Provincial Wesleyan.

WEDNESDAY, OCT'R. 18, 1871.

"A STRANGER AND YE TOOK ME IN."

A considerable amount of discussion has recently been carried on in the British Methodist journals on what is called Connexional Leakage. By Connexional Leakage is understood that disappearance from the membership of the Methodist Church, otherwise than by death or emigration to distant lands, continually occurring of persons formerly in full fellowship with that Church. An enquiry has been instituted into the causes of this leakage; and these causes have been variously set forth by different writers. Some have attributed the leakage to one cause; some to another; some to many causes combined. Among these, one held to be productive of most serious loss to the Church, has been described with a force and fulness that has made a deep impression on our mind. That one is the want of prompt, earnest and affectionate attention to strangers happening to find their way from time to time into the Methodist places of worship in many English localities. The disastrous effect of this indifference to the claims of the stranger in their midst by Methodists has been easily made to appear.

A large number of the English people is constantly moving to and fro, especially in the manufacturing districts of that country. They move from the rural portions to the towns, and from town to town, as the viccissitudes of trade or their own changing fortunes may dictate. Many of these people are Methodist in name and in fact. On their arrival in a new place, a not inconsiderable portion of them neglect to connect themselves with the Methodist Society there existing, but nevertheless find their way to Methodist chapels. If these happen to attract the observation and awaken the sympathy of pastors or leaders or other pious souls connected with these chapels, agreeable results follow. The stranger is made to feel at home among his brethren, and his connection with the Church is renewed. He is saved to its membership. But it is alledged, and we have no doubt with perfect truth, that in almost innumerable instances such persons come and go unheeded and uncared for. The result is that they are chilled and repelled by the frigid atmosphere around them, and are lost to Methodism. Others of this migratory Methodist class are drawn away from the communion of their Church by the kindly attention of people of other denominations with whom they happen to come into communication while yet they feel in an unsettled condition in their new place of residence. From what has appeared in the British Methodist journals on this subject, we infer that there are in London thousands of persons originally Methodists who have been lost to Methodism by one or other or both of these causes just mentioned.

It may be said that members so easily lost are not worth saving—that they are themselves to blame for not at once making themselves known and claiming their right to Methodist membership on their arrival in new Circuits. They are undoubtedly to blame; but for all that, they are worth saving. It is the practice of the Good Shepherd to care for the weak and ailing. He carries the lambs in His bosom. He gently leads those who but for such provident and tender care would perish by the way. We never read about any poor creatures not worth saving in the glorious gospel of the Blessed God. Not a word. Nor should we hear a word in that sense from any quarter whatsoever. Apart from all other considerations, it often happens that the most timid and retiring are in the human point of view the most really loveable and estimable.

It is to be feared that it is not in England alone that the interests of our Church suffer in one way or another for want of more kindly attention to strangers, who may happen to appear in Methodist sanctuaries. But a few days ago the following illustrative facts were recited to us by a friend. A Methodist gentleman from one of the upper Provinces had occasion to spend a few weeks in a town in one of the Maritime Provinces in which Methodism is strong. On an early Sabbath during his stay, he chanced to visit the church of a somewhat popular pastor connected with another denomination. At the close of the service, while the congregation was slowly departing, this pastor reached him, made sundry kindly enquiries of him respecting his place of residence, his intended length of stay in the place, and cordially invited him to worship with them during his sojourn. The gentleman did not accept the invitation, but he was strongly impressed by the manifestation of interest thus shown in his welfare as a stranger. During the remaining portion of his stay, he repaired in succession to the different Methodist churches in the place, but no such interest was shown in him, no special attention was paid to him, no cordial invitation tendered to him to repeat his visit. He needed no such invitation. But there are many who settling down in a new place will form their new church relations very much under the influence of the thoughtful sympathy that may at first be extended to them as strangers by the members or ministers of those congregations with whom they have an opportunity of worshipping. If they are regarded with coldness or indifference by Methodist congregations and with interest and kindness by others which they happen to visit, the result in most cases may easily be foreseen.

It seems to us that in nothing ought Methodism to be more careful and anxious than in the preservation and culture of that traditional warmth of heart and manner which in the days of its early history was such an unmistakable element of power to it. And the stranger that comes within our gates to enquire of the Lord our God, is a most fitting object on which to exercise that warmth. Everybody connected with Methodism ought to cultivate such geniality of soul. It accords well with our fervid theology. It is in consonance with the example of the Lord Jesus. It is itself fraught with blessing to him who cherishes it; and it may be made the means of accomplishing an infinite amount of good.

J. R. N.

(For the Provincial Wesleyan.)

