

lot with the Irish brethren. Mr. Taylor proved to be a first-class man; he was an acquisition. While he lived he remained with his new masters, and his son is now one of the best missionaries in the field.

As in the history of most other missions, it was some time before fruit began to be reaped. That there was anxiety for visible success both by the missionaries themselves and by the people at home may be taken for granted. Possibly there was more than justifiable anxiety at home before the desire was gratified. In time, and not an unreasonably long time, fruit began to appear. From that date onward the progress has been most satisfactory. When converts began to come out and publicly profess Christianity a new difficulty with a twofold aspect presented itself. It affected the missionaries themselves, and it affected the converts. It aroused such opposition at the hands of the relatives of the converts that in some cases the missionaries were almost driven from their posts, indeed, one station that was taken up had to be abandoned for years because a place of residence or a spot to build one could not be procured for love or money. The opposition was a serious thing for the converts. That they were ostracized by their neighbours is easy to understand. We understand it all the easier, as nearer home we are no strangers to that kind of treatment. Missions among the French of Quebec have the same tale to tell. A line of policy had to be adopted to meet such an emergency if the mission was to go on permanently. Tracts of land were purchased and Christian colonies were established. First one was tried, and, when it was found that the plan would work, others at various times and in different localities were started. It seemed a novel thing for the Mission Board in Ireland to become landlords in India, but necessity demanded it, and, when it did, what is in a name? Homes and security were provided for the converts, not only so, the inexperienced were taken out of the way of temptation, a temptation so strong that it is difficult for us living in a Christian land to comprehend the full force of it. In these colonies villages have sprung up which differ only from other villages in India in that the heathen element is eliminated, or rather it was not allowed to enter, and a higher degree of comfort is attained. The village has its native church, and the aim is, and in several cases it is already a fact, to have a native pastor as well. These villages are centres of light to the region around. They are named sometimes after a missionary, as Wallacepur. Sometimes after an Irish donor who built the church for them at his own expense, as Careypur. Mr. Wallace was one of the early missionaries, a wise and devoted man. Mr. Carey is a gentleman who lives near Toome, County Antrim, and his name will long be remembered by the Church for good deeds at home as well as in India.

The following extract from the last page but one of the volume will show somewhat of the progress made: "In 1861 there were just seventy-four communicants; in 1871, 133; in 1881, 248; and at the end of 1889, 390. The entire Christian community, including enquirers under instruction and children too old to be baptized, except on profession of faith, numbered in 1861, 291; in 1871, 532; in 1881, 1,808, and in 1889, 2,149. During the last five years there have been 698 baptisms, including over 200 adults, and after deducting losses by death, removal and other causes, the number of baptized members of the native church has increased from 1,294 in 1884 to 1,679 in 1889, or by thirty per cent.; while communicants have increased from 293 to 390, or by thirty-three per cent. The Christian community in connection with any one of the three principal stations—Anand, Borsad and Ahmedabad—is larger than the whole Christian community in connection with the mission in 1861, twenty-eight years ago; and at Swat again there is a fourth Christian community nearly as numerous as the whole Christian community was in 1861.

We are unwilling to close this article without a word or two respecting the Conveners of the Foreign Mission. On them as a matter of course much depends as to the successful and pleasant working of those that are in the field. There have been three successive Conveners, or rather four, as there are two joint-Conveners at present. If the Church was fortunate in the missionaries that were in their employ, and it was, it was no less so in the Conveners. The character of the Conveners had no doubt much to do in determining the kind of the missionaries that were selected from time to time. Dr. James Morgan was the founder of the mission, and he watched over it for thirty years with a father's love, with a faith that never wavered, and a wisdom that seldom has been surpassed. Dr. Edgar was for a time associated with him in the Conventership, but he was not the father of the mission as Dr. Morgan was. Then came Dr. Fleming Stevenson, of whom not much needs to be said, as he was so widely known in the Christian world. He brought to bear on the work a sanctified enthusiasm that was little less than inspiration, as well as a rare literary culture. The present Convenir, the Rev. W. Park, this year Moderator of the General Assembly, combines in some degree the merits of both his predecessors, it may be with a little less intensity than either as regards that which distinguished each. He has, however, according to Mr. Jeffery, and we are prepared to believe it, a higher degree of the organizing faculty than either had. For two or three years past there has been a joint-Convenir, as we have seen, Mr. Park having found the work too heavy. The gentleman associated with Mr. Park is Mr. D. G. Barbour, who for many years occupied a high and lucrative office in the Civil Service of India. This arrangement has worked well.

We may add that the India Mission is not the only foreign field worked by the Irish Presbyterian Church. There is a vigorously-worked China Mission, and there is a Jewish Mission. The principal stations of the latter are at Damascus in Syria, and Hamburg in Europe.

