

spiritual and temporal concerns. It was in recognition of this all pervading principle, that that profound thinker, and truly great man, the late Dr. Robertson, in working out church extension, divided Scotland into Provinces, and thus, by enlisting local sympathies on the side of his scheme, his labours were made eminently successful. Precisely on the same principles we must also work, if we expect to be successful. We have our local sympathies and these must be aroused into action. The Presbytery and people of Halifax, will from the very nature of things be more interested in the spiritual wellbeing of their friends and relatives of Lake Porter, Sackville and Musquodoboit, than in the people of Barney's River, St. Mary's or Lochaber; but the Presbytery and people of Pictou will as certainly feel more interested in these last, than they can possibly do in those of "Hog River" "Cross Road" or "Cardigan" in P. E. Island. Thus, it must be, from the very nature of the social ties which bind man to man, that the force of our sympathies weaken at the same ratio as the circle of operation widens from its centre. Unless we are altogether dead to the moral impulses of our nature, our commiseration will be excited, on behalf of our "kinsmen according to the flesh" dying at our door or lack of spiritual food, and our hearts and hands ready to render their relief, more than he distant and unknown, though probably equally deserving objects. Nor is there any old or narrow selfishness in this.—Our blessed Saviour when on earth, to show, that on asking upon himself the "seed of Abraham" now deeply imbued he was with all the sinless phases of human sympathies, in sending forth His very first Missionaries, charged them, "Not to go the way of the Gentiles" but "rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." His last injunction to his disciples, immediately before His ascension, was, to "Preach the Gospel to all creatures—beginning at Jerusalem;" and His deep sorrowings in view of the coming woe, and of the utter desolation which impended over that hapless city, was but another expression of human sympathies, mixed with Divine compassion.

Let me not be understood as standing in antagonism to foreign Missions.—It is not so. I would rejoice to see our Church maintain a Mission to the Heathen, but I would rejoice more to see her send the Gospel to our own brethren nearer home.

Since writing the above I read the Rev. Mr. Grant's letter on the "Home Mission" and "Lay Association" in this month's Record. I mention it only to notice a mistake, calculated to convey a wrong impression, in which he (unintentionally no doubt) has fallen. As an instance of the clashing of the Lay Association with the Home Mission Scheme, he tells us that "The Pictou Presbytery at their last meeting authorized their Clerk to grant a supplement out of the Home

Mission fund to one of their weak congregations; but this is the work of the Lay Association has taken in hand to perform, and I suppose that if any other weak congregation did come forward asking supplement, it would have to go out of the Presbytery and ask it of the Lay Association."

Now the supplement alluded to by Mr. Grant was not granted by the Pictou Presbytery, but by the Synod; application having been made by the party in June last—the Presbytery only drew for the money by authority of Synod. Neither has the Lay Association at any time granted or withheld any of the monies collected by it, in any other way than by concurrence of the standing committee of Synod, Mr. Grant's supposition notwithstanding.

JOHN MCKAY.

Retrospection.

In crossing the threshold of another year, it may not be out of place nor altogether unprofitable to look back and take a very slight glance at our past, as compared with our present position. Ever since the unfortunate secession of 1843, the history of our church in this Province may be described as a long struggle against adverse circumstances. Twenty years ago we were one in name and brotherhood with our now Free Church brethren, worshipped in the same churches, acknowledged the same doctrines, shared in the same trials and were called by the same name. Feelings of sympathy rather than reason or necessity made a division in our ranks. The separation weakened both and embittered both, and those who aforesaid had oftentimes taken sweet counsel together, stood sullenly apart, though not many of them knew why or wherefore. But as has not seldom been the case, a cry was put into the mouths of men, instead of a reason or an argument, one which could be easily spoken and easily remembered, and well calculated to make a deep impression upon a simple and earnest minded people. That cry was that Christ's crown and covenant had been trampled under foot and that the author of this fearful sacrilege was the Church of Scotland. Oh how intensely and bitterly unchristian were the feelings of those unhappy days, when brother would not speak to brother and one part of a household went this way and another that. Time has weeded out much of the