CIRCUIT FINANCE.

We had purposed quietly enjoying the discussion of this very interesting question in the articles signed A. W. N.: but the matrimonial quotation in article 4, has slightly changed our mind—"If any one can show just cause why" our plan should not be adopted, "let him now speak," &c., &c. Without consuming either your space or your time by reviewing the plan proposed by the above writer, which plan is fresh in the mind and ready to the hand of "all whom it may concern" we shall proceed at once to "show cause" &c., &c.

1. *The plan proposed* by A. W. N. is *extremely complicated.* This will not be regarded by many as a recommendation at a time when the Conference feels so deeply the importance of simplifying its financial polity. In the numerical columns of article 4 we observe no fewer than eight distinct classifications, six of which are founded upon Circuit receipts, and two upon conventional terms specifying certain classes of Circuits without any reference to receipts.

2. The *mode of classification proposed, admits of no general principle, by which the claims for Children's Fund can be adjusted.* The liabilities of each class must be calculated by a different and ever-varying percentage, after dissecting the ecclesiastical body annually, to arrange the numerous classifications.

3. *Either mode of adjustment may absolutely fail when applied to any particular classification, and throw the burden of decision upon the discretionary power of a Committee.*

The author of the proposed plan favours us with an excellent illustration of this fact in the following words—"The proportion of the highest Circuit in comparison with those of a lower classification is not so much by *one third* as according to the method followed at present." Out of this difficulty A. W. N. gracefully glides with a "figure of speech," this time—"The proportion could easily be altered if the Committee deemed proper." (See article 4.) Now we apprehend that the same difficulty might occur in any classification, unless the plan is partial to Class I. If so the whole mode of adjustment may break down and the question revert to the Committee. What Committee would assume the responsibility; or what Secretary would do the work?

4. The plan proposed by A. W. N. possesses no advantage over that submitted to the Conferences of '69 and '70. Indeed it possesses the only supposed weakness of that scheme without any of its virtues. The chief objection, if not the only one urged against the plan, which we shall hereafter present more fully, was—that by taxing Circuits according to their receipts, we place an embargo on financial progress. The plan more recently proposed though much more intricate will not escape a similar judgment. This principle, however, is the correct one either for the Church or State. Assuming that the financial returns of the several Circuits are honestly given, they must generally constitute a fair exhibit of the financial ability of each, and that *financial ability can be the only just basis upon which to calculate the proportion which each Circuit should contribute to a common fund.*

The great advantage which this plan possesses over the one in article 4 on the "New Committee, &c.," is that it admits of one principle of adjustment applicable to every Circuit in the Conference, a uniform tariff (which is the order of the day) being levied on all.

If your compositors will bear with a few more "numerical columns" we shall elaborate this system in one District by way of illustration. Taking the date of 1869 in the absence of more recent figures we find the

Aggregate receipts of the Halifax District	$10,418
Amount required for Children's Fund,	1,420

14 per cent tax on the aggregate receipts will raise the revenue needed for Children's Fund, and leave a slight margin in favour of emergency. Consequently 14 per cent will be the tax upon the receipts of each Circuit, *i. e.* every Circuit capable of raising one hundred dollars must contribute fourteen to the fund in question.

We here subjoin two columns—No. 1 showing what each Circuit in the Halifax District *would have been* liable for under the proposed scheme. No. 2 showing what each Circuit *was taxed* according to membership.

	No. 1.	No. 2.
Halifax North,	243	200
Do. South,	149	110
Dartmouth,	62	30
Windsor,	102	80
Falmouth,	44	70
Horton,	155	120
Newport,	73	80
Avondale,	98	100
Kempt,	42	80
Maitland,	69	110
Ma-quodoboit Harbor,	30	40
Middle Musquodoboit,	56	70
Shubenacadie,	56	40
Bermuda,	273	330
Total,	1452	1460

By comparing the above figures it will readily appear that any increased burden resulting from the proposed plan falls just where it should, on those best able to bear it, while it relieves some poorer Circuits having the *misfortune* of a large membership. The plan here proposed cannot in the slightest degree oppress any dependent Circuit or Home Mission as the division of Grant will leave all with an equal unprovided for deficiency. This plan though not beyond the possibility of amendment which it may subsequently receive, is certainly much more simple and we think more equitable than that submitted by our esteemed co-laborer A. W. N. And hence all things considered we think we "can show just cause" why said plan should not be adopted.

L. G.

REPLY.

We are more than pleased that Mr. Gaetz has taken up this subject. He has given it no little consideration; and it must be illustrated in its various modes to general satisfaction before it is disposed of.

