

keep the accounts of a large congregation. I resigned my treasurership on account of the trouble of keeping a set of books and the continued interruption to regular business from people calling to pay their pew rents.

EX-TREASURER.

Woodstock, Oct. 12th, 1879.

DRAWING-ROOM GOSSIP.

MR. EDITOR.—As parlour socials in connection with our congregations are becoming very general, and as these meetings are attended by our leading men, it occurred to me that the opinions and suggestions upon church matters expressed there might be interesting to your readers, more especially as on the occasions referred to we have opportunities of hearing the views of the ladies whose "rights" at regular church meetings have not yet been recognized. One subject talked of was

OUR VACANCIES.

This subject was discussed very intelligently, and opinions upon it were freely exchanged, but as might be expected, parties were very much divided. Extended or protracted vacancies were generally condemned as being injurious to the interests of Presbyterianism. Congregations which remain long vacant suffer from many causes. The attendance begins to fall off. The church funds run low. Stagnation and inactivity take the place of life and progress.

THE FILLING OF VACANCIES.

came in for a full share of attention. There is of course in every well regulated congregation one or more Diotrepheses who think their nominee should be appointed, whilst the minister so nominated may have no other qualifications than that he is a friend or in some way related to the person who proposes him. Then again, the congregation may be a prominent one, comprising a few wealthy, influential men, who think they must travel a great distance before they get a man sufficiently able to fill their pulpit, thus ignoring home talent, home experiences, and that true spirit of patriotism which should characterize every country and every people. Without any reflection upon the brethren who have been called from a distance and settled among us, and to whom we wish every prosperity, it must be admitted that this practice of calling outsiders has grown to rather considerable dimensions, as for the last two or three years nearly all important vacancies have been filled by men imported from a distance. This is scarcely fair to those ministers who have either been born or educated in this country; or who have by adoption made Canada their home. Such a practice is discouraging in the highest degree to our rural clergy, and it is no wonder that many of them take to farming, school teaching, or school inspecting.

There are large numbers of our ministers in towns and country charges who by their zeal and abilities not only reflect credit on the rising ministry of our Church but are thoroughly qualified to instruct any congregation and "edify the body of Christ."

CHURCH MUSIC.

was another topic referred to, and the opinion was expressed that in this respect our congregations are improving. The grave, sanctimonious precentor has given place to trained choirs who supply good substantial music, and at the same time the psalmody is made more interesting to the younger people in our congregations. It is true that some of our more scrupulous members object to a "choir" on the grounds that some of the members at times seem to forget that they are a part of a worshipping Assembly—their singing being too much of a mechanical exercise. Well, I admit that on occasions a gentleman in a choir may be rather officious, or a lady may pass around a smelling bottle or enter into a conversation with the person beside her during the sermon or while the congregation is engaged in prayer, but these faults, though very serious, belong to the individuals and not to the choir, and call, not for the abolition of the latter, but for the removal of the former. They might misbehave in the pews, but no one would think of doing away with the church on that account, and so these objections are no arguments against the system, which is working well in many of our congregations. It augurs well for the future of our Church when we find her wealthy, intelligent ministers so freely discussing matters so intimately connected with her progress and prosperity.

CRITIC.

HOME MISSION WORK.

MR. EDITOR.—I have recently returned from my fifth trip in the last thirteen months among the Hastings Road Mission Fields and the lumber shanties. My first trip was performed partly on foot and partly with a jumper amid considerable difficulties; my fourth trip in November on horseback, when the roads were at their worst; and my last amid snow so deep that it was causing several shanties to break up. In these the distance travelled was fully 1,000 miles, the time spent, forty entire days; the services given, fully fifty, apart from visitation to the sick and other work; and the labour may be said to be both free and voluntary.

THE FIELD.

The lumberer's axe has done much, the fire has done more to rob our forests of their wealth; and in a few years the whole country will be abandoned to the settlers. Our Church fails in not providing continuous supply for all vacancies; and, if continuous supply is not now provided for at least three of our Mission fields, the results will be most disastrous.

The 1st is called "Thanet and the Ridge." The church at the Ridge is enclosed, and another is projected for Thanet. There is a glebe at the latter place of three acres; there are four stations, fifty-four communicants, and the missionary has the range of four townships.

The 2nd, L'Amable. This is an important centre, and the land around is good. A fine glebe of seventeen acres has been purchased, a beautiful plan of a church and near \$400 towards building it have been procured, nearly \$600 more subscribed; and within a radius of six miles there are over sixty possible contributors. The Montreal Students' Missionary Society has done much to bring both of these to their present state of efficiency, and I trust two of the best men belonging to it and about to be licensed are willing to go in this fall and take possession for the Lord.

The 3rd, Carlow. The soil is magnificent; the communicants are over sixty; promised contributions foot up to near \$400; the Church is almost free of debt, and a fine glebe of 36 acres attached should tempt the best licentiate of the year from Knox College to spend a term in it with a view of a call. Mayo has been hitherto attached to Carlow, but as all obstruction is now removed, as we lay claim to thirty families in it, and still they come, and as the development eastward along the Mississippi Road is unlimited, Knox College Missionary Society should send a student here for the summer months.

