

THE MONTHLY RECORD.

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Efforts for Missionaries

We believe that no intelligence which we can communicate, to the greater number of our readers, is more welcome and acceptable at the present moment than the notices which we have lately published of the vigorous, and trust successful, efforts to obtain suitable Public Missionaries for the vacant congregations in these Provinces. The Colonial Committee certainly adopted a wise resolution when they agreed to send a deputation under their authority to the different Scottish Universities, to bring the circumstances and wants of their fellow-countrymen in the Colonies, fully and forcibly under the consideration of the students of divinity and preachers at these seminaries of learning and theology. Statements and representations of the moral and spiritual wants of strangers, living at a great distance, and in unfavourable circumstances, although they should be couched in the strongest and most forcible language, and appeal very earnestly to the religious feelings—are found to produce only a very feeble and transient impression. If the Priest and the Levite, even when they saw the man who had fallen among thieves stripped of his raiment, wounded and half dead, shut up their bowels of compassion towards him, and in a cool and unfeeling manner passed by on the other side, it is not at all wonderful, that those who only read or hear of our spiritual necessities, and our long continued privations, should be very slightly affected, more especially when they are discouraged by ministers who had been formerly in the colonies, or perhaps have better situations in prospect, or in their offer. But when a direct and personal appeal is made to such individuals by ministers who have recently come from the field of destitution; who have seen it in its length and breadth; by clergymen who are personally acquainted with the excellent character and devoted attachment of the applicants, and with their ability and willingness to support the ordinances of religion, when students and preachers in the mother country almost hear the longing complaints and mournful entreaties of the most zealous friends of their own church in the colonies, the effect as we shall soon see is very different. The intelligence in our last number found the Rev. Mr. Sprott preparing to visit the University seats, to arouse the minds of the students in favour of the Colonists. And we are now enabled from additional intelligence, to announce the result of his appeal, so far as it had then manifested itself. "I have been," says this zealous and much respected young clergyman, in a letter from Edinburgh of the 1st February, "to the different Universities, commissioned by the committee to beat up for recruits for the Colonies. I went first to Aberdeen and addressed the Faculty Students. I then stated that I would give the names of those who are to be licensed in May and those of the year next the last. Their minds were made up to apply for special appointments. Seven gave me in their names, among whom were the sons of

Mr. McKenzie, formerly of Wallace, and of Mr. McRae of Pictou. At St. Andrew's I also addressed the Hall, and received the names of several more. I addressed the Glasgow Students a fortnight ago, and with the exception of one whose mind had been made up previously none resolved at once—but several told me they were strongly inclined, and requested time to consider. To-morrow morning I address the Edinburgh Students. Besides this I have hopes of one or two licentiates, and I know definitely of one, who has been licensed a few months, and who has been a most successful missionary in the Parish of one of my greatest friends, Mr. Cumming of Perth. His application is already in the hands of the Committee, and I think you may expect him in Halifax early in March. I brought the whole state of the Colonial Church, so far as I knew it personally, before the minds of the students; and I hope not only those who are near license, but others will be led to think of the field, and that those who remain at home will also be influenced to make greater exertions than have been made in the past. I feel confident that there will soon be a great awakening in the Church, and that large missionary efforts will be made. The Colonial Committee has, as you will see in its last address, promised to advance the interests of those who do good service abroad.

Widow's Fund.

A correspondent in a late number, after acknowledging the receipt of two donations of twenty five shillings each, from Montreal, says, "I beg to ask, who is the Treasurer or Secretary of said fund?" It is well known, we imagine, that our Synod took no steps last summer with a view to the institution of such a fund; although, the obvious want of it and the great desirableness of it, as well as the advantages which its existence would confer upon our church, were not without a place in the thoughts and conversation of some of the members. A debt of gratitude is, however, owing to the Rev. Alex. Mackid, one of the Deputation from Canada, for the zealous and eloquent manner in which he introduced the subject into his speech, at the meeting of the friends of the church in Halifax, shortly after the Synod had closed its sittings. On that occasion there were not wanting others to follow up his appeal, which, we were delighted to think, was received at the time, with considerable sensation. Ever since, from month to month, we have been entertaining the hope that we would be able to record, that the initiative step for the formation of a Minister's Widows' Fund was no longer a thing of the future—an undefined idea, around which our hopes and fears, expectations and surmises gather, in a variety of fitful combinations—but an actual, tangible reality, emanating from some quarter or another, in the shape of no ambiguous declaration, supported by strenuous and determined exertions, and growing

daily into a thing of becoming magnitude and fair proportions, by the liberal donation of the affluent merchant, the generous lady, the comfortable farmer, and the hopeful young man. After waiting thus long, what have we to record? Disappointment, vexing, unexpected disappointment. Writing, however, as we do, at a distance, and reminding ourselves that these are times of active though unrevealed diplomacy, we think it is just possible that some of the more able and devoted men of our church may be doing something, which, when it becomes known, shall extinguish our disappointment, and show it to have been premature. Our disappointment, however, does not make the slightest approach to despair, and, as we have no connection with that class of mortals whose existence is one continued state of desperation, the result of successive but unprosecuted attempts, we say confidently and emphatically, a Widows' Fund is an institution which must and shall have a place in the organization of our church.

We are of opinion that the Lay Association of Halifax, which has been wont to embrace the whole Province of Nova Scotia in its operations, occupies a place and possesses a character which eminently fit it to be the originator of a movement for the establishment of a Widows' Fund. We would respectfully submit to the members of that Association, that, at one of their meetings, a resolution might be introduced and passed, stating in general terms, the desirableness of instituting such a Fund and the favourableness of the present time for making a commencement. Little more would be required, in the meantime, unless it be the appointment of collectors and a general Treasurer. On the strength of a resolution of this kind, a subscription list could at once be opened, and by drawing up and transmitting to the different congregations a short address on the subject, congregational Committees could be formed without delay, and thus an effort would be made throughout the whole church in furtherance of the object. The laity, with whom, we conceive, the initiative in such an organization most properly lies, would in this way, by the next meeting of Synod, when we expect the subject to be discussed be in a position to come forward and say to the court, "Here is a sum of money which has been raised over the church, and which, it is intended, shall form the nucleus of a Widow's Fund, and, desiring you to regard it as an earnest of our continued and increased support, we invite you to cooperate with us in the constitution of a Board for the management of the same."

We think there is a simplicity and propriety in this course which will at once recommend it. And, while a glance at the past, the situation, and the fewness of our Ministers must satisfy any man that it is not possible to conceive a more favourable opportunity than the present, we trust that the manner, in which the notice and obligation embodied in the words of our corres-