

Church at home, the Colombo Presbytery, and some here, much about the same time. I may only mention that I never corresponded with Mr. Sprott on the subject of a mission in Ceylon, but it has been a familiar idea to me for some years back. And it certainly surprised me, that, after having given expression to my views at the Synod, I should receive such an unexpected and impartial testimony as to the feasibility of such a mission, from one on the spot, of whose good sense and judgment, and zeal for the Church, I, and our people generally, entertain a high opinion. I need scarcely add that the publication of this extract is only intended to assist us in arriving at a proper decision in a most important matter, and commits no one to any opinion,—hardly even Mr. Sprott himself, as his letter was not intended for publication.

ALLAN POLLOK.

*The Manse, Kandy, 29th Sept., 1863.*

MY DEAR FRIEND :

I altogether forget whether you owe me a letter, or I you; but I am moved to write you, having something to say about the mission you propose starting. I daresay I should write to Mr. McLean, my old friend; but then the navigation may be closed. But not to come to this point at once, I must tell you something about ourselves. We have been here now nearly six years, and have enjoyed many mercies. We have two little girls, who are a great source of pleasure to us, and are all pretty well. The Church in Ceylon is in a very different state from what it was when I arrived. In the Vaudian district I was alone, but there are now three other clergymen, who are well supported and doing well; and we have catechists labouring among the heathen. I have had a great deal to do with the operations and organizations necessary to bring about this state of things. Presbyterianism had been declining for sixty years; but the tide has, I hope, been fairly turned. My own congregation, particularly the European portion of it, is very fluctuating, and, as quite a number have left Kandy lately, it is scarcely as good as usual. But I hope it will be all right again soon. The people are very liberal, e. g.: our collection from this congregation for the Lancashire Fund was between £70 and £80 sterling; but, on account of climate, &c., they are not very good attenders of church. Once a day suffices most, and they are fond of a run to the cooler climate of the hills on Saturday afternoon.

And now about the mission. I wrote to Dr. Stevenson some months ago, recommending Ceylon and asking him to write to Nova Scotia, and I see that the Canada delegates pressed this field upon your attention. I don't think you should send a man to the South Pacific,—a solitary individual in a field which is being very fast filled up. Ceylon is most urgent claims on all Presbyterians.

In 1800, there were nearly 400,000 Singhaless Presbyterians, and there are none now except an old man here and there who remembers the Dutch times, and preserves the Dutch articles and prayers done into Singhaless.

There are lots of places here where a missionary could do a double work, among the Presbyterian, Dutch and mixed population, and the dense masses of heathenism around. There was a letter of mine published in the *Home Record* soon after coming here, which gives information about many of these places. The Church at home is going to take up one, and they expect Canada to assist. If you are not able to take up an independent place, I would recommend you to do what Canada was expected to do. But, if possible, it would be better to take up an independent place. I believe the obstacle is funds. A missionary in the low country, to which I chiefly allude, ought not to have less than £300; but I think a good deal could be collected here. However, if this be out of the question, in the first place join the Church at home in their's, and make a beginning here, and I feel confident that the result would justify the selection of Ceylon. Our jungle-clergymen get £100, of which £250 is paid by planters, and the balance by government. But this is the most expensive part of the Island.

Even if you do not employ a European at first, send your money to our Presbytery, who can make excellent use of it in employing Tamul catechists and Portuguese native labourers of various sorts, of whom the catechists get £36 a-year, and more according to ability. We want, very much, a number of men of this sort—a native agency. All other bodies have them here; and the native ministers, whether pure natives or mixed, get small salaries compared with Europeans, as they know how to live cheaply. It would be an immense thing for the Church here, if you would take up this field. I hope to hear from you about it soon, and also about Pictou. I often think of the good people of Nova Scotia, and would like very much to see them again. Remember me very kindly to Squire Fraser, Mr. McKay on the hill, also to Mr. Gordon and Mr. Costley; and to Mr. McLean when you write him. I only hear of Nova Scotia from Musquodoboit and from Halifax, with a few papers occasionally. We have generally had a few Nova Scotians here, and it is some still, such as Mortimer and Wilkins. It is an excellent country for a young man getting on in the world, but a very bad country for poor whites. From about 12 to 15 years is enough for a young man to make an independency of some hundreds a-year, if he has something to begin upon; but it is wretched for people who sink down—poor Europeans with families growing up in the country, and with no prospect of leaving. The children grow up weak, and, unless they are kept from acquiring the native language,