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Contributors and Correspondents

ACTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE LATE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The roll of the Assembly that met in Halifax shows that 388 were entitled to seats—170 ministers and 168 elders. The difference was caused by the Presbytery of Newfoundland, which being entitled to send one minister and one elder, sent two ministers. The two brethren got their seats, but the Presbytery was told not to do it again. Of the 170 there were 10 that did not come, and of the elders 46 were absent; accordingly the actual attendance was 272. The Synod of Toronto and Kingston had the largest number of absentees, as many as 19 elders and 3 ministers failing to come.

Some days ago a friend called the attention of the writer to the strange circumstance that on the Committee of Bills and Overtures—the most important Committee that meets during the deliberations of the Assembly—there was but one minister from the whole Province of Nova Scotia, namely, Dr. McGregor, and he had so many other duties to attend to that he could very seldom attend. In connection with this, perhaps because of it, it is to be noted that of the fifty-nine members of the Board of French Evangelization, only five, in other words about one-twelfth, are from the Maritime Provinces. And that is not all. Of the five, only one belongs to the Maritime Provinces; the other four came from the West not long ago. It may be that all this is the result of accident so called; if it be, it is an accident that is not calculated to inspire the fullest confidence in the administration of the Board. We down here thought we took some interest in the French Mission, we must now see that we were mistaken, when the Assembly or those that contrived to pull the wires did not think that men educated in the Maritime Provinces were fit to serve on the Board.

Turning to the statistical tables, there is much there of interest to every lover of our Church. Your correspondent turned up, for the sake of comparison, the Statistics of the late Canada Presbyterian Church for 1870, that is to say seven years ago. Of the 252 reporting in that year only 82 were in receipt of a salary of \$1,000 and upwards, that is about one-eighth of the whole. This year in the United Church, according to the report of the Committee on Statistics, there are 690 ministers and all these did not report, but 121 of them, or more than a fifth, are in receipt of salaries of \$1,000 and upwards. In 1870 the highest salary paid to any one minister was \$2,400, the minister being Dr. Ormiston of Central Church, Hamilton. I am speaking of course of those within the bounds of Canada. This year the highest is \$4,200, which was paid to Mr. Black by Eskimo Church, Montreal. There are two other congregations, indeed we may say three, for Central Church has again come to the front, that come very near to the maximum, namely, Knox Church, Toronto, and St. Paul's Church, Montreal. The average all over the Church has not increased so much as that perhaps during the seven years, but the probability is that it was not much short of it. In the Presbytery of Prince Edward Island, for example, the increase during the time mentioned has been very noticeable. In the year 1870 not one minister on the Island belonging to the late Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces was in receipt of \$600 per annum from his congregation—the average was \$406. This year there are three reported as getting \$1,000 each; next year there will be five or six; the average during the past year being \$602, an increase of fully sixty-two per cent. The cost of living on the Island is cheaper than in any of the other seaboard provinces.

It is to be regretted that this year has shown backsliding in the time at which the statistics come into the hands of the ministers and elders. Last year they were printed and put into the hands of members of Assembly during the sittings of the Court in Toronto. This year they were not seen until the minutes were published, a difference of about four months. The longer they are in appearing the less service they are of. It is needless to say that it is not the Convener that is in fault, it is the congregations that delay in making returns. What is gained by delay it is impossible to say. Here, as in all other cases procrastination is not only the thief of time, it is a thief in many other ways. As a general rule where returns are delayed or not furnished at all it is evidence that all is not right; there is an unhealthy element somewhere; at all events it is a suspicious circumstance.

To teach one who has no curiosity to learn, is to sow a field without ploughing.

A FEW NOTES REGARDING METIS, QUEBEC.