We will briefly follow his headings and endeavor to meet the objections to which he attaches so much importance.

1. We were not aware that our plan was complicated till Bro. Gaetz called our attention to it; and we fail to see that his objection is correct. Most of the business conducted in the world on the Mutual Interest principle is on the same basis. We have met with persons who have none of Mr. Gaetz's reputation for devotion to figures, who seemed to understand it, and worked out its details. Besides, it is Bro. Gaetz's own principle, only worked in a different way.

2. Our principle is one of per centage on actual receipts. We divide the Circuits into classes in order to simplify the work of appropriation. Mr. Gaetz's plan makes each circuit a class by itself,—he has 160 in the Conference, we have but eight, and those might be reduced to six. As to the varying of per centage, Mr. Gaetz's own plan must be on that basis if there is not to be an arbitrary tax, irrespective of the proportion which the number of children may bear each year to the receipts of the Circuit.

3. There can be no failure in a principle which is regulated by the showing of our annual Circuit Accounts, except it be in the adjustment of one difficulty at the commencement. Our allusion was to such Circuits as Halifax North, which has been raising $300, and is put by Bro. Gaetz at $243. We put it at $185, because our rate of per centage has differed, owing to some change in Circuit receipts since 1869. The only question for a Committee would be "Will we request this class of circuits to raise more than they would be required to do by this rate of per centage? Will we, representatives of our own territory, assume a larger proportion than bare justice demands?" We assume that no one will object to an annual Committee. There are interests connected with our Children's Fund which will be disposed of only by such a Board.

4. The advantages of our plan are easily seen on comparison of our table with that of Bro. Gaetz. For a single District he has fourteen calculations, or one for every Circuit. We have for the same District but *six.* And we repeat that the principle is the same. We will take a certain per centage on Circuit receipts and reach the same conclusions, only with much more trouble. Besides, in taxing all Home Missions and Dependent Circuits alike, we save calculations for *sixty-five or seventy Circuits.* The injustice to these Circuits is obviated, as Bro. Gaetz admits, by the distribution of grant, which leaves them all equal in the end.

A. W. N.

HOME MISSION MEETINGS.

The campaign for this season has been fairly opened. We have enjoyed the privilege of attending several of the Meetings in the Halifax District, and as far as we can perceive, there is no abatement of the enthusiasm with which the movement was inaugurated.

At *Newport*, though the attendance was affected by local causes, the meeting was of excellent tone, and every promise seemed to be afforded that the liberality of last year would be sustained.

At *Avondale* the attendance was respectable. The President elect of our Conference will receive every pledge, in this the third year of his Pastorate among that people, that his influence has not declined. The receipts are already far in advance of those of last year for Home Missions.

The *Windsor* H. M. Meeting was one of rare power and enjoyment. Rev's Hennigar and G. O. Huestis were in their happiest vein. Messrs. J. Sterling, J. Webb and J. B. Morrow of Halifax delivered speeches of point and fervency. Such shrewd business men have a practical influence in recommending Christian benevolence which no minister can possess. These Brethren spoke of conscientious and systematic giving—of direct and immediate consecration to God, and of hearty co-operation with the agencies of the church. Their best argument, however, was the readiness with which they respouded to the call of the church, at the sacrifice in some instances of their own comfort and business interests, to carry forward this important branch of its economy.

Bro. Cassidy promises to send us from *Guysborough* a description of the Meeting there, which seems to have been attended with great success; and at *Falmouth* we are informed the financial proceeds are twice as much as those of last year.

Last Tuesday evening we attended a meeting at *Kempt.* There also the amounts contributed were 100 per. cent in advance. At *Tennecape* on Wednesday night, with a congregation of perhaps 50 persons, the subscriptions, mostly paid down, were better than those reported last year from some old and favoured Circuits. The Meeting at Kempt was postponed owing to the frightful gale.

Let our people and brethren in the ministry take courage. God is with us signally in this H. Mission enterprise. Thirteen young men coming from England! Others doubtless pondering their privilege and responsibility, among ourselves, to decide before next Conference that they will enter the sacred work, in which sympathy, success in soul-saving and joy in the Holy Ghost will meet them to the utmost extent of their faithfulness.

(For the Provincial Wesleyan.)

MR. EDITOR,—The oft-fatal disease diptheria continues to rage in this village. Many of the apparently most healthy children in this vicinity have suddenly fallen victims to this dread complaint. Within the last few days our excellent brother, John Harvie, has lost his only daughter, aged seven years. Little Minnie was one of the most prominent members of our Sabbath School Infant Class. But her much afflicted father and mother have the assurance that their loved child is now numbered with the thousands of redeemed children who before the Throne sing the song of the Lamb.

