

## The duty of the Town-Churches towards the Congregations in the Country.

THE fund for aiding the weaker congregations of the United Presbyterian Church in the elevating of their ministers' stipends to a minimum, in the first instance, of £120, exclusive of a manse, with the prospective increase of the sum to the higher minimum of £150, must continue mainly to depend, as it has hitherto done, for its steady and adequate support upon the wealthier members of the denomination, and the larger and more opulent congregations in our cities and great towns. The two metropolitan presbyteries, and that of Paisley and Greenock alone, contributed, in 1851, seven-twelfths of the whole amount. The smaller churches receiving supplement are required to make corresponding, and often arduous, efforts, to meet the donations of the Synod, and are thus disqualified from giving much beyond a formal compliance, with the recommendation to make an annual collection towards the central fund.

The duty, then, of furnishing the means to meet the existing engagements, and still further extend the benefits of the Scheme for Supplementing Small Stipends, rests chiefly upon those societies, whose wealth and numerical strength enable them easily to give the largest stipends in the body to their own ministers, and bear, besides, the burdens of the small and poor congregations. Failing this, the alternative is the gradual decline and ultimate extinction of the fund altogether, and along with that the "quenching of a coal in Israel." In very many localities where it ought to be cherished and inflamed; the impoverishing of an under-paid ministry yet more than ever, and the repressing of the hopes of candidates for the sacred office, that they will be secured in employment and adequate support in our Church, as well as in the other evangelical denominations in the land, who let it be remarked, are all moving in an upward direction as to ministerial sustenance. But what is duty usually, even at the present time—certainly in the end—advantage too. Let the large churches, located in the great seats of population and the emporiums of trade and commerce, let the societies having merchant-princes, and millionaires amongst their members, look to it, and they will find that both their numbers and their opulence have often flowed into them from the persons of the young of the supplemented congregations in the country village or rural town; nay, that the most attractive and successful ministers in the cities have themselves been first located in such places, and been transferred, after their experience had been acquired as the pastors of a poor people, to be honoured instruments of upholding the denomination in high places. Now, what would be the consequence of allowing two-thirds of the weaker churches to go down, as we they must go if this supplementing fund, which has already excited hopes and given to dependence, be neglected? Migration to the cities will necessarily go on. Of the 30 members added in 1854 to the 72 supplemented churches reporting their accessions, but 30 have been removed by death or otherwise. This attests the overflowing of the village churches into the towns and cities the congregations at large. They must allow up our youth who can find no congenial pursuits, or scope for their activities, their birth-place, and who are constantly in search of employment where they can find it, or others' success. But if they have not been trained in our Sabbath-schools, and ad-

mitted to our fellowship while at home, but have, on the contrary, early attachments to other denominations, will they not go to swell the ranks of these same parties, when they reach the city and progress in life? *U.P. Record.*

