

It must be confessed that the accumulation of lands by the Church or any branch of the Church might become a public burden, and injurious to the State. Against such an abuse the State has a perfect right to protect itself, and the way is perfectly clear.

A distinction must be made between real estate held for the actual use of the Church in the public worship of God, and real estate held for revenue or speculation.

In respect to the former the Church, or any branch of the Church, in so far as she is true to the Gospel of the Son of God—must be held as God's representative here among men, and such property ought to be held sacred, and therefore, untaxed.

But in respect to the latter, that is to say, lands not required for actual use in the worship of God, but held for revenue and speculation, the Church in the holding such lands, to this extent, becomes a mere trading company, and is entitled to no more favour than any other person or company dealing in land or any other commodity.

When the Church departs from her spiritual functions, and becomes a dealer in lands, she leaves her own sphere, and intrudes into the sphere of Caesar, and must, to this extent, come under Caesar's rule.

Whether, and to what extent, such an abuse exists is a fair matter of inquiry. If there be such an abuse, or any danger of it, it is surely within the power of the honest and God-fearing men to find a remedy without the perpetration of a grievous wrong.

SUPPLY OF VACANT PULPITS.

BY THE REV. R. J. LAIDLAW.

The following is a proposed substitute for the Scheme for the Distribution of Probationers which was discontinued at last General Assembly in order to make way for some better scheme.

I.—In each Synod there shall be a Committee on the Supply of Vacant Pulpits.

II.—This committee shall consist of a Convener appointed by the Synod, together with the Home Mission Conveners of the several Presbyteries of the bounds.

III.—Arrangements for the supply of all vacancies within the bounds, other than the mission stations, shall be made through this committee; but the committee shall be at liberty to request vacant congregations to choose their own supply for one third of the time.

IV.—Vacant congregations shall, through the Home Mission Conveners of their respective Presbyteries, notify the Convener of their need of supply whether occasional or for an extended period, and may also submit the names of ministers preferred.

V.—Ministers desiring appointments shall send in their names and Presbyterian connection to the Convener of the committee, stating the time for which they wish appointments, and naming also the congregations to which they wish to be assigned when any special appointments are sought.

VI.—The committee shall be at liberty to apply for the occasional services of ministers in charge, who have made no application for appointments, but whose services may be required in vacant congregations.

VII.—When ministers in charge shall be assigned to occasional appointments, they shall apply to the committee for supply for their pulpits in their absence.

VIII.—With the concurrence of the congregation and the Presbytery of the bounds, a minister without charge shall be appointed to a vacancy for a continuous period not exceeding six months; but during this time the minister so placed may be appointed elsewhere as often as every third Sabbath, a substitute being secured, either by the congregation or the committee, to fill his place in his absence.

IX.—In making appointments the committee shall comply with the special request both of congregations and of ministers seeking appointments, in as far as this shall be found practicable and consistent with a due regard for the interests of all concerned.

X.—Appointments shall be given only to accredited ministers and licentiates of the Church.

XI.—When the committee shall be in doubt at any time as to the propriety of giving appointments, the case shall be referred to the Presbytery to which the applicant may belong.

XII.—The members of each Synodical Committee shall furnish information from time to time to their respective Presbyteries regarding the position of the Presbytery's vacancies; each committee shall also submit a half-yearly statement to the several Presby-

teries it represents, and shall render an annual report to Synod and through the Synod to the General Assembly.

Among the apparent advantages of this scheme are the following:

1. It brings Synods into closer connection with the actual life of the congregations within their bounds, and yet does not interfere with Presbyterian oversight.

2. It utilizes the experience and present services of the members of the Home Mission Committee without laying any new responsibility upon that Committee as a whole.

3. It provides a regular way by which ministers needing a change may be heard in vacant pulpits without either resigning their charges or resorting to any other inconvenient method of seeking a change.

4.—It gives small charges, and large and influential congregations alike, as wide and desirable a range of choice as if they had the whole securing of their own supply, and at the same time relieves their office-bearers of much embarrassing correspondence.

5. It makes no invidious distinction between settled ministers and ministers without charge.

6. It provides for assigning ministers without charge to congregations about to become vacant as well as to charges already vacant.

7. It makes the Presbytery, or in case of appeal, the higher courts (and not either the committee or the taste of congregations) decide the question as to a minister's privilege of exercising his gifts.

8. It provides for supplying congregations with continuous ministerial oversight, in accordance with the terms of an overture approved by the General Assembly of 1883, and yet does not disregard either the congregation's right to choose a pastor or the minister's right to be heard in other vacancies.

9. It provides for the fair distribution of difficult and delicate work affecting the well-being of the whole Church, but which under the former scheme was largely in the hands of one necessarily local committee.

10. It will tend to interest individuals, Presbyteries and Synods in the relation between pastor and people in a way that will go far toward solving difficult problems affecting the pastoral relation—problems which appear to be growing more and more in need of solution under the existing state of things.

