

At an average of five persons to a family, our Presbyterian French Missions have a constituency of 4,825 souls. Old missionaries well acquainted with the field will bear me out in the assertion that there was not half that number in 1875. In Montreal we have had for the last four or five years, a distinct French Protestant community, people in good standing, lawyers, doctors, professors, merchants, etc., who form pleasant social circles a thing unknown here previous to 1875. If this does not show progress, where shall we look for it?

5. In 1876 the Minutes of Assembly mention two contributions from fields, \$600 from Kankakee and \$46 from Ottawa. I presume other small amounts may have been sent in by other stations. But if we estimate the total at \$1,000, I believe we are much beyond the truth. In 1884 the fields contributed \$4,797.09. No decay there.

It now only remains for me to point out a few glaring errors in Rev. Mr. Ball's letter. Had he condescended to answer a communication I sent him last summer he might have avoided them.

He insinuates that the schedules are the "stated means of intercourse between missionaries and the Board," not knowing, it appears, that whenever there is special need of a visit to missionary or people, one or more members of the Executive are deputed to see them, and to spend as much time with them as the case requires.

At the end of his "schedule paragraph" Mr. Ball states "that we have actually less numbers in attendance at our whole seventy-eight stations, than the numbers who left Rome, under the preaching of a single man in one single year." This statement to be true should read thus, "than the numbers who pretended to leave Rome, etc." I know something of it, having had to sift those numbers during the first year of my pastorate in St. John's Church. Much good seed fell upon stony places, and when the sun was up the plants were scorched, because they had no root, they withered away. Our own Church has had revivals more than once, then came reaction. A certain amount of gain follows those times of religious excitement but it would be absurd to count the attendance at a crowded revival meeting, and compare it seven years later with that of the same congregation in its normal state.

As to Mr. Ball's attack on the Executive, when he alleges that it capriciously takes up fields to abandon them soon after, and that by such changes "labour is lost, and hearts of missionaries and people discouraged" it shows too much personal animus to deserve an answer other than this. The Board is elected by the Assembly, and presumably its members are believed by that body to have the best interests of the work at heart. It is not an irresponsible committee. If Presbyteries fail in their duty by not taking any interest in mission fields within their bounds, it is well that there is a Mission Board to do so. I am not aware that the Presbytery of Chatham has addressed any remonstrance to the Board, probably because those of its members who were conversant with the work in Essex, approved of the action of the Board. I challenge Mr. Ball, or any other person to specify a single instance in which the Board has declined to work a field, when asked to do so by any Presbytery.

The same answer suffices for Mr. Ball's attack on the financial management of our French Mission. He cannot question the exactitude of the accounts, nor the punctuality of the treasurer in paying missionaries, so he assails the wisdom of certain items of expenditure. I decline to follow him there, his standpoint being utterly different from that of the majority of our best informed ministers. Any one, however, looking at the printed financial statement can see for themselves the thorough inaccuracy of his figures. I now conclude by asking your readers, the clerical part of them especially, whether a minister of any Church has the right to attack publicly and do his utmost to damage a work which the Church itself has recommended to our congregations? Is not this following "divisive courses" in violation of the ordination vow?

If Mr. Ball or his partizans, if he has any, have just cause of complaint, the Assembly is ready to hear them and redress the wrong. As it is, there will be many glad enough of an excuse to refuse to contribute to the support of this great work of French Evangelization, and if the missionaries suffer they will know whom to thank for it.

Montreal, Oct. 29, 1884. CHARLES A. DOUDIET.

DENOMINATIONAL RECIPROCITY.

MR. EDITOR,—I was much interested in the letter of your Belleville correspondent on this subject in your issue of October 29th. I am happy to inform him and your readers that the Montreal Conference of the Methodist Church, at its session in last June, passed a resolution making provision for just such reciprocity as he advocates. The preamble is as follows. "Inasmuch as in many parts of the Dominion of Canada the Protestant population is unable to maintain in each locality the ministers necessary to supply each separate denomination there represented with the Gospel without aid from the mission funds of the churches; and whereas in many places one minister could supply the Gospel ordinances to people now divided into separate congregations, thus avoiding unnecessary expenditure of missionary moneys and a waste of ministerial effort."

It was therefore resolved that the Conference appoint a committee to meet any committees appointed by other churches to prepare a plan for submission to higher courts of the several churches "by which," the resolution reads, "the consolidation of the forces of our common Protestantism may be effected and our resources husbanded for the more economical and at the same time more extended prosecution of the work of God among the people residing in those sections of our Dominion where the denominations represented are not able separately to support a minister." This resolution passed by a majority of seven-eighths of the Conference. It is well, as you remark, that fraternal resolutions at the conferences and synods should crystallize into something practical, and not evaporate in mere sentiment. Such reciprocity as above suggested, without at all destroying the autonomy of the Churches, would be a practical exhibition of fraternity that the world would understand, and, as your correspondent remarks, "would vindicate the Churches from the charge of sectarianism and be a blessing to the country." I hope that the Presbyterian Synods will appoint similar committees for promoting this desirable object. A leading minister of the Presbyterian Church informed the writer that he believed that within the bounds of his own Presbytery such action would save \$2,000 a year for his own church and as much for the Methodist Church.