Within a few hours of the death of little Minnie our kind brother, James Maher, was called to part with another of his beloved children by the same disease: Nicholas, aged three years, soon after his brother Brewster's death, was seized with the same disease, and has also gone home to God.

We perhaps seldom give such children credit for the early fruits of the Spirit; but such should not be the case. God deals with them as children, and associated with childishness, we often may detect manifestations which belong not to human nature. Little Nicholas knew he was passing away, and among many other significant little acts, were the principles he had been taught, and which were so signally manifested in his sainted grandmother; he called for his little purse, and selecting therefrom *one dollar*, he said to his mama, "Give this to our minister." This was one of the last acts of his life. This was the presentation of nearly his earthly *all* to the cause of God. What a lesson for the penurious!

Yesterday afternoon we were called to commit another subject of diptheria to an early grave—the little daughter of Mr. Thomas Armstrong. A few months ago her mother, after a brief illness, passed away, but she died in the Lord; and now her only daughter, Alva, aged seven years, has, we question not, rejoined her mother in that better land.

May the Lord comfort all of them, and other bereaved parents in this place, and help them to follow their children to the kingdom above.

JAMES G. HENNIGAR.

Avondale, Oct. 9th, 1871.

From the Baltimore Episcopal Methodist.

REV. W. H. MILBURN.

The following letter just received from our esteemed friend, the Rev. Wm. H. Milburn, will be read with intense interest. It has been forwarded to us accompanied with a personal note from Bro. Milburn, the substance of which is, that he had joined as a Local Elder of the Church from which he started in the ministry twenty-eight years ago, and that his orders had been recognized by the Illinois Conference:

JACKSONVILLE, ILL., Sept. 23, 1871.

Right Reverend W. H. Bissel, D. D., Bishop of Vermont—Rt. Rev. and Dear Sir:—For reasons which seemed weighty and sufficient, I determined in 1864 to quit Methodism and to enter the Protestant Episcopal Church; and was ordained Deacon in 1865 and Presbyter in 1866, by your venerated and beloved predecessor the great and good Bishop Hopkins. As I have not since then removed my canonical residence from Vermont, I address this communication to you, Rt. Rev. Sir, as my Bishop. A connection of seven years with your Church has satisfied me that I made a mistake in entering it. When a man finds that he has taken a false step the only right course left him is to retrace his way. I therefore propose to return to the Communion of my Fathers, in which I was born and nurtured, and in which I hope to end my days. In taking farewell of your branch of the Church I cannot forbear to express my grateful sense of the numberless acts of kindness which I have received from many of her Bishops, Clergy, and Laity; nor can I withhold the statement that within her pale I have met many of the most sweet, noble Godly men and women it has ever been my happiness to know. Unspeakably precious are the treasures which I have found in the daily use of the book of "Common Prayer;" and I trust that the fellowship begun with so many of your people with whom I have taken sweet counsel, if interrupted here, may be renewed in that world where I, who for so many years have walked beneath a darkened Sun, hope to see the King in his beauty, and to behold the land that is very far off. I trust that the manifold good influences which I have received during my stay in the Protestant Episcopal Church will abide with me forever; and that my character will be quickened and hallowed by the beautiful examples of piety which I have seen within her pale. But as one advances in years he finds it hard to form new attachments, and the heart turns with inexpressible longing to the friends and associations of earlier days. Nothing has obliterated, nothing can obliterate my deep and yearning love of Methodism, the Spiritual Mother who, under God, bred and made me what I am.

With the utmost respect for yourself, and sentiments of life-long affection for my dear and cherished friends whose ecclesiastical connection I am quitting, I beg leave herewith to tender my resignation of the ministry in your church, and to subscribe myself, Rt. Rev. and dear Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,
W. H. MILBURN.

MR. PUNSHON AT MANCHESTER.

The power of oratory is wonderful. You shall write a book or pamphlet containing many interesting facts, full of fine language and flowing periods, and profusely adorned with notes of interrogation and signs of exclamation, and with many passages printed in large or shouting type, and yet the reader shall be so little pleased that he will lay aside the essay long before he gets to the peroration. But if, with the genius of the orator, you bring the music of uttered speech into play, and declaim from a platform the same written paper, men shall be roused into the condition of the wildest enthusiasm, and shall obey your will as though you ruled them with a wizard's wand.

