

the liberal contribution which the Colonial Committee had agreed to make, and instructed the Convener to press the Committee to follow up the measure. When your Committee met in Jan'y a letter was read, which had been received from Mr. Bonar, intimating that Mr. Johnston had, in the mean time, declined the offer made to him, and suggesting the name of another party with whom the Committee, they thought proper, might open a correspondence. But "the Committee after lengthened deliberation came to the resolution to delay for the present taking any step in the matter." Only a few days after this meeting another letter was received from Mr. Bonar, stating that some of the difficulties which had formerly induced Mr. Johnston, to decline our proposal were now out of the way, and recommending us, if the situation had not been filled, to renew our correspondence with Mr. Johnston. The Convener acting on the instructions given him by the Committee in October, lost no time in communicating both with Mr. Johnston and the Colonial Committee, urging the appointment to be carried out with as little delay as possible, and the result is that Mr. Johnston has accepted the appointment, and expects to be released by the Presbytery of Ayr, from the pastoral charge of the congregation of New Cumnock, on the 11th of the present month, and will, as soon as possible, thereafter proceed to Canada, to enter upon the duties to which he has been called.

The Committee was very desirous of being able to present in this report, a full statistical view of the Home Mission Field throughout the Church, and made application to the different Presbyteries to furnish materials for such report. Only six of the Presbyteries have made any return to this request. It is surely necessary, if the providing of the means of grace to her destitute people, and the extension of the Church throughout the land, is to be an object of concern to the Church at large, that there be brought before her, from time to time, an accurate representation of the amount of existing destitution—of the progress made in supplying it, and of the means which are being employed in the various localities for the accomplishment of this great and glorious work. Such representations might be expected to awaken, throughout the Church, greater sympathies—to lead to more earnest supplications to the Lord of the harvest, to send forth laborers into his harvest, and to greater and more combined efforts to overtake the spiritual destitution of the country. This Church will assuredly have mistaken her calling, and cannot expect the continued blessing of heaven, should she ever forget, or cease to act upon the belief, that she is a missionary Church, and that she must never relax her efforts till she has extended the knowledge of salvation, and a stated dispensation of Gospel ordinances into every corner of the land, into which God gives her access. It is one of the results that the Committee contemplates from the labors of the Superintendent of Home Missions, that he will, from personal observation, present, from time to time, to the Church correct accounts of the spiritual destitution of the country, and give such suggestion as may lead to the adoption of the best method of supplying it. The Presbyteries that have sent reports of the missionary operations for the past year, are London, Hamilton, Toronto, Kingston, Cobourg and Brockville.

In the Presbytery of London there are nine missionary stations. One of them has been supplied by the settlement of the Rev. John Fraser. Another will soon have a pastor, the Rev. Thos. Macpherson. These seven stations, embracing a population of 3500 adherents of our Church, all require missionaries having the Gaelic language. Three of these stations are ready for settlement.

The Presbytery of Hamilton was able, with seven missionaries and catechists, to give partial supply to twenty-three stations during the last summer. Good accounts are given of the labours of the students, and there is a growing thirst for ordinances. The Niagara District presents a

field of calling for a peculiar and efficient instrumentality. The Presbytery made more effectual arrangements for the comfort and support of their missionaries.

The Presbytery of Toronto has given supply, within the year, to thirty-nine stations, ranging from three to one hundred and fifty miles from the city. The members, in ordinary attendance, are about 2700. There were twelve missionary catechists and two lay missionaries employed in summer. The stations contributed about £300 for the Home Mission Fund of the Presbytery. The larger number of these stations had only one diet of worship each Sabbath. There are pleasing features of encouragement, and in more than one district, refreshing manifestations of the descent of the dew of Hermon on the hills and in the valleys. Gaelic missionaries are much needed.

The Presbytery of Cobourg includes three stations ripe for settlement, and several mission stations, (probably eight.) The Presbytery has been unable to meet the demand for supply. All the settled ministers have devoted some time to the missionary field. The congregations of Cobourg, and Grafton, had ministers settled during the year.

In the Presbytery of Kingston, there are about 365 adhering families connected with seventeen stations, and other places might be taken up, if the men and means were available. The sum contributed during the year was about £150, partly raised among the stations, and partly from the regular congregations at their annual missionary meetings. Throughout the Presbytery, a greater thirst for the word, greater earnestness and corresponding improvement in life and conversation, give pleasing tokens of the Divine favour.

