

for the improvement of the financial condition of the College. This Society has had several meetings and has organized a scheme of operations, but the general depression which prevails in the country, combined with the urgent appeals made by the representatives of other Schemes, for funds to reduce the deficiencies in their revenues, have seriously operated against much progress being made in the work contemplated by this new Society. The Board resolved some time ago, instead of seeking for new investments for money paid on account of existing securities, to apply these funds towards the reduction of the mortgage debt on the College. This mortgage originally stood at \$26,500, but has now, from the moneys received at the time of the Semi-Centenary of the College, and from payments made on investments, been reduced to \$5,000. The Treasurer is now in funds to pay this amount, and has given to the mortgagees the required notice prior to payment.

The Board has had under its repeated consideration the matter of the College Residence, and contemplates making changes which will conduce to the comfort of the students, as well as reduce the annual outlay in the management of this department. The Board hopes to be able to make arrangements for securing the services of a resident dean who will exercise a general superintendence over the students living in the College.

The Rev. George Logie, B. D., who has for some years taken charge of the Preparatory Course in the College with much acceptance, was relieved of his duties in order to permit him to pursue his studies in Edinburgh and Germany. The Board has instructed the Senate to make provision for the conduct of the class during the coming winter, which it is hoped will be satisfactory.

Since the last report the Board has made much needed improvements in the ventilation of the class-room by the use of electric fans. This change has already greatly conduced to the health and comfort of professors and students alike. The Auer light has been introduced into the students' rooms, and it is expected that in addition to the great increase in light, a very considerable reduction will be made in the expenditure for gas.

MANITOBA

The Board of Management of Manitoba College begs to submit the Report for the past year.

During the winter session, just closed, the number of students in the Faculty of Arts and the Preparatory Department was 177, and there are now in attendance in the Faculty of Theology 23 students, making a total of 200, being 6 fewer than in the previous year. At the University examinations of 1896 there were 3 medals and 11 scholarships won by students of the College. At the examinations just closed 103 students of the College have been writing, 11 more than last year; of these, 32 are candidates for the degree of B. A.

The total receipts for the Ordinary Fund, including the balance in hand of \$799.24, has been \$21,918.21, as compared with \$20,590.65 of the previous year. This includes \$8,835.09 for fees and board of resident students, being \$223 more than during the previous year. The expenditure has been \$20,823, leaving a balance in hand of \$1,095.21.

The legacy from the late Warden King, mentioned in last report, has been paid during the year, \$5,000, less \$500, the succession duty. This money will be invested as soon as opportunity offers; with it the Endowment Fund is now \$51,215.

The Board fully concurs in the opinion expressed in the Report of the Senate, as to the value of the services of Professor McLaren, gives for the fourth time, and of those of Professor Dr. George Adam Smith and Dr. Beattie. The Board is also of one mind with the Senate that steps should be taken, without unnecessary delay, to secure an addition to the teaching staff of the College. This is in full accord with a resolution passed by the Synod of Manitoba and the North-West Territories at its last meeting. The making of such an addition will, of course, necessitate an increase in the annual income of the College.

CHURCH AND MANSE.

The report of the Board of Management of the Church and Manse Building Fund for Manitoba and the North-West Territories:

During the past year the operations of the Board have not been so extensive as in some previous years of its history, the state of the fund having prevented the making of grants in several instances. Assistance has been given towards the erection or extension of 14 churches and 12 manses. The amount advanced by way of loan has been \$3,800, while grants amounting to \$440 have been made. Of

these, 9 churches are in the Synod of Manitoba and the North-West Territories, with 5 churches and 2 manses in the Synod of British Columbia. A more detailed statement of these loans and grants is afterwards given.

In the report presented to last Assembly it was said that, owing to the state of the fund, grants could no longer be made except out of interest, and even then only under exceptional circumstances. This policy the Board has had to pursue during the past year. It is with great regret that it has done so, but no other course was open to it, unless the capital of the fund was to be seriously impaired.

Of the moneys advanced by J. T. Morton, Esq., and of which mention has been made in the reports of former years, there has been repaid \$4,125.55, leaving a little over \$10,000 still due to him.

Through the Rev. Dr. Robertson, who has spent the past six months in Great Britain, various sums have been received in aid of the fund, amounting in all to \$3,885.78. This amount, it is believed, has been obtained from individuals and not from congregations, but the Board is not yet in possession of any detailed information on the subject. It, however, desires to express most grateful thanks to the Christian friends who, on having the great work this Church is carrying on in the North-West brought under their notice, recognized the claim resting upon the Motherland to share in the work of providing for her children and sons settling there, and generously responded to it.

DISTRIBUTION OF PROBATIONERS.

Your Committee are pleased to be able to state that their work has been throughout more pleasant than for some years past—that confidence in the Scheme appears to be increasing, and that it is hoped will increase after some additional improvements in its regulations, or as those are more correctly and generally known and more faithfully enforced. For the most part, or in very many instances, Presbyteries do not seem to be acquainted with its provisions, and this is particularly the case with the Moderators of Sessions in vacant congregations, and the Committees of Supply in these when such are appointed. One of the recommendations with which the Report concludes bears on such.

Your Committee think that it was a wise action on the part of the last General Assembly to allow some measure of discretion as to admission to the roll of Probationers. It will surely not be disputed that the roll should be composed of such as are eligible and likely to be called. If vacancies desire to hear only candidates from whom they may be guided to seek a pastor, those sent by the Committees should be such as are likely, one or other of them, to meet their expectations and present an acceptable appearance. Necessity has been felt in the course of the year to act upon the discretion granted, and to refuse one or two who were certified by Presbyteries, but whose work within their bounds was not such as to encourage the anticipation that they would be successful in other quarters. It was also judged prudent in the interests of the Scheme and of vacancies to drop a name from the list. Two whose names had been formerly on the list and had received appointments for the period allowed, namely, two years, applied to be replaced, but their request was not granted. In this it is thought the Assembly will concur.

Eighty vacancies were reported during the year, some of these since the arrangement of the Scheme for the quarter now current. Of these, 41 were settled at the dates and by the persons recorded, and 39 are still under supply.

The number of Probationers on the roll whose services were at the disposal of your Committee was, 24. Of these, 4 obtained stated charges; 3 accepted appointments as Ordained Missionaries; 1 was dropped from the roll; and 1 withdrew, leaving 15 on the roll at the present date.

Your Committee would commend the Scheme or Act to the approval of this Assembly, and ask that it give the influence of its authority in favor of its faithful and impartial operation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:—I. That the Presbyteries be required to report all vacancies when they occur, or exist, in their bounds to the Committee, for some supply, either full or partial.

II. That the names of interim Moderators of Sessions in vacancies be sent by the Presbytery Clerks to the Convener of the Committee, that he may furnish them with a copy of the Regulations, and help them in the fulfilment of their duties.

III. That the Presbyteries on the licensure of students to preach the Gospel recommend them to place their services at the disposal of the Committee for employment in the regular way.

IV. That the attention of Presbyteries be called again to the regulations in force guarding pulpits of vacant congregations from the undue preponderance in supply by ministers in settled charges or students.