Of course, the Free-Trade Hall was filled with people on Wednesday night, Sept 6. Everyone of these might have read comfortably by his or her own fireside, as much or more than Mr. Punshon could tell of Florence and its Memories, and without expending the sum of sixpence, one shilling, or half-a-crown, as the case might be, or running the risk of an almost certain drenching on an unpleasantly wet night. But the hall was crowded to its utmost limits with men and women attracted by the magic of eloquence. This alone was a wonderful spectacle. It was a religious gathering. Religious gatherings have a peculiar appearance which distinguishes them from all other assemblies in the unsectarian establishment in Peter-street. There is also a great tendency to talk during the interval before the performance, and to stand up and look out for friends as though the people did not come singly but in groups, the members of a family, or the co-worshippers in a chapel, being together. As we took our seat immediately in front of the platform, the buzz of conversation behind us and the braying of the great organ in front—distance not lending enchantment to the sound—were positively stupefying. Add to this that a dim, cavern-like light was all that the man at the meter would allow us, and our readers will perceive that we were not sorry when the advent of a chairman gave the signal for more light and—the burst of applause over—for silence. The chairman, Mr. Haworth, announced the number of a hymn without naming any book, whereupon the people stood and sang as if they knew all about the composition and the tune, sending forth a flood of sound which rose in overwhelming waves and was also wonderful, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, which the people repeated after him. From these facts we concluded that the audience was mainly a Wesleyan one.

Mr. Punshon has not the look of an orator. There is nothing either grand or imposing in his physique; at least we saw nothing before he began to talk. When he began to speak his voice was very disappointing; it sounded husky and not musical, we were even afraid that he would not be heard. But the power of the speaker soon showed itself, and the growing clearness and animation of the lecturer's utterances left our faculties free to enjoy. The first noticeable characteristic in Mr. Punshon's delivery was the exact pronunciation of every word. Not a syllable was permitted to escape, and on two occasions when the right pronunciation had not been given, the speaker repeated the words. With a beatifully varied vocabulary, and a graphic power of pourtrayal of character and description of scenery, combined with elocutionary talent of no second-rate order, he led us on from point to point, from period to period, and from man to man, until Florence stood fair and lovely before us, and its daad heroes were again clothed with flesh and endowed with voices. Beginning with the statement that a great city is a poem, Mr. Punshon vividly sketched the appearance and surroundings of Florence when—the sun shining upon it—it lay "a pearl set in emerald." Referring to its history he briefly outlined its early career and former magnificence, a glance at the tombs, introducing us to a few of its rulers, and amongst others Lorenzo de Medici, the man at whose death all Florence wept. Passing amongst the buildings of the city, a few English memories were awakened by Lely's portrait of Cromwell, painted with all the rough imperfections of the man, every wart and scar upon its face, and the slab erected to the memory of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The latter part of the lecture consisted of sketches of the three most noted citizens of Florence, Dante, Michael Angelo, and Savanarole, the poet, the artist and the painter.

Of all subjects of an historical nature of which a popular lecturer may choose to treat there is, perhaps, none more inspiring than the Memories of Florence. As full of incident as the history of Athens, associated with much that we prize in poetry and art, the story of the city of the Arno has a less remote connection with the life of our own day than has "the city of the Violet Crown." Mr. Punshon's lecture was full of anecdote and illustration of Florence and her great ones; but the real power of the oration lay in his keen recognition of the latter fact. His personages were not classic ideals of virtue and philosophy, but strong-voiced kingly men. It was because his heroes were men who struggled for principles in which the speaker gloried that his sketches were not lifeless descriptions, but vital re-creations. Scorning with their scorn and triumphing with their triumph, he lost his personality, and exerted such a spell that for the time being we had forgotten Punshon, and were listening to the men whom he had summoned from the past to be our judges and our examples. With that perfect command of his subject which showed that he was not merely reciting or talking, but re-living and re-thinking all he said, he made the organ change into the palace window of the Duke, and the platform become the wintry garden, and himself the sculptor standing before his snow-statue. So strong was this fire of reality that sometimes the powerful emphasis of one word did duty for a whole sentence; and the ungainliness of his appearance even helped the illusion as he swung round his fist to smite home the utterance. Continually bringing the past to bear upon the present, he wound many a passage with a sturdy sarcasm. There was a glorious patriotism throughout the address, which culminated in a sublime peroration, when, bidding his hearers cultivate gentleness with firmness, he flung his arms aloft, and, with glowing face upturned, bade them stand by "our Freedom, our Queen, and our Reformed Faith." It was not the oration of a deep thinker, but of a man who, with an enthusiastic admiration of the great and true in human endeavor, combined with a fervor of religious feeling which was grand in itself, marshalled the results of his reading and observation with an order and sequence which made listening easy, and with an application to home which awoke our deepest sympathies. When it was all over we looked at the man and wondered how we had been so moved.—*The Sphinx*, (Manchester.)

