

## REMIT ON STUDENT'S GRADUATING.

By W. G. W. FORTUNE.

I READ with relish the article by Dr. Robertson, in a recent number of the PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW. A few lines from one who has gone west to do frontier work, may not be out of place, and may, we hope, add some weight to what has been said.

Regarding the benefits, which accrue to the graduate missionary, there seem to be no room for doubt. We all had our theories during our college course. At times we deplored the apparent deadness of congregations, and found fault with the *modus operandi* of the pastors of such. We longed to test our theories, and wake to life those who were either dead or asleep. But our theories were then untried. Some of them when put into practice were abandoned, because of their impracticability. Such mistakes when made in the mission field are not so costly as when made in a large congregation.

Moreover, the student who is in a mission station, for six months, does not feel the responsibility which devolves upon the settled pastor or ordained missionary. He knows that if he errs in any way he will soon be out of the field, and next summer may look for a fresh scene of labor. The people knowing that such is the case, will put up with a great deal more from him, than they will from an ordained man.

Let men be sent out for a year, and when they realize their future, to a certain extent, depends upon the verdict rendered at the end of that time, they will be more judicious and discreet, and better able to manage a large congregation. Hence as a means of discipline, a year in the field as an ordained missionary would be invaluable.

If men will leave for the States, rather than obey the courts of the church, we shall lose but little. Selfishness forms too large an element in their compound for them to be of much real value.

Some take exception to the church making it compulsory to labor in the mission field. Why are they not consistent and take exception to the compulsory attendance on lectures? We do not find Scripture authority for a *fixed period* of attendance upon lectures, either in Arts, Science, or Theology. The Church, convinced that it would be in the interest of the people, and also of the ministers, that there should be a certain standard of proficiency, legislated accordingly, and no one demurs. When the course has been extended in the past, the students fell in with the change, and numbers of us in the work would like to take an additional year.

If the church has the right to compel men to study so many years, or pass so many prescribed examinations, she has the right to add a year's work, as a practical test of their fitness as pastors.

Appeals for volunteers have been made from year to year, by our worthy superintendent, but very few respond. Men have been written to personally offering them desirable fields. As Convener of the H.M.C. of Brandon Presbytery. I have written to several, but no response, save "thank you for remembering me."

Some may object to the Remit saying: "that where a congregation unites upon a man as their pastor, the church, by passing such legislation, is interfering with a call from God. Let us look at the question fairly. Is every man who enters the ministry called of God? No. Is every call from a congregation, a call from God? No. Is every call from a congregation, a call from God, when the one called has signified his willingness to become their minister? If you answer yes, then you have some hard problems to solve.

1 Does God call a man to two or three congregations at the same time? for sometimes that number have been in a man's hand at the one time, he having signified his willingness to become the pastor to each of them.

2 Why some men are forced to leave a charge inside of one year or two years, on account of lack of

judgment in pulpit utterances, or inefficiency in the supply given?

3 How men almost invariably break their promises made to smaller congregations, and accept the larger and more lucrative?

Did congregations *know the men thoroughly* and were ministers *absolutely unselfish* then every call might be said to come from God, but it would be extremely dangerous to say at present that such is the case.

My contention is, that if the General Assembly saw fit to pass such a measure, it would much more likely be a call from God to the young men graduating, than a call from a single congregation. The Assembly takes a view of the whole work of the Church; they know where there are the greatest needs; they realize the only source of efficient supply; and in saying, for the cause of Christ's young men you must man these fields for a time they are likely to be the medium, through whom God calls men to the work. There is no selfishness in such a decision. They are not circumscribed in their view. They are acting in the best interests of the Church and humanity and these cannot always be predicated of the candidate for a call.

Moreover such legislation would abolish the abominable practice to which some resort of recommending proteges of theirs, young, untried men, who have been members of their congregations. Instead of advising these men to spend a few years in mission work, they write to desirable vacancies, and extol their qualities, when they have yet to prove they are capable of filling such responsible positions. Besides, it would remove the stigma from the men who have gone West. In the name of a number of my brethren now in the West, I protest against the prejudice, existing against men, who at the sacrifice of lucrative salaries, have entered the mission field for a time to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." These men are scholarly, and fluent speakers, and so far as settling down is concerned, did not require to come West. Further, it might eradicate some of the selfishness which seems to exist to an alarming degree, in some of our men. In David's time, those who went to the battle, objected to sharing the spoil with those who remained at the brook Besor, 1 Sam. xxx. 21-25. Now the order appears to be inverted and those who tarry *beside the stuff* verse 24 get the lion's share, while those who fight in the fore front of the battle, are put on short rations. It is self evident the spirit of selfishness is fostered by our present system. Were the test of our Lord "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." applied stringently, it would thin out the number of applicants for the ministry, if we may judge by their actions. Besides, it would give every graduate some practical knowledge of the nature and extent of our work, of which some of our men are woefully ignorant, when such are called upon to speak of the "Hardships and Difficulties in Home Mission Work," they are compelled to get their information from those who had been engaged in this work.

If the General Assembly passes this measure, it is to be earnestly hoped it will be carried out to the letter, and that neither the General Assembly nor the various Presbyteries will show anything of their former supineness.

Thanking you for the space.

Elkhorn, Man.

In God's light only can we truly see light. When we study his truth "according to the Scriptures" we can see and understand. A new man in Christ and a new life in Christ go together. "Come see the place where the Lord lay," we can say of the Christian's grave. He who does not die with Christ will die the death eternal; he who is not by faith buried with Christ and raised again, will be buried with a sepulture that knows no resurrection. "Dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God," is the attitude of the resurrection man.