*Presbytery of Brockville.*—This Presbytery has reported, that two missionary labourers have been employed within the bounds during a part of the past year, and that the members of Presbytery have, according to their ability, attended to missionary work. The sum raised within the bounds for missionary purposes, amounts to £33. The report further states, that there are several localities on the outskirts of the bounds, to which, from want of means, they are unable to attend, which, if cultivated, might become excellent stations.

The Committee is aware, that in some of the other Presbyteries, there is a much greater destitution than in any of those above referred to; but in the absence of reports, it is impossible for the Committee to furnish to the Synod, the statistics of these localities. This information will, we trust, hereafter be furnished through the labors of your Superintendent of Home Missions. Something of the extensive destitution existing within the bounds of these Presbyteries, will be seen from their applications for missionary laborers.

In the six Presbyteries from which reports have been received, there are 102 missionary stations. The number of missionaries that labored for a longer or shorter period in these, was thirty-three; and there has been raised and expended, for conducting the missionary operations within these bounds, the sum of £872 5s. 3d. It would have been interesting to the Synod to have known how many mission stations in Canada have, to some extent, been supplied by our missionaries, and are looking to us for a further dispensation of ordinances. The Presbyteries of London, Hamilton, Toronto, Cobourg, and Kingston, have reported nine y-six stations within their bounds; and at the last distribution of missionaries, they made application for twenty-nine. Perth and Montreal, from which no returns have been given in, applied for fifteen missionary laborers: and from these data we infer, that there cannot be fewer than 150 missionary stations within the bounds of our Church.

The destitution in the Home Mission field, during the winter months, was truly distressing. In consequence of the almost universal suspension of the law that required from every preacher, who had been ordained by any of our Presbyteries, or admitted from other churches, to give a year's lab-

to your Home Mission, nearly all the preachers licensed during last summer, as well as the missionaries who had been received from other churches, were inducted into pastoral charges about the beginning of winter, at the very time when the students, who had been acting as catechists during the summer, were recalled to prosecute the studies at the college. The consequence was, that the Home Mission field was almost entirely forsaken. The Presbytery of Hamilton, which employs seven catechists during summer, was left without a single missionary; and some of the other Presbyteries were in no better condition. It is truly painful to think of this state of matters. Can the Church be doing her duty to Christ and to her people, when she leaves so large a portion of her adherents throughout the land, for so many months in the year, without a dispensation of ordinances? Is nothing to be done to remedy this evil? We feel persuaded that the Synod, when it takes this subject into serious consideration, will adopt some measure to prevent a like occurrence for the future. We would suggest, that pastors should be required to devote a larger portion of their time to missionary work, if this can be done without weakening the pastoral tie, and diminishing the resources of the Church. At all events, all the preachers licensed, or missionaries admitted from other churches after the meeting of Synod, should be placed at the disposal of the Home Mission Committee, till the close of the next College Session, and the Presbyteries prohibited from inducting any of them into pastoral charges till that period. This would secure a number of Home Mission laborers during the winter months. In the meantime, the missionaries might be permitted to accept calls, and the Presbyteries might be making arrangements for their induction, as soon as they were relieved from the duties in the Home Mission field. This arrangement would avoid some of the evils which were felt to be intolerable in the old law, and led, last year, to its entire suspension.

At the meeting of the Committee held in Toronto, on the 16th of April last, applications were made for missionaries for the summer half year from all the Presbyteries of the Church, except Brockville. Applications were made in all for 44 missionaries, at the same time last year, 38 were applied for, being an application for six more laborers this year than for the last, and, that notwithstanding, the number of vacant congregations that during the year have been supplied with pastors. This is an evidence how much the Lord is extending our Church, and opening up to us opportunities of usefulness throughout the land. To meet these applications for forty-four missionary laborers, your Committee had at their disposal eight ministers and preachers who had been laboring in various parts of the Church during the winter months, and twenty-seven students to be employed as catechists, amounting in all to thirty-five missionary laborers. Last year the number sent out was thirty-two, being six less than the number applied for, whereas the number sent out this year is nine less than the applications. Some of the friends of the Church last year, were beginning to think that we would soon have a surplus of missionary laborers, and that we might safely relax our efforts in the way of seeking to increase their number. But what is the result? with all the missionaries that have been sent to us from other Churches, and those that have been sent out from our own College during the past year, the demand is increasing more rapidly than the supply. Thus calling us to continued efforts and prayer, that the Lord of the harvest would send forth more laborers into His harvest. The Committee would remark, in conclusion, that the greatest deficiency is in missionaries leaving the Gaelic languages, and would suggest that a special effort should be made by ministers of Gaelic congregations to induce young men of suitable gifts and graces to give themselves to the work of the ministry, and to enter on the preparatory studies necessary to fit them for that work.