweet singer of Israel, when his soul thirsted in a dry and parched land, where there was no water. But in other cases your Committee has reason to believe that there were no assemblies—no meetings for social worship. What an urgent call for earnest prayer, that the Lord of the harvest would, in his abundant mercy, send forth more labourers. The Committee, however, would acknowledge with gratitude to God, the prospects which are presented to us as a Church, in reference to an increase of spiritual labourers. A bright day we trust is about to dawn upon us. May we know and improve the day of our merciful visitation.

At a meeting of the Committee, held in Toronto, at the close of the College Session, for the purpose of distributing the missionaries at their disposal for the summer half-year, applications were made from the different Presbyteries, for amounting in all, to thirty-eight missionary labourers. This we believe was a number quite inadequate to meet the wants of the Church. The applications had been brought down to the very lowest amount, from an utter hopelessness of being able to obtain any thing like an adequate supply, and perhaps from a fear that they might not be able to raise funds for the support of more. On looking at the list of missionaries at our disposal, then in the field, we found that they amounted only to six, but when we added to them the 26 Students in Divinity, that were recommended to us, as qualified for missionary duties, we found that we had a force at our disposal, consisting of no fewer than thirty-two, being only six short of the present demand. Three of the Professors kindly undertook to perform missionary duties, for a time, thus enabling us to meet all the applications, with the exception of three,—a result we are sure which will be most gratifying to the Church, as it was to your Committee. We know of no argument calculated to tell more powerfully upon the minds of your congregations, in reference to the unspeaking importance of Knox's College, to the stability and advancement of our church, and to the solemn duty incumbent on them to uphold it, by their contributions and prayers, in a state of thorough efficiency, than the mere statement of the fact above-mentioned. And in making this remark we do not refer merely to the number, but also to the character and reputation of the young men sent forth. The applications from our Presbyteries for students, were many; and in the most of cases the same Presbyteries, in which they had formerly laboured, requested them to be sent back,—a gratifying testimony to their efficiency and usefulness; although, for several weighty reasons, the Committee did not see meet, in all cases, to comply with these requests.

III. Your Committee is deeply impressed with the necessity of procuring some more efficient

central agency to bear on the Home Mission field. The fact that so few reports have been made from Presbyteries—the small number of ordained ministers in several of them—the vast extent of the field embraced within their bounds, and, we may add, the circumstances in which many of our ministers are placed, render it impossible for Presbyteries *aloue* to extend anything like an adequate supervision to the Home Mission field. There are wide districts of country, which, we have reason to believe, have never been visited by any member of Presbytery. The missionaries that have been sent into these localities, are left to feel their own way. Large congregations adhering to our Church, have never been organized—no arrangements have been made in regard to the payment of missionaries, who are left to support themselves as they best can, and remove from one place to another, or altogether abandon the field without the authority, or even the knowledge of the Presbytery, within whose bounds they are labouring. Surely this is a state of matters which ought not to be allowed to continue. As a remedy for these evils, about eighteen months ago, this Committee, in connection with the Sustentation Board, appointed a respected minister of this Church, to act as Agent or Superintendent of Home Missions. The work they contemplated him to undertake, was, to visit the districts—meet with the different Presbyteries, and, in conjunction with them, to visit the various mission stations—see to their organization (both for conducting public worship, and collecting the funds necessary for properly conducting the Home Missionary operations of the Church)—to devote his whole time and energies to this work—to correspond with, and give directions to the missionaries, and by holding public meetings in the various congregations, to awaken and keep alive throughout the Church, an interest in this great work. The esteemed brother referred to, after mature deliberation, felt it to be his duty to decline the call of the Committee. But the greater the experience we have had in conducting the business of your Home Mission, the more deeply are we impressed with the importance of having some properly qualified individual to fill the office. In the early part of the present year, the attention of the Committee was directed to a respected deputy from the Free Church of Scotland, the Rev. Gilbert Johnston, of New Cumnock, as possessed of the necessary qualifications. They appointed him to fill this office; and instructed the Convener to write to the Rev. John Bonar, the Convener of the Colonial Committee, and through him to urge the appointment of Mr. Johnston. To this communication, addressed to Mr. Bonar, on the 2nd of February, no answer has yet been received—not even an intimation as to whether the Colonial Committee were inclined to give any attention to our communication. Your Committee are aware that, in making this appointment, some brethren have thought they acted without authority. But it was under the conviction that they were fully warranted by the instructions already quoted, that they took this step. And the Committee would now earnestly urge upon the Synod not to allow the matter to drop.

The circumstances of the Home Mission field, already mentioned in this report, must impress every reflecting mind with the necessity of more combined central agency. Let them either confirm the appointment that has been made, or cancel it, and appoint some other person better qualified, if such can be found willing to undertake the work. Repeatedly has the Synod issued excellent instructions to Presbyteries; but in how many cases have these remained a dead letter? And, perhaps, in the circumstances in which some of our Presbyteries are placed, they cannot be expected to do much more than they have done; but one energetic labourer, devoting all his time and talents to this great work, would greatly strengthen the hands of such Presbyteries; and by the blessing of God, might impart new life to the whole Church.