11. It recognizes the unity of the Church, and the claim which every congregation and minister has upon the sympathy and support of the whole body.

12. It is more in accord with the genius of Presbyterianism than either the former Scheme or the present method of supply.

The above is submitted to the readers of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN in the hope that it may call forth such criticism as may be found of value in framing an overture on this important question.

NOTES FROM MHOW.

Mhow, one of the central stations of our Canadian mission, is beautifully situated on the Gambher river, only a few miles from the Vandhya Mountains. It has a population variously estimated at from 8,000 to 15,000. Since 1818 it has been occupied as a military station or cantonment by the British. There are four churches for the soldiers and other Europeans at the station, a Roman Catholic, a Church of England, a Methodist, and a Church of Scotland. The congregations are very small, with the exception of that attending the Church of England, where most of the soldiers worship.

Not much attention is given by any of these bodies to the natives.

Educational facilities in Mhow are very poor. There are a few small Hindoo schools taught in true Hindoo fashion. The scholars assemble in the porch of some private house, and, sitting on the ground floor swaying back and forth, they commit to memory their sacred writings. There is also a Parsee school, which is now in a languishing condition, where higher education is professed to be given. The school building is excellent, and, were there a competent staff of teachers, a large number of boys would attend, and this institution would become a centre of great influence.

Our own Church is the only one that has a mission among the natives. Since the mission has been established there has been gathered together a Christian community of thirty-five souls. Two boys' schools are being taught by the native Christians, the one in one of the suburbs with an attendance of thirty; the

other in the building used for a church with an attendance of twenty.

There is also a girls' school with an attendance of twenty-five, held in rented rooms of a bungalow on the Mission Compound, taught by the Misses Stockburg, who are rendering excellent service to the mission also as zenana workers. A nightly prayer meeting is held on the mission premises, at which all the native Christians are expected to attend. Every Thursday morning a distribution of rice is made to a number of poor people, and advantage is taken of their assembling to preach the Gospel to them.

On Sabbath morning a Sunday school is held in the church, superintended by Mr. Middleton, one of the preachers of the staff, and many natives gather at the doors and windows of the building, which is in the midst of the bazaar, attracted by the singing and the voice of the preacher. Most listen with respect, and sometimes a few are induced to enter and remain till the close of the service.

While the services are being held within, the traffic and business of daily life and work are going on without. Mhow, outside of the little church-going community, knows no Sabbath. Low-caste women, with their loads of filthy fuel on their heads, coolie men and boys with their burdens, ghair drivers with their bullock carts, Parsee merchants bent on trade, pass and repass, only glancing in for a moment as their attention is caught by the sound of singing or preaching.

It will take years of patient, persevering labour before much impression can be made on the mass of heathenism in Mhow. The people are so fettered by caste, so blinded by the Brahmins, and so conservative that it seems almost impossible to move them. But influences are slowly at work which are preparing the way, and, some day, when by contact with western civilization—by the spread of education which Indian youth is hungry for, caste bonds have been burned and old faiths shaken, the people will move in masses to Christ.

In connection with the mission, there is also a depository where Bibles and religious books and tracts in several dialects are kept for sale. A native colporteur has a stock of such books and tracts at the railway station, and endeavours to make sales to the passengers on the arrival of the trains.

Work is being carried on in several of the villages near Mhow by catechists who open schools and teach and preach as they find opportunity, the missionary from the central station occasionally visiting them and superintending their labours.

The work in the villages is, in many respects, the most inviting and encouraging. The missionary has no difficulty in securing attentive audiences, and the people are most anxious to have schools established among them. Thus the missionaries are endeavouring to leaven the mass of heathenism around them, many may be discouraged because of the apparent little progress, but let it not be so. We are labouring not for present results merely, but for time and eternity. Let it be ours to sow the seed, reap who may.

Mhow, Jan. 14th, 1885.

W. A. W.

WE club THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN and *Rural Canadian* at \$2 per annum. Already a large number of our readers interested in agricultural affairs have signified their desire to have the *Rural Canadian* along with THE PRESBYTERIAN; and we are still willing to enter the names of thousands of subscribers for both papers. This low clubbing offer places an excellent family paper and a first-class farm journal within the reach of every one, at a merely nominal price. Please mention this offer to your neighbours.

A PAPER read before the New York Medical Society at Albany lately, by Dr. F. N. Hammond, of Auburn, presented some very significant and important facts, showing an enormous growth in the use of opium in the United States. In 1840, about 20,000 pounds of opium were consumed, in 1880, 533,450 pounds. In 1868, there were about 90,000 habitual opium-eaters in the country; now they number 500,000. More women than men are addicted to the use of the drug. The vice is one so easily contracted, so easily practised in private, and so difficult of detection that it presents peculiar temptations, and is very insidious. The relief from pain that it gives, and the peculiar exaltation of spirits easily lead the victim to believe that the use of it is beneficial. Opium and chloral are to-day the most deadly foes of women.