The 4th, Maynooth, represents from four to eight townships. The Knox College Missionary Society deserted it. Let Queen's College Missionary Society win its spurs here. Two men are needed. The difficulties to be overcome are great, but when their labours are crowned with success, the glory will be the greater.

The country east, west and north of these mission fields has yet to be opened up. Ought not other Colonization Roads to yield as large returns? What about the Opeongo, Addington, Mississippi, Petersen, Burleigh, Bobcaygeon, Victoria and Muskoka Roads? They can hardly go through a rougher country, and who is to blame for their not being properly looked after? We should, as a Church, aim at nothing less than one or two charges in every township old and new.

THE MISSIONARY NEEDED.

The ignorance we meet with is perfectly alarming. From experience I can say that only twenty years are needed to turn a decent Christian into a heathen if he is neglected, and the children are sure to be. Let me give a few cases out of many in proof. I asked a youth that had come to service, "who was the perfect man?" His reply was "George Washington." Having by request called to see a woman dying, I found four entire families in, not an individual among them could read, or tell me who was the Saviour of sinners—and yet they were Presbyterians—by tradition. I visited the brother of one high up in English aristocratic circles, and what a picture presented itself! The husband and wife were smoking into each other's faces with the stove between, and their children seemed to be a portion of Miss McPherson's latest importations from the vilest dens of London. A tax-gatherer told me that on entering a house one day, he found a woman reading; and she said to him, "I have just met these words in the Bible Mr. W. gave me, that 'the Father hath given all things into the hands of His

Son;' the greater fool he, for me and my man have given all things to our son John, and he has turned us out of house and home." Now it is quite right to obey Christ's "marching orders," but we are to "begin at Jerusalem." I have heard our neglected countrymen cursing the Church of their fathers for not looking after them. We are commanded to go into the wilderness in search of the lost sheep. We must not let the Home Field shrivel up by neglect, as we dry up our resources for the Foreign Field, and dwarf our Church beside. Do foreign missionaries constitute the entire staff of our devoted men? And is our Church unwilling to hold the rope whilst explorations are being made in outlying districts? I know of thirteen Presbyterian families in Monmouth on the Burleigh Road, who daily hear the railway whistle and have not seen the face of a Presbyterian missionary since they went in there 14 years ago. In other words, infant congregations along our great highways are allowed to perish because we are unwilling to help to pay for their upbringing. The Lord forgive us our sins of remissness.

MISSION TO THE LUMBERMEN.

We also sinfully neglect this class. Many of our young men work in the shanties all winter. They only know of the Sabbath in many cases by its being washing day. They only hear of God's name accompanied with an oath. When they return home they neglect God's house and become indifferent to all religion. There are over 2,000 lumbermen in my diocese. Having received considerable literature from the Rev. Mr. G. of Ottawa for their benefit, I resolved to visit as many shanties as I could, but my limited time only permitted me to reach 400 men. This additional work shows that there is more need of missionaries in the winter in such outlying districts than in the summer. The Lord develop to proper proportions this most important branch of Church work.

MADOC.

AN ENQUIRY.

MR. EDITOR.—In some copies of the Baptist paper, which is, I presume, the religious organ of the body I noticed the following advertisement:—"Fresh supply of 'What eminent Presbyterian Divines say about Baptism and Communion'—75 cents per 100.—Recommended to be scattered among Pseudo-Baptists."

I presume it was one of those which was shown by a Baptist to a Presbyterian friend of mine lately. It contained statements from such men as Chalmers, McCheyne, Jonathan Edwards, Luther, etc. I presume these are garbled as were the statements from the Waldensian History, and to those who know what they believe, and why they believe, it matters little. But while exercising all due charity towards our fellow-Christians we do expect honesty.

Now, as there are many into whose hands these tracts may fall whose minds are unsettled, and perhaps, poorly informed, would it not be well if some of our ministers who are capable of exposing this lack of honest principle, would do so through the columns of your valuable paper. Hoping to have the matter exposed before long.

VERITAS.

Wardsville, Feb. 21, 1879.

THE ELDERSHIP.

MR. EDITOR.—What does "Presbyteros" in the "Presbyterian" of this week mean when he writes:—"The division of elders into teaching and ruling is a figment of priestcraft, which has no warrant in the Word of God?"

I have always been taught—and that by men who had no sympathy with priestcraft or its teachings—that the polity in the Presbyterian Church which is recognized as set forth in the division of the elders into ruling and teaching elders is as much scriptural as any other part of that same polity, and is to be sustained by such proof from Scripture, as 1 Tim. v. 17.

Is it not the case in our Church that all the elders, including the minister, have a parity of position and authority as rulers, but the minister because of natural gifts and education is fitted and ordained to teach, thereby obtaining the right of precedence, which he is in duty called to maintain by labours in word and doctrine, so obtaining double honour; likewise the elders who rule, that they be counted worthy who rule well?

DAVID.

Montreal, 15th March, 1879.