To the meeting of the General Assembly in Halifax this year, the inmates of Metis Manse are indebted for visits from three of our ministers. The Rev. Mr. Cameron, of Chatsworth, accompanied by his son, came the week before the opening. The following Sabbath he preached for me, and addressed the classes which are held in the church. Afterwards we visited a dying man at the Ste. Flavie Station, about ten miles distant. The Tuesday after, I took Mr. Cameron to our station (St. Octave). There I had the pleasure of seeing a large number of our ministers, all Halifaxward-bound. My appearance was to them like that of a ship to those who, for several days, have seen only sky and sea. I was the first Presbyterian minister who had come on board since they left Point Levis. I may here say that I am the only one between Point Levis on the one hand, and Dalhousie on the other—a distance in all of fully 800 miles. The time for saluting so many was very short. Finding that the train was moving off, I had to disembark very hastily, leaving some of my brethren to puzzle themselves with the questions, "Whence did he come? and, Whither did he go?" Next day, accompanied by Mr. Cameron's son, I visited the dying man already referred to. This gave me an opportunity of seeing for a few minutes several others of our ministers on their way to the capital of Nova Scotia. On his return, Mr. Cameron spent another Sabbath with us; again he preached for me. Afterwards we went to my Sabbath School, about four miles distant, where he addressed parents and children. In the evening he conducted a meeting in Gaelic, which was a great treat to those of my people whose mother tongue is that in which some believe Adam and Eve conversed, (Acts xxii. 2.) The following morning the Rev. Mr. Straith, of Paley, paid us a visit. Next day he, Messrs Cameron, Sen. and Jr., and myself took the train—I for Rimouski. On board we met a large number of the brethren homeward bound. Some of them would have visited the Manse if they had known a little sooner that I live as near St. Octave Station as I do. At Rimouski I met Mr. Adamson, one of the Toronto elders. In the evening I held a meeting, at which I had his assistance. During the following week I held a meeting at the Amqui Station. On my return I met in the cars the Rev. Mr. Alexander, of Norval. I succeeded in making him prolong his visit by three days, so that he spent a Sabbath with us. As may naturally be supposed, I made him work that day. Besides preaching for me, he addressed my Sabbath School in the afternoon. A Sabbath or two after, the Rev. Messrs Peacock, of the Congregational Church, Kingston, and Torrance, of our Church, Peterboro, did duty as my curates, the one at my regular station, the other at my summer one. This enabled me, the Presbyterian bishop of Metis—every pastor is a bishop—to spend a Sabbath in Rimouski. There I met Mr. Blaikie, another Toronto elder, who with his wife and family were spending a few days in that part. On the following Tuesday I returned home, accompanied by Mr. Blaikie, who was going to Sayabec to fish. At the Ste. Flavie Station we exchanged a few words with the Rev. Messrs. Frazer of Bond Head, and McQuarrie of Wingham, who were returning from Halifax. These were "the last roses of summer." The following Sabbath the Rev. Mr. Lindsay, of Sherbrooke, Que., preached for me at both Stations. The next one, Mr. Patterson, of the Quebec Auxiliary Bible Society, preached for me at my regular station, and Mr. Lindsay at the summer one. That day I spent at Amqui Station; in the morning I preached, in the afternoon I had a Bible Class. At the close, I visited a family fully a mile distant, the father of which is a Romanist, and the mother a Protestant. On my way back I called at a French Canadian House where I read portions of Scripture, and made a few remarks thereon. I was very courteously treated. I preached again in the evening; as four young French Canadians were present I said a few words additional in French. Another Sabbath morning after, the Rev. Mr. Longley of one of the Methodist churches in Montreal, preached for me; in the afternoon I met the Rev. Mr. Heaney, of Montreal, at my summer station. Owing to weakness, the effect of a severe illness from which he was recovering, he was not able to take part in the exercises. Twice I had the pleasure of a visit from him in company with Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Thomson, of Quebec. On one occasion I had at the same time Mr. and Mrs. Longley already referred to. Another welcome visitor was Col. Haultain, of Peterboro, who, on different occasions, saw the inside of the

Manse. During the visiting season just closed, the Manse was envied by visits from a goodly number of strangers, whose names I need not, however, mention. The collections at my summer station amounted to a trifle over \$32. To the brethren of other Churches as well as my own who preached for me, I return my hearty thanks. May a rich blessing follow the word spoken by them. T. F. Metis, Que.

SUSTENTATION.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—Since writing you last I have had some "new light" on the impracticability of a Sustentation Scheme. I have been told that an abortive attempt was made in Canada to establish a Sustentation Scheme, and that the causes which operated against it then will operate still. My reply is—that Canada, now, is not the Canada of thirty years ago—that the "Presbyterian Church in Canada" is a very different Church from that one in which the attempt was made, which met with such signal non-success. That a scheme is correct in theory, and has succeeded, is a sufficient answer to the objection that it is "unworkable." One success in favor of a plan is a much stronger argument on its behalf than many failures are against it. "Try again" is a good adage. In Scotland the Scheme has been found practicable. "The Chalmersian force" that gave the Scheme its launch in Scotland has had time, at least, to subside. In England Sustentation has been a success, and there, there has been no "Chalmersian force." The want of large liberal congregations here need not make the Scheme a failure. Far more will depend on the accumulation of the titles in each congregation over the Dominion.