### CANDIDATING.

MR. EDITOR,—The conviction has of late been growing upon many in the Church, that our present system of supplying vacant congregations is not quite satisfactory, and might be improved. Firm as we are in the belief that Presbyterian Church polity is, as a system, superior to all others, we must not therefore conclude that in all its details it is beyond criticism. It is one of the glories of the system that it fully recognizes the "rights of the people." It is "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people." It secures the fullest possible liberty and protection to the individual, consistent with the supremacy of law and the unity of the Church. This is one reason why Presbyterianism has ever been hated by despots and tyrants, whether in Church or State. King James I. said at the Hampton Court Conference "Ye are aiming at a Scot's Presbytery, which agrees with monarchy as well as God and the devil." By monarchy James of course meant his own will, which was tyranny. "There was not," said Charles I., "a wiser man since Solomon than he who said, 'No bishop, no king.'" It was doubtless a wise saying. No bishop in the Church, no tyrant on the throne. If it is not granted that Church power rests in a self-perpetuating hierarchy it is not likely to be granted that civil power rests in hereditary kings and nobles. Religious and civil liberty usually go together. The Presbyterian Church has ever been a strong advocate of both, and therefore it allows the people to choose, elect or "call" their own minister.

The object of this paper is to call attention to some existing irregularities or abuses in the Church, which, it is believed, are directly traceable, not to the "calling" system, but to an imperfect form of that appendage of it known by the unsavoury name of "candidating." These irregularities we believe it is within the power of Presbyteries in the exercise of their regular functions to greatly lessen if not altogether remove.

First of all it is a well-known fact that ministers not unfrequently remain in congregations long after the circumstances demanded a change, invariably to the detriment of all concerned. Why is this? Very often it is because of the utter uncertainty on the part of the minister as to whether, if once he resigns his present charge, he will ever be able to secure another, or even secure such employment as will be an adequate means of support. He is able and willing to work, but the only work the Church guarantees him is a precarious candidating expedition. Is it any wonder that ministers who naturally dislike "tramping" should sometimes exhibit extraordinary "staying powers," especially if they are old and have families?

Then sometimes appears the somewhat unseemly spectacle of a minister duly settled in a charge in which lies his allotted work fooling away a large part of the time eagerly seeking work elsewhere. He is now serving his people, and they in their turn are supporting him, not from choice and mutual love and obligation as before, but from sheer necessity. The results can only be evil and the anomalous condition is quite inconsistent with the genius of Presbyterianism. I do not say there are many such cases in the Church, but I believe they are on the increase, owing to the restless and critical spirit of the age. Can the Church not so facilitate the dissolution of the pastoral relation that the minister may be free to resign a charge without the risk of becoming a pauper, when he is satisfied that his usefulness therein is at an end?

Now look at the state of things when a congregation has become vacant. Practically the people are "as sheep without a shepherd," and, when there may be wolves and "dogs without," this is not desirable. All are therefore anxious for an early settlement, except possibly a few who may be charmed with the cheapness and variety of the weekly supply. How is this much-desired end to be attained? The Church—I think we have as good a claim to this expression as our Anglican brethren—will not take a man and place him irrespective of the will of the people. This, whatever it may be, is not Presbyterianism which, subject to certain conditions, cheerfully accords to the people the right to choose or elect those who are "to have the rule over them." But, and "here's the rub," how are the people to become sufficiently acquainted with the ministers to be prepared to make a suitable choice? They get leave from Presbytery to hear candidates or probationers; each on one or more Sabbaths as may be convenient. The first aspirant comes and preaches what he thinks is one of his best sermons. He may have had scores of others the people would have appreciated much more, because better suited to their capacity and taste. At all events he is "heard," and in all probability it may be said "That was a very good sermon, and I believe he is a fine man; but, well he is not perfect; there may be better in the Church. We will hear another." The other comes, and sure enough he is better-looking, is more affable and polite, and is an equally good preacher. "He will suit us better, especially the young people." But now a morbid curiosity is awakened, and the general feeling is that "since we are about it we might as well secure the very best we can get, for remember once we make a choice we must be satisfied with it. We will hear some more. The very fact of their coming to preach implies that they are willing to settle if called." Thus it goes on until a list of perhaps sixty or more candidates is exhausted. At last they decide to call and at considerable trouble go through the various steps, when, lo, the call is declined! The mountain travailed and brought forth—a mouse. Some are now angry; some are discouraged; some become more

indifferent; others are inwardly glad for they will have further scope for their splendid powers of discrimination; all are more or less confused. They never thought of how the minister liked them when the "wooing" was going on. At all events they are as far from a settlement as ever.