BOARD OF CHURCH ERECTION.

We referred last week to the need there is in the Presbyterian Church for a Board of Church Erection. Let us look at the matter a little more closely. The present system is about as unsatisfactory as any that could be thought of. It does well enough for wealthy congregations that require no aid from beyond their own bounds; but the weak—the weaker—the weakest are left in a position that can fairly be described as bad, worse, worst. The most deserving cases are often left without any help because they do not know how to ask effectually. The least deserving sometimes obtain the aid that should have gone to others. In church affairs, as in the case of individuals, the sturdy beggar, the importunate bore, is sure of more than a rightful share, while modest poverty pines unnoticed.

Not a year passes without say, fifteen new churches being in course of erection in connection with our Synod. Five of these are built by decidedly poor congregations that require and deserve help. How are they to get it? They may possibly send an Elder on a "begging expedition." But if they venture once on such an expedition they are not very likely to venture a second time. The usual plan is to get a minister and to devolve upon him the ugly work of collecting funds wherever he can to pay for the church. We have seen this process tried over and over again, and always with increasing pity for the young minister and disapprobation for the system that devolves such a burden on a young man.

Let the minister start on an expedition to collect money, and he will find that it is a peculiarly trying operation. Much more will depend on the man than on the particular case in hand. If he is energetic, frank, of good address, humorous, understanding "human nature," he will come to Halifax and carry away with him say, $400. He will make from $50 to $100 a day. If, on the other hand, the collector is slow of speech, and long-winded, if he makes long preambles, if he begins discussing the weather and consumes precious time in dreary commonplaces, if he gets discouraged and looks half afraid and half ashamed, however good his case is his success will be but poor indeed. A. will give him a donation, for he makes conscience of understanding such appeals and responding to them. B. will give him something because he wants to get rid of him. C., D., and E. will also do a little, but the rest of the moneyed alphabet "have had so many calls lately that they cannot possibly give another dollar."

Thus it is to a large extent chance work whether the poorest and most deserving congregation ever gets proper assistance.

This evil would be at once remedied by the proposed Board of Church Erection. Every claim would rest simply on its own merits.

Another great evil is this: the dwellers in cities and towns are at present called upon at least ten times as often as the well to do farmers in our rural congregations. We know of young men of comparatively limited income who give more every year towards church building outside of their own congregation than is given by whole congregations in rural districts. This is unfair to all parties. Our town-folk do not give too much; perhaps they do not give enough; but certainly a large number of our country congregations need to have this grace more frequently exercised.

From want of timely assistance, many sections of the church continue long years without places of worship; and thus much ground is lost to the Redeemer's kingdom. When churches in comparatively poor congregations are destroyed by fire, there is at present no ready means to help them, and the burden of soliciting help falls on the over-wrought and anxious pastor.

It appears to us that next Synod this matter should be taken into serious consideration. The Widows' Fund is now safely established, and self-sustaining. The Fund for Aged and Infirm ministers will probably be placed this year beyond the reach of danger. The Supplementing Fund is rapidly gaining its proper place in the affections of the people. The Home Mission and Foreign Mission Funds retain their well-merited pre-eminence. The field will therefore we hope, be comparatively clear for the discussion, if not the institution of a new "Scheme."

There are serious objections to the undue multiplying of "Boards," "Funds," and "Schemes." The fewer we have the better if they embrace our work in all its extent and urgency. It may be that the Home Mission Board could be charged with the functions of a 'Church Erection Board.' The establishment of the Supplementing Board has relieved the Home Mission Board of part of its work—indeed the most arduous part. It is possible that at least for a few years, "Church Erection" in destitute localities might wisely be made a department of Home Mission work.

It may be worth while noticing that many of our congregations need help other than money. They would be greatly benefitted by judicious advice as to the style and structure of their place of worship—the plan, the contract, the deed, &c. Much loss and confusion would be avoided were our younger and poorer congregations put in possession of the wisdom gathered by costly experience by older congregations.—*Pres. Witness.*

THE GALE.

The gale last evening was of short duration; but it was unexampled in the history of the city for violence, and probably for damage done. The fact that the tide was at its height just when the wind was at its height, was the chief cause of the disastrous effects produced. It was principally the conjunction of a great, though short, gale with the tide when at its height—that caused the damage to the wharves. All the low wharves in the city suffered; all the high ones escaped. In Wylde's wharf, the extreme end of the wharf, being built higher than the rest, escaped, while the portion between the end and the shore being low was ripped up and generally demoralized as though the demon of destruction had passed that way.

