

would form together one manageable charge; and they are fully ready to receive a minister.—The past services of such faithful young men as Messrs. Swinton, Alexander, McLaren, and Murray, have been duly appreciated. The earnestness and the skilful propriety with which the praises of God were sung in these localities, as well as in those of Inverness, formed a pleasing feature as an index of pious feeling, and a proof of congregational organization. Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes also appear to have been successfully conducted.

In St. Sylvester and Leeds the number of families adhering to us cannot be fewer than one hundred and twenty. But there are out fields which must not be overlooked.

There are Frampton, Broughton, and Kennebec road, in all five stations at least, and upwards of one hundred avowedly Presbyterian families, but scattered at varied distances over a large extent of country. In connexion with a fixed pastor at Leeds and St. Sylvester, a lay missionary or catechist for those appendages, would be of great value. On the Kennebec road, the Rev. Simon Fraser, now of McNab, laboured for some years, and our friend, Mr. Angus Macintosh, now in Scotland, in one of his zealous mission tours, first brought to light the existence of settlements of Presbyterian families at the other places, who had been many years without the knowledge or the spiritual aid of the Church whose children they were. In regard to temporal support for a gospel ministry, there will be, as there has been, some difficulty; but there can be no question as to the call of duty addressed to us, to look after those children of our people and of our Church, now scattered abroad.

On Monday, 22nd, I went on to Inverness, where I preached that day and next day in the same place, and at the same hour, to congregations of between eighty and a hundred. On both occasions, a conference was held after sermon, and every encouragement held out to the people to keep together, and to wait for more regular supply. The number of families in Inverness belonging to us, professedly, cannot much exceed fifty, and they are for the most part Gaelic. To shew their real desire to obtain a minister, they have built a nice manse in a convenient situation. My two days' intercourse with these excellent people, was of the most pleasing kind. Much intelligence and warm hearted piety met my observation. I was greeted with real christian affection, and left them with the full impression, that a pious young minister, having the Gaelic language, would find in this township a most promising field of useful labour. In looking into the libraries of the families with whom I stay, I am often delighted to find in their proper places of influence, some of the standard works of our most venerated authors; and here, I found that several pious collectors from the United States had given extensive circulation to new and cheap editions of the works of the Flavels, and the Charlocks, and the Baxter's, and the Howes, of the justly venerated Christian authorship of other days; and, moreover, that these visits of young men, most of them aspirants to the ministry in the Presbyterian Churches of America, had been in other respects pleasing and salutary. Here also I found some promising specimens of attainment both in family and congregational singing. Need I add, that both in Leeds and Inverness, there is much physical beauty to meet the traveller's eye; while the "falls of Inverness" reminded me of similar scenery in other lands.—Disappointed was I to be told, that the river on which these "falls" were, was not called the Ness (as I had anticipated,) but the "Thames." This, however, did not take from the beauty of the scene.

Richmond and Melbourne are seventy miles from Montreal—nearly half way to Quebec—on the line of the great Railway now in progress from Montreal to Portland in Maine, U. S. They are on the River St. Francis, a beautiful stream,

of considerable flow, and admirably adapted for public works. A better station for an able and zealous ministry there cannot be. Short as was my stay in the district, and unfavourable as the circumstances of attending my visit were, I saw enough to satisfy me that here the Presbyterian Church of Canada ought to take up a position in right good earnest; that under a pious and popular ministry, conflicting and opposing elements will very soon be consolidated into one compact mass; that the warm and hearty good-will of the people will soon prove a thorough match for all the golden bribes so readily set forth by the dwarfish genius of a blasted residuaryism; that the spirit of our Church, if truly evoked, and her appliances brought to bear, is the very thing that suits the land; and that the only formidable bar in the way of success is—the insensibility of our Church to her real glory and greatness.—It delights me to think that the Presbytery of the bounds is fully alive to these views of the matter.

I spent one Sabbath in this interesting locality, and preached four times on the Lord's day and Monday. To the friends in Danville, Richmond and Melbourne, I am under obligations for their great kindness. Their pleadings for a resident evangelical ministry shall not soon fade from my memory. God grant that such an invaluable blessing may soon be enjoyed; and then shall the spiritual graces of the lovely district more than vie with its physical beauties and commercial capabilities.

