

Early in August the agent of the new Society reached Montreal, and without taking the pastoral charge of the church at the time, proceeded westward as a visitor and explorer. Brockville, Kingston, Toronto, Brantford, Guelph, London and other places were visited: plans were formed: somewhat voluminous reports were sent to England containing recommendations: on the way down the new church building at Cobourg was "opened" or "dedicated:" and on the first Sunday in October the pastoral charge at Montreal was assumed; but there was no formal induction or recognition service, or any of those sacred and heart stirring solemnities to which we are accustomed.

I might narrate the coming out of the late Rev. John Roaf, who took the agency westward. I might tell you of Dunkerley, Drummond, Clarke, Hall, Atkinson, Byrne, Carruthers and others. Visits to the infant churches annually. Visits to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, &c., &c., &c. Seventeen years agency and fourteen more years of Secretary-Treasurership, might afford many an interesting sketch. But it is time that I made way for others who can tell your readers better than I can, of individual churches and sections of country blessed by the work of the Colonial Missionary Society. Farewell!

THE LITURGICAL QUESTION.

According to promise, we publish in the present number Professor Cornish's Essay on "Sabbath Devotional Services," which we commend to the careful perusal of our readers. Its suggestions cannot be read without advantage. We do not attempt, at present, to discuss the many subjects of interest there dwelt upon, but will confine our remarks to that which excited so warm a controversy at the Union meeting, viz., the partial introduction of forms of prayer into the worship of our Churches. Is this "lawful?" and, if lawful, is it "expedient?"

We are not prepared to meet the former question with such a decided negative as the latter. We have been often painfully oppressed by the deficiencies of extemporaneous prayers. Ministers and others make "forms" of their own, which those who often hear them come to know by heart, but which are not equal to those in the books. A hymn is a form of praise or prayer, but not necessarily formal. Is it not rather the more precious, the older and the more familiar it is? And is it not lawful to say a form in prose as well as to sing it in verse? There may be spiritual worship through forms of prayer,—and the utterest formality without them.

But no such question can be discussed, with a view to any practical action, simply on the ground of what is abstractly and ideally lawful or preferable. Wise men will take up such matters as they stand related to the habits and views of others, and the associations which the past has thrown around them. A thing never so innocent in itself, may be so inseparably associated with evil, that it may always suggest the evil, and that evil association will neutralise its own good. Or, if it have no such association for us, it may have it for most of our brethren, and for their sakes we should reject it.

Now what are the associations connected with liturgical worship, in the minds of the great body of the members of our churches? Does it not seem to them part and parcel, first, of that system of Popery, against which they follow the reformers of three centuries ago in protesting with all their might? And secondly, of that Anglican modification of Popery, from which Nonconformists find so many and so strong reasons for dissent? Does it not