About noon seafaring men began to look anxious, the barometer indicating the approach of a storm of no ordinary violence. In another part we give the readings of the barometer, and it will be seen that the lowest point indicated by the instrument was the same as during the late hurricane in the West Indies. Towards evening the indications were painfully evident that the gale would be at its height just when the tide was highest. Merchants on the wharves were busy removing their fish and taking every precaution. The waves were rolling in higher and higher. Then about half-past five came the culminating period; the highest wind and the highest water. It was during a period not exceeding over a dozen minutes that the damage to wharf property occurred. Eye-witnesses declare that such was the force of the wind that it seemed to hold the water at high-water mark for some minutes, a second's lull being sufficient to lower the water a couple of feet at a bound.

It was a grand sight to see the wind and the waves united in their efforts to mock the puny strength of man—to see the ship and vessels dragged off as by giant force, carrying with them the wharves to which they were attached.—*Reporter.*

On the journey from Maitland to Halifax, Friday morning, we were obliged to cut our way through windrows of trees which the gale had laid across the road. We counted five barns unroofed, two were altogether prostrated and a house was hopelessly damaged. The fences, for miles and miles, were level with the ground.

At Shubenacadie, the Halifax train was looked for from 8.30 up to 1 p. m. Then a small train arrived from the junction and admitted of the Truro train passing on. We found coaches at Bedford which conveyed us to Prince's Lodge, where another train was waiting to convey passengers to Halifax. The scene all along was pitiful. The railroad had yielded in several places to the force of the waves, and will require weeks of repair. Vessels large and small were lying on the shores, on ledges, and shattered in the harbour. The damage to wharf property has been immense.

It was curious to notice the rise of the gale at Maitland. An Aneroid Barometer whose index had been fixed at 3 o'clock, fell by seven o'clock to an extent seldom known in these latitudes. And it went up with equal rapidity. The houses shook amid concussions which seemed like approaching thunder. One ship on the stocks had her sails blown loose, and but for the dexterity of several hands, would have been shattered to fragments. The injury to grain and hay, where buildings have been torn open, must be very serious.—*Ed. Wes.*

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE IN CHICAGO.

For some weeks past heavy fires have been raging in the Western States, destroying forests, farmhouses and whole villages—in fact everything within the circle of destruction that was not fire-proof. On Tuesday morning the astounding intelligence reached here that Chicago had been devastated by a terrible fire on Sunday and Monday which laid nearly the whole of the business portion of the city in ashes. All the newspaper offices are destroyed except that of the "Tribune;" also the Sherman Hotel, Board of Trade Buildings, all the Banks, Railway Depot, and the City Water Works. All these were magnificent buildings and important business centres. One account says that the district swept by the fire is three miles in length by a mile and a half in width. Ten thousand buildings burned, 50,000 to 75,000 people homeless and destitute, and $50,000,000 worth of property burned, make up a terrible holocaust of destruction. One sad feature of the fire is the terrible loss of life. The flames swept through the city with the rapidity of a prairie fire overtaking many in their efforts to escape, and cutting off all chances of escape for others. Nothing definite is yet known as to the number of persons who have perished. Such a conflagration is unprecedented in American history and is only paralleled by the great fire of London in 1766. We see that a call has been made for the destitute families, to which Boston, New York and other cities are responding nobly. Could not the Maritime Provinces throw in their mite. Compared with what will be given in the large cities of the Republic it might appear small, but we have no doubt it would be thankfully received, and would be such an evidence of good feeling on our part as would be heartily appreciated by the American people.

It is difficult to judge what effect this calamity will have upon gold, stocks and breadstuffs. Chicago is an important centre of western trade, and the loss of $50 000,000 cannot but be felt in financial and trade circles in all the centres of trade. It is to be feared there will be "crashing" among insurance companies. If even less than half of the property destroyed is insured it will cause such a drain from their coffers as has not been experienced for half a centnry.—*Citizen.*

Special to the Reporter.

BOSTON, Oct. 12.—The Volunteer Militia and U. S. military are pouring into Chicago from other places, to maintain order and protect property. General Sheridan is in command. The excitement in the Atlantic cities continues. Boston has raised $240,000 up to noon of to-day. Hundreds of boxes and barrels of estables of all kinds have been forwarded to Chicago

It is estimated that the probable loss of life will reach 1000. Sixty dead bodies were found among the ruins of one dwelling. The wooden pavements being all ablaze prevented many persons from being successful in their attempts to escape.