But suppose the minister called accepts. Why was he chosen in preference to say the first candidate heard? Was he a better preacher, a better pastor, a better man? Do you mean to say that you can decide this important matter by hearing a man preach two or three sermons specially prepared, and perhaps shaking hands with him? The man called may have been a superior man, but my point is this, that for all the people really know to the contrary, he may have been in every respect an inferior man. In many cases he is preferred because he is a better courtier, or a better talker, not to say a better joker. It is not mere "talkers" we want in the pulpits. We have enough of them in the pews. We want men, scholars, theologians, preachers, pastors, workers.

Again, what is the moral effect of the present system upon the minister? Does it not tend to destroy single-hearted consecration to the Master's work, and to foster a spirit of self-seeking and worldly-mindedness? It is natural for a minister—for he is human—to seek the best position available. Why so many applications for a hearing in a vacant church in Toronto, when the mission fields of Muskoka and the North-West are suffering for lack of men? Is it from a fear that by following the Master into an out-of-the-way mission field and "enduring hardness as a good soldier," one thereby loses prestige in the Church, and lessens his future prospect of a call under the superficial candidating system? At all events the fact savours of self-seeking. Why, moreover, so many applications for nearly all desirable vacancies, from settled pastors? Whilst it may in part be due to a spirit of restless ambition for new and larger fields of labour, it is doubtless in many cases due to a kind of instinct in the minister, which, in view of ominous indications of a possible rupture in the near future, prompts him to avoid, if at all possible, that veritable "Slough of Despond"—the probationers' list.

What is the remedy for all this, if any? I will again state some of the evils: 1. Pastors remaining too long in charges. 2. Congregations remaining too long vacant, often because of the super-abundance of applicants. 3. Inability to choose intelligently from a mere casual and superficial acquaintance. 4. The tendency to induce a lack of conservatism in the ministers. 5. The anomaly of ministers in charge seeking a charge. 6. The reproach of "candidating."

The remedy seems to be in a fuller exercise of the powers and functions of Presbytery. Is it not the duty of Presbyteries to supply every capable minister in the Church with work and to supply every congregation in the Church with the ministry of the Word? The formation of pastorates would then take care of itself. The above duty is at present attempted to be done, but we claim that it should be more thoroughly attempted, and more thoroughly done. In reality a minister now out of a charge is not given work, he is simply sent to look for it; vacant congregations are not given the ministry of the Word, they are simply asked to critically listen to fine sermons. The improvement suggested is simply this: Let Presbyteries, according to their best judgment, appoint unemployed ministers to vacant charges for a period of, say, not less than three and not more than twelve months, duly instructing them to discharge, while thus employed, all the functions of a regular pastor, and requiring that they receive a salary proportionate to the ability of the congregation, or to its former practice, and in no ordinary case less than the minimum amount. Presbyteries, as a rule, know their men and their congregations better than the people do and they are surely as subject to divine guidance. They would therefore know what men to send to particular fields. This would of course still leave vacant congregations free to call any duly qualified minister at any time, whether already settled or not. It only curtails the liberties of settled pastors by making it impossible as well as unnecessary for them to seek new fields until they have resigned their old ones.

The following reasons are given in support of the foregoing recommendation: 1. A minister would feel free to resign a charge when the circumstances demanded it, knowing that there was work for him elsewhere adequate for support. 2. It would do away with the incongruity of seeking another charge when pledged to whole-heartedness in the work of that already held. 3. It would almost entirely remove the features so disagreeable to ministers, of "candidating," of being tested only by a few sermons, and of constant unrest and homelessness. 4. It would do away with the great expense of constant travelling. 5. It would give a man an opportunity to do work that would fairly test his ability; and it would give congregations an opportunity to ascertain the pastoral and executive, as well as preaching powers, of the minister before calling. 6. The congregational machinery would be kept in better running order, the spirit of liberality would not be allowed to decline, and more good generally would result. 7. It would practically do away with vacancies and their attendant evils.

But some may object, "Why this is a regular 'itinerancy'." Not quite. It is simply a "real probation" for both ministers and congregations, instead of a merely nominal one. If it is an itinerancy it is one in exact accord with Presbyterian polity. Moreover, much of the strength of Methodism lies in its itinerancy, however faulty in theory. Not unfrequently the truth lies somewhere between antagonistic systems, or in a union of them. Presbyterians may commit far graver mistakes than to appropriate a modified "itinerancy," as the preparatory step towards the formation of their regular pastorates. Such a union would embody the strong features of both systems, and would be free from many of their objections, weakness and defects. I will close this paper, already too long, with a quotation from Prof. Witherow's well-known little book, "The Apostolic Church. Which is it?" "It is one among the many recommendations of the Presbyterian Church polity, that it possesses within itself a purifying and reforming power, by which, while always preserving the Scriptural and essential principles of the system, it can alter any arrangement that experience has proved in its operation not to be productive of good."

J. MCKINNON.

Roslin, O., October 25, 1890.