I have been told again that the General Assembly will never pass a law requiring a qualifying rate of \$5 per member on behalf of the Fund. That remains to be seen. She has said, regarding supplemented congregations, that members must give at the rate of \$4.50 per member—not much difference in the sum—not much difference in the principle. "Do to others as you would have others do to you." If she will not require a rate of \$5, perhaps she will of \$3, or \$2. "But what good?" you say. "That would not raise anything like the sum aimed at. Well, another thing can be done. There may be, as in Ireland, a Stipend Fund, apart from the Sustentation Scheme. Then there will still be an opportunity for congregations to compete with each other in the matter of pastors' salaries. If the Assembly should see fit to adopt the sliding scale of contributions at present in operation in the Free Church of Scotland, and now proposed in the Irish Church, there will still be made to appear a large difference in ministerial income.

It may be replied that a Stipend Fund, apart from Sustentation, amounts to the same thing as that contemplated in the overture from the Presbytery of Toronto. There is this difference—you have not as yet the sliding scale referred to. Another is that all the congregations do not necessarily become contributors to the Supplemental Fund. These are important differences. Let the readers of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN ponder them well.

"The scheme will deprive congregations of the power of 'starving out' a minister, and therefore will be opposed by some." This I have been told. The power referred to certainly will not be furnished to the extent that it is under our present Home Mission Regulations, (see Min. 1876, page 55, Reg. 5.) but that I think is one of the great excellencies of a Sustentation Scheme. There is a constitutional way of getting rid of a minister when he ceases to do his duty among his people. I do not think there are enough of congregations, in our Church, to defeat a Sustentation measure on the score of curtailed power over their pastors. If there are, the sooner we know it the better. W. BENNETT. Springville, Sept. 15th, 1877.

FEMALE preachers are evidently on the increase in America. Some of these ladies undertake duty alone; while others are accompanied by their better halves, who act in the capacity of assistant. Here is a case in point. A correspondent, writing from Indianapolis, tells how a Methodist lady preached there night after night for a month to crowded congregations. Exhausted nature at length gave way, and the husband was brought in to assist. The lady would address the people at some length, and then, turning to her husband, exclaimed: "Now, dear, you pronounce the benediction." On a recent Sunday we are told that no less than nine sermons were preached in Indianapolis by women.

MISSION WORK IN MANITOBA.

MR. EDITOR.—It is difficult for Presbyterianians in Manitoba to understand the policy of the Church below in reference to mission work, whether Home or Foreign, in Manitoba and the North-West. At Battleford, we understand, that there is quite a number of settlers. Governor Laird and family and all government officials are to reside there this winter, and there is to be a detachment of the Mounted Police stationed at that point. So important a centre should be occupied at once by a missionary of our Church. We hear of no appointment having been yet made.

The Rev. Mr. Stewart, who relieved the Rev. Mr. McKellar, has left Prince Albert. The Rev. Mr. Johnson, Teacher, is the only missionary we have at that point now. When the General Assembly transferred the mission, as to English service, to the H.M. Com., was it understood that there was no need of appointing any missionary to take Mr. Stewart's place? There are five stations at Prince Albert, and the settlement is fast extending. If Mr. Johnson attends to the school his hands are full, and who is to care for the congregation? In spite of the remonstrance of the Presbytery of Manitoba, and that, we believe, of the Bishop of Rupert's Land, the mission was invaded by Bishop McLean. He has not, if report does not do him injustice, scrupled to approach Catechist at Prince Albert with a view to proselytise. What better opportunity could he ask than the present to try his hand with the people. If Mr. Johnson is left alone the people will be obliged to attend the Episcopal service part of the time, and an opportunity will be offered the bishop to try his favourite game. This state of things was known long ago and steps should have been taken to prevent any display of the Bishop's peculiar tactics.

Prince Albert is 500 miles west of Winnipeg, and Battleford 670. Freighters are going west every week now. The last of them will leave in a short time. If the Church is desirous of sending men at little expense, arrangements should be made early and the two should go together. To hire a special conveyance and guide is expensive, and soon even that mode will be too late. The comfort of the gentlemen going west might perhaps be taken into account too. For about 500 miles of the way to Battleford there are no houses. It is neither agreeable nor soothing to the nerves to drive all day and then pitch your tent on the lee side of a willow bush or your whipstock, when the ground is covered with snow and the mercury at zero. But perhaps it is as well that men should endure hardness early and thus prevent grumbling afterwards. In the case of the last three sent west this was the experience. Messrs. McKellar, Stewart, and Johnson left Winnipeg late—Mr. McKellar as late as the beginning of November—and had much needless suffering before reaching their destination. They were unable to take much baggage, and had not even necessary clothing during the winter. Members of the committee may forget all this when away at the seaside or out duck-shooting, but they must excuse us in mentioning such matter-of-fact things as comfort in connection with mission work. If the work of the Assembly is not too exhaustive and the weather not too relaxing would it not be well to make such appointments in time to enable men to arrange deliberately.