Had it been in my power to have devoted at least one month to missionary labours in the eastern townships, I might have obtained some idea of the extent of the field and the religious condition of its inhabitants. A whole season would be needed to do anything like justice to such a work; and yet I know not a missionary tour which, if properly prosecuted by a minister of Christ of due experience and energy, would be of more avail to the cause of Christ and the interests of his Church in this western world. The superiors of these townships are, properly speaking, the shareholders of the American Land Company of London, and there are among them, and occupying stations of influence, those who have felt the power of the truth in their own minds, and know the value of religion to the well-being of a community, even in a temporal point of view. Will no apostolic man be sent out from the capital of the British empire, who, with the weight of influence which that Company could command, and the far loftier influence of zealous and enlightened christianity in his heart, in his sermons, and in his whole career, would devote six months to an enterprise which would almost to a certainty issue in the permanent "lifting up of a standard" for the people inhabiting one of the finest portions of the habitable globe? O that the Presbyterian Church in England would think of this, and, making common cause with us in Canada, send us, for a season, one of their ablest champions of the faith, accompanied by one of their pious lay members,—say a Nisbet, or a Barbour, or a Gillespie. "The thing would pay"—ah, that it would—not, it may be, in the sordid dross of this world, although there is gold in that land too—but in the durable riches of the kingdom that cannot be moved. And, oh! that the Free Church of Scotland would rouse to her duty as the noble herald of peace and salvation to many lands, and first and foremost to those whose inhabitants speak her language, and where the prestige is wholly and absolutely in her favour.

Toronto, Jan. 25, 1853.

R. B.

ON THE ELDERSHIP.

From Lectures addressed to a Congregation.

NO. II. DUTIES OF THE OFFICE.

II. There is a second department of duty peculiar to the Elder; the consideration of which is highly calculated to magnify the office in our esteem.

The very terms that are employed when elders are addressed or spoken of in the Scriptures, strikingly bring under our eye the peculiar duties to which they are set apart. They are enjoined by Paul to feed the Church of God. Peter almost supplies an echo to the injunction when he says, "Feed the flock of God—not of constraint, but willingly." From which mode of expression we infer that the Elder is expected to exhibit the tender care, the unwearied patience, the vigilant inspection of the shepherd.—He must keep watch over the flock—sound the note of alarm when danger threatens—be intimately acquainted with every individual member, and feed them with knowledge and sound understanding. Substantially the same truths are conveyed in those passages where elders are represented as "watching for souls,"—as taking the oversight thereof—as made overseers by the Holy Ghost. They imply that it is their duty closely to examine—carefully to inspect—as if the Judge were standing at the door, and the great white throne were before them; to possess an intimate knowledge of the names, nature, wants, weaknesses, general and specific infirmities of the little flock;—in short, to follow in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd himself, who calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out, and who hath declared with respect to them, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me." But to come to particulars.

1. It is the duty of Elders to visit the congregation. He would be deemed a careless merchant who was ignorant of the clerks in his establishment, and the description of the goods that stock his shelves; or a careless commander who was ignorant of the character and capabilities of his men; or a careless schoolmaster or shepherd who was ignorant of the condition and circumstances of those entrusted respectively to their charge. On the same principle he may be looked upon as a careless Elder—as one who cannot be said to rule well—who remains in profound ignorance of everything connected with those priceless souls, to whom he has been summoned to act as an overseer. His knowledge, of course, cannot be obtained without personal intercourse. Elders and people must come face to face in order to know one another. With other duties to attend to, it would have been altogether unreasonable, however, to expect each elder to be personally acquainted with each individual connected with a congregation of average dimensions. Hence the importance of a division of labour, and a considerable corps of efficient elders in order to this being realized. Unless there be a number of elders, this dividing of the congregation into sections cannot take place; and consequently the visitation for which we contend, must be in a large measure neglected. There is not to us a lovelier spectacle on this side heaven; it forms, indeed, a picture of our Father's house, where there are many mansions, than to see a flourishing congregation partitioned off into so many distinct compartments, with an elder that rules well, in active superintendence of each. He regards it as his house, which it becomes him to set and keep in order; its inmates, as like the members of his family, in whose welfare he is bound to feel a more than ordinary interest. He has twenty families or so committed to his care. Twice a year or oftener, as he finds opportunity, does he break bread amongst them from house to house. With roll book in hand, the names of parents and children are carefully registered.—The period of each visit and any interesting incidents that may have transpired, are noted down. The superintendents of each section come periodically together, and report how matters are progressing in their respective enclosures. By these periodical meetings they are led to look, not every one to his own things, but every one also to the things of others. The affairs of each are attended to, while an interest in all is maintained. Oh! there is nothing better