## THE CHURCH IN THE COLONIES.

### The Existing Vacancies. How are they to be Supplied?

Those who were present at the last meeting of Synod will not readily forget the solemn scene which accompanied its opening, nor will the earnestness of the special outpouring of prayer to God for help in the afflictive circumstances in which the Church was placed, soon pass from their remembrance. A solemn awe seemed to be upon all, and a sense of being in God's hand, a feeling of entire dependence upon Him influenced all, while one of the fathers of the Church addressed the Synod, and another, who had long as a co-presbyter associated with some of the departed brethren, led the devotions and under the influence of strong feeling appealed with deep earnestness to the Hearer and Answerer of Prayer, to overrule their deliberations for good, and to render these afflictions a source of good, and to bless and prosper the Church. If that deep sense of entire reliance upon our Maker continue to influence Ministers and people, it will be well for us. Feeling then this, and looking to the Great Head of the Church for His blessing, active, energetic measures should be forthwith taken to endeavour to supply the existing vacancies and to build-up Zion. One desirable step will be a combined effort so to set forth their duty, that parents may be found ready to devote their children and that young men may be found willing to consecrate themselves to the office of the ministry. But, important as this is for the ultimate extension of our Church, a more prompt relief is necessary. The Synod decided wisely on a special appeal by the Moderator to the Church of Scotland. We are persuaded that a faithful, earnest appeal from our Synod, setting forth our necessities, exhibiting our destitution, and detailing our actual circumstances, would be productive of good. All publicity should be given to it, and care should be taken to secure its appearance in the *Home Record*. It is also matter of grave consideration, whether the Commission of Synod should not empower a delegate again to follow up this appeal by personal influence and explanation. It is matter of reflection whether such an effort should be made now, or after the next meeting of Synod, when our temporal matters may perhaps be in a more settled state. We have often thought lately that the Canadian Church is brought too little under the notice of the Ministers and Probationers of the Church in Scotland. Even occasional letters from individual Ministers would do good, but it has occurred to us that an annual statement from our Presbyteries, of the position of the Church within their bounds, of the openings for usefulness and extension, would prove profitable for local circulation, and would be eminently beneficial in attracting attention to the Province. The position of the people is not now what it once was—our country is fast becoming populous—settlements are dense—villages and towns are rising with wonderful rapidity and material comforts are abundant. Even temporally then the position of many a minister, with a family, may be bettered by a removal from Scotland to this rising country, where the opportunities of placing his children in a position for attain-

ing a respectable livelihood are so numerous. Our Province is so far advanced that it holds its own place with the nations in the World's gathering for the exhibition of industry and art. How important then is it that a land, whose resources are so great and whose future is so brilliant, should be occupied by the ministers of the Word! Correct views of Canada are now more generally obtaining, and we do trust that the special appeal from the Moderator may prove beneficial. Such a paper, carrying with it the weight of our Synod, will receive attention, and even already we were rejoiced to hear of one Gaelic Parish Minister, whose attention was turned to Canada by reading a letter in the *Home Record* from one of the fathers of our Church and who may probably settle in the Province.—*Presbyterian.*

### Statistical Returns.

Information as to the extent of the membership of our Church, and the number of our adherents, as well of those gathered into congregations, as of those yet unprovided with spiritual ordinances, would prove of much service. Were such an ecclesiastical census once accurately obtained, the annual returns would prove interesting, useful and instructive. Now telling of advance and progress, and stimulating to exertion, here showing removals by death, and again chronicle additions to the roll of members from the ranks of the young or the indifferent; such details would mark the history of the Church. In order to effect this, a Committee of the Synod might be charged with the duty, and their annual report would be looked for with interest. It might include a statement of the sums contributed to each congregation to the support of the Pastor and to the various Schemes of the Church, and to Church or Manse erection. The exhibiting for instance, of such facts as those relating to the increase in Church membership of certain of our congregations, recently referred to in our columns, would not fail to prove encouraging to the whole Church. Henceforth our Church must be in the main a voluntary Church, and therefore the present is the proper time for considering what measures will best conduce to the maintenance of her efficiency, and evince her adaption to the change in her circumstances. Amongst these measures, at some of which we have already glanced, and at others design to glance from time to time, we consider this matter of *Statistical Returns* important, and trust to see a Committee charged by the next Synod with their collection, and cordially supported by the Church to the efficient performance of their duties.—*I*

### Commission of the Synod of Canada.

The Commission of Synod met according to appointment on the 3rd of October at Kingston. There were present Doctors Macfar, Barclay, Williamson and Skinner, Messrs. Urquhart, George, William Bain, Mowat, Macdonnell, MacLennan, Burnet and McKerras, Ministers, and Judge Malloch and Mr. Mowat, Elders. Professor Williamson was appointed Moderator, and, in the absence of the Clerk through severe illness, the Rev. Mr. Mowat was chosen to act as Clerk.

An application from the congregation at Litchfield, to the Colonial Committee, for aid in paying off the debt on their Church having been laid before the Commission for its approval, it was agreed to remit it to the Presbytery