The value of goods transported in one train from New York to Chicago was $100,000. The Railways from Chicago carry all passengers free of charge. Thousands of persons have availed themselves of the chance and have left the city. The burnt district includes sixty two streets running parallel with the lake, and about fifty running at right angles with the lake.

Destructive fires in the woods have devastated the Counties of St. Clair and Huron, in the State of Michigan, dozens of towns and vilages have been consumed and many lives lost. The destitution and suffering are very great.

To the Associated Press.]

NEW YORK, Oct. 12.—There are fears that 200 persons have perished in the Wisconsin fires.

Plenty of food is now at Chicago, and the authorities have telegraphed that no more is needed at present. The water let on, and all the inhabited portion of the city supplied.

All the Railroads leading out of Chicago are carrying free the homeless to other places. The Common Council has fixed the price of bread at 8 cents for 12 ounces, with penalty of ten dollars for violation. Police continue to capture and deal summarily with thieves, burglars, and incendiaries. Bank vaults were generally found safe, and the Banks will all resume business.

Insurance offices all wiped out.

NEW YORK, Oct. 11.—The sufferers in Chicago are now receiving needed temporary aid, but the distress must necessarily continue a long long time. The contributions are noble. A T. Stewart sends $50,000, and New York Chamber of Commerce $50,000. Other New York parties contribute large sums. Boston sends a quarter of a million dollars; Montreal twenty thousand dollars. Similar benevolence is shown all over the country.

THE MORMONS.

By recent intelligence from the United States it will be seen that a crisis in the history of Mormonism in Utah has arrived. The American civil authorities have taken the Mormon bull by the horns, and have annouced their determination to enforce the laws of the United States in Utah and Salt Lake City at all hazards. Being supported by the presence of 5000 soldiers at Camp Douglass in front of Salt Lake City, it is not at all likely that they will be disuaded from their purpose. By late despatches it will be seen that Brigham Young and several Mormon officials have been arrested on charges of adultry, arson, murder, and other crimes against the laws of the land. With the head of the Mormon Church under arrest it may be readily judged that the crisis which has suddenly arrived is fully appreciated by the Mormons of Salt Lake City. When the United States civil authorities took the first steps towards enforcing the law, it was announced that the Mormons would resist by force of arms. Such a wild proposition or decision was not long adhered to, and it was next announced that the whole Mormon colony would emigrate to the Sandwich Islands. This also has become quite improbable, and it now seems pretty evident that, whatever the Mormon leaders may wish or threaten to do, the people will "accept the situation," and conform to the laws of the country. Enthusiastic as they may be in their adherence to the tenets of Mormonism, they can hardly be equal to the task of sacrificing their wealth and property, comforts and conveniences, to follow a fanatical leader to a new home beyond the reaches of Christian civilization. Indeed, if the charges made against the arrested Mormon leaders be sustained in the courts, their chances of ever again becoming leaders in such an unchristian and unlawful movement are exceedingly small. If not condemned to the halter they will probably find employment and a resting place for life in the State penitentiary.

The existence and practices of the Mormons in Salt Lake City have been a blot upon American civilization and Christianity; and now that the civil authorities have "taken the bull by the horns," it is to be hoped they will not rest till Mormonism has become a thing of the past, and in their crusade against this monster evil they should have the moral and material support of the whole American people.—*East. Chronicle.*

[The Northern Methodists have in Utah five preachers, three churches, five Sunday-schools, and three day schools, regular preaching in five places with an attendance of about a thousand. Church lots have been secured at Salt Lake City, Evanstown, and Corinne.—*Ed. P. W.*]

PRAIRIE FIRES.

The immense fires raging in Michigan and Minnesota have destroyed millions worth of pine and hard-wood timber. The area of the region within the latter State, under the control of the destructive element, has been estimated at three thousand square miles. In Michigan hundreds of families have been burned out, houses and fences being consumed as well as precious belts of timber. This calamity may not yet have reached its end, in which case more valuable property may utterly perish. The result of these fires is disastrous to the community, which is deprived of wood for building and heating purposes, or made to pay heavier prices for that which has become indispensable. The Canadians too, have suffered seriously the past season. Settlers carelessly ignite brushwood and tree-stumps for clearing and other purposes, when the wind scatters sparks or jumps the flame to adjacent timber, thus originating the mischief so difficult to check, and so injurious to the country. Lumbermen also sin in this way, permanently impairing one of our best resources. The forests of the States have been pretty well exhausted by this and other causes, including the extensive consumption for building purposes. Michigan and Minnesota have been envied their fine tracts of wood-land, from which they have derived valuable gains.—*Ib.*

THE LAHAVE TRAGEDY.—The perpetrator of the great crime was Solomon Wamback, a