

devoted to the work of winning souls to Christ, but their natural talents should be cultivated to the utmost extent of which they are capable; and that for this purpose they should be required to take advantage of all the opportunities for improvement which the church can afford: yet, while this is my decided opinion—an opinion only gathering strength as the church and the world become better known to me. I have begun to examine this subject more closely, and to enquire, if occasions may not arise in the church, when she is bound to employ, in the service of her divine master, pious and talented young men, even although they may not yet have finished their course of preparatory study, which the church in ordinary circumstances justly requires. That such occasions may arise, will, I believe, be admitted by all; and I am firmly persuaded that such an occasion has arisen in that portion of Christ's visible church with which we are connected.

When lately engaged, along with yourself, as a deputation from the Synod to the congregations under the inspection of the Island Presbytery, I was really pained to see so great a destitution of ministerial labor. There were at the very least four meeting houses, in which respectable audiences might be gathered every Lord's day, but which enjoy only the occasional services of a minister of the gospel; and this has been their position for years, notwithstanding the brethren in the Island have endeavored to give them as large an amount of their labors as was in their power. It is true that these four congregations, with their separate meeting houses and sessions, were formerly under the pastoral care of only two ministers: but such appears to me to be the peculiarity of their locality, either arising out of their distance from one another, or their separation by wide arms of the sea, that they would require three pastors among them; and even this additional laborer would still leave to the ministers what I consider a large amount of labor and travel; and besides all this, I was persuaded that one or two preachers would find full employment in visiting stations and outposts, sowing the seed of the Word, and forming and building up churches to the glory of God the Father. Now, to accomplish these purposes we need men; and where are they to be found? And while I was gratified to see the order that obtained in these churches, and among the people,

considering the circumstances, I would not at all have been surprised to learn that many among them were careless and indifferent, and that another generation was growing up in their midst, more thoughtless and unconcerned about divine things than the present. I say not that such things are so, but I ask, could any thing else in these circumstances be expected? Religion is not a commodity that the natural man seeks after; and I am afraid there may be many who, through the blessing of God resting on his own ordinances, might be led to seek the way to Zion; but who, in their present unguided and untaught situation, are losing any little respect for sacred things they may have had, and who are becoming confirmed in their aversion and indifference to the truth as it is in Jesus. God grant it may not be so.

But what, it may be asked, is your plan by which this evil, which you so much deplore, may be remedied? I proceed, then, to submit a few thoughts on this subject, premising that I will not think it strange, though my mode of meeting this evil should be viewed as Utopian by you, or others more versant in such subjects, and better acquainted with the country and with the wants of a growing colony. Any remarks I make are based upon the idea, that it is better to have a partial provision, than that immortal souls should be left to perish for lack of knowledge. Our young men who are attending the Divinity Hall are chiefly employed in teaching during the recess.—Some of these young men are advanced in their theological studies. Now, in our present destitute condition, let the Synod license a few of the more advanced to preach the gospel. Let them be appointed to out-stations or congregations for a certain time, say two or three months. Let them be under the especial control and supervision of the respective Presbyteries in which they labor. Let the young men so employed give to the Presbyteries a regular and particular account of these labors. Let them also deliver those exercises to the Presbyteries which would have been required of them were they merely students at the Hall. Let them also attend the Hall when in session, and likewise all other classes required, until the curriculum is finished. These then would form the outlines of my very simple plan, leaving it to Presbyteries or Synodical committees to give them more definite