The wants of settlements within the Province and immediately outside, Mr. Robertson's letter laid before the Church. For forty miles along the Little Saskatchewan the land has been taken up this summer, and all along the base of the Riding Mountain on the south. A number of families have settled there already, and a much larger immigration is expected next year. Last week the Factor of Lord Dunmore, Scotland, and a Chief Factor of the H.B. Co. went west there with the view of making arrangements for a Scotch Colony. There is work for a missionary at once. Will not the Church appoint a vigorous man immediately to take charge and welcome the incoming settlers next year? The importance of first occupation should not be underestimated.

From Mr. Robertson's letter it appears that Mr. J. S. Stewart supplies five stations. The people are scattered over eight or ten townships. This summer the settlement has extended far beyond the old limits. Mr. Stewart thinks that a station should be established at once ten miles north west and another twenty miles west of Palestine. The whole field then would approach the County of Oxford in size. Mr. Stewart must be like a farmer cultivating a section (640 acres) of arable land singlehanded and without the aid of steam plough or Marsh Harvester. Would

such a farmer be thought lazy if like Oliver he asked for a little more help.

The Rev. Mr. Bestwick must surely be an Ericoplain and not a Presbyterian Bishop. The reverend gentleman has to minister to the Presbyterian settlers scattered over twenty-eight townships. If stations were to be erected in this district eight miles apart, he would require to supply fifteen such. There are few horse teams in these settlements and if people have to drive oxen or walk four miles to church during winter it is as much as they can do. At this rate the people would get bi-monthly service. To retain one's spirituality at this rate would require no ordinary effort. What wonder if ministers thinking they are laboring in vain and spending their strength for nought, should become discouraged and resign. All admit that the policy has been fraught with evil in the past; are we to be cursed with it for all time and in every place? Here then are five fields raising the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us," shall they do so in vain? Let those who have charge of this business act promptly.

You will recollect, doubtless, that the Rev. A. Frazer and the Rev. A. Glendinning resigned at the May meeting of the Manitoba Presbytery in 1876, and yet their fields of labor have been without a regular missionary ever since. Mr. Bell and Mr. Donaldson supply High Bluff and Portage Creek as they can consistently with the duties of their own fields, and the College supplies Rockwood, etc. Both fields are anxious to call a minister, but they are not acquainted with any. Both guarantee \$800 per annum for the support of a minister. At Grassmere there is a church which was opened this summer; at Rockwood is another, unfinished; while the people of Greenwood are talking of building at once. Here is a field comprising seven townships with two churches and another to be built soon. The Presbytery and people are most anxious to have a good man settled there at once. Will the committee allow another winter to do its best in chilling the life out of these people? The High Bluff field is not so large but it is important. There is a church at High Bluff, and the presence of a minister is all that is required to have one erected at Portage Creek. When the tide in temporal matters has turned, when grasshoppers have left the country, and God is blessing us with bountiful harvests, surely the Church should devise liberal things. When the state of things is such as I have represented what is the policy of the Church? It may be necessary yet to point out how this supineness is operating against the Church's best interests.

Is the Committee hampered through lack of means? Do they find it difficult to get men? Do they think the work unimportant? From the Convener's reports and letters he appears to be alive to the importance of the work. If the second cause is a difficulty, it is not creditable to the missionary spirit of our Church or to the efficiency of the mode of our appointment. That the first is a difficulty we know, and we submit that the Home Mission Committee could do no greater service to the Church than devise some scheme by which the liberality of our people should be better evoked in connection with this work. With your permission I will direct attention to some other points again, as this letter is too long already. Allow me to state, however, before closing, for fear any should think Manitoba is getting an undue share of men, that at the time of the Assembly in 1875 ten (10) ministers were laboring in this Province; in 1876 eleven (11), and only eleven (11) at the present time. When the immigration and extension of old settlements and the beginning of new are considered, we must be falling greatly behind in our proportion of missionaries.

Manitoba, Sept., 1877. AMICUS.

Missionaries for Manitoba.—Special Request.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—Will you permit me through your columns, to notify all applicants for churches or stations in Manitoba, to meet with the Home Mission Committee on Monday next, the 8th October, within the Deacon's court room of Knox church, Toronto.

The Committee will begin its sessions on Monday evening, 1st October, at 7 p.m.

Yours truly, Wm. COCHRAN. Brantford, Sept. 22nd, 1877.

JAMES NEWBY, a negro newby, who went from New London to the West ten years ago, accompanied M. Jody and Sankey to Scotland. Since then he has studied for the Church of England ministry at London, and passed an examination before the bishops which prompted the bishop of London to say, "I would to God all our clergymen were like this young man." He has sailed for Africa to be Bishop Cusset's assistant.