For my own part I see very little difficulty in the way of hearty co-operation in church work of these two leading Protestant denominations. We now labour cordially together in temperance work and Sunday school and other Christian conventions. Can we not work together in direct evangelistic effort as the churches do at the Moody revival in England and as they did in the Irish revival? I have seen it tried in a leading Canadian city with great success. The city was divided into sections and the ministers of the different churches went out two and two, in apostolic fashion, to visit every house. My companion was a Presbyterian minister, I was a Methodist. We sought not to proselytize the people to a sect but to bring the unsaved to Christ. They then made choice of their church home. This plan disarmed prejudice, gained us access where neither could go alone, and brought many to the house of God who could not otherwise be reached. We preached also in each other's churches and laboured side by side in union revival services with great joy to ourselves and I believe with great profit to the people.

The Methodist people, I believe, while staunchly loyal to their own Church, have a strong sympathy with the grand old Presbyterian Church—the heroic daughter of the Reformation. We sing with the hymns of Wesley and of Watts, those of Bonar and Macduff. We read with delight the writings of Baxter and Rutherford and McCheyne, and Arnot and Guthrie, and Chalmers and McLeod, and feel that we are spiritually akin. We rejoice in the missionary successes of a Moffat and a Duff. We believe as your own Dr. McLaren, Moderator of your late General Assembly, said to the Methodist Conference that the great religious truths upon which we agree are more numerous, more vital, more essential than those on which we differ. We hope to spend eternity together, and we would like to enjoy the kindest relations and most hearty co-operation here on earth.

A METHODIST MINISTER.

P.S.—Since the above was written I have found that the late Pan-Presbyterian Council at Belfast, by a unanimous vote, recommended union and co-operation in the foreign missionary field. The resolution is, in part, as follows:—

"That, inasmuch as union and co-operation in foreign missionary work are in many respects of ex-

ceedingly great importance, the Council rejoice to learn that the Churches connected with this Alliance have generally expressed an earnest desire for as large a measure of such union and co-operation as it may be found possible to obtain. The Council also thankfully recognize the amount of union, already realized or in progress, in China, Japan, South Africa, Trinidad, the New Hebrides, and elsewhere. Further, the Council, having respect to the fact that various topics in the prosecution of mission work require earnest attention, appoint two committees (one European and one American) for the purpose of considering and reporting on such questions. In particular, the Council instruct the two committees to approach the various Churches connected with the Alliance, with the expression of the Christian and brotherly regards of the Council, soliciting at the same time an early expression of their views on these important topics."

A COUNTERBLAST TO TOBACCO.

MR. EDITOR.—In a recent number of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN appeared a brief article on tobacco smoking, with which I heartily concur so far as it goes. As to the unintentional cruelty inflicted upon non-smoking travellers especially upon women and children, who cannot well afford to pay first-class fare, is patent to all who have had even moderate experience in travelling in the so-called second-class coaches. It is a pity that railway companies permit it—yet it is done—and I think THE PRESBYTERIAN will receive the hearty thanks of very many for the manly way in which it condemns such a practice, and it is to be hoped that many smokers will take it to heart and ponder over it to their personal profit. But, Mr. Editor, I must be plain with you on another point brought out in the same editorial, and it is this, that I fear that you are not standing on safe ground when tested in the light of the estimate in which it will doubtless be held by public opinion, say half a century hence. This ground is stated in a single sentence by you in that article, viz., "we are quite satisfied to leave it to the conscience of our neighbour whether he should smoke or not." Now, Mr. Editor, I am convinced that that ground will have to be given up—the same as it has had to give way before the searching inquiries that led to the abolition of slavery—and thank God, as it is now giving way before the mighty wave of prohibition and total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors as a beverage. And I am sorry, Mr. Editor, that you have made use of that rusty old weapon, that should be buried beyond the hope of a resurrection, viz., that good men smoke, men "a thousand times better" than those "so-called reformers" who lecture them on the use of tobacco. But no one knows better than you that that is no new ground to take, no new argument. In fact it is as old as the history of moral and civil reforms. It is no new thing to make light of those who have the courage to denounce what their consciences dictate to them to be wrong and having wrong tendencies, even though many good men, yes, men it may be in some, if not in many, respects better than themselves, indulge in the practice they are obliged to condemn. Those who agitated the abolition of slavery, were called fanatics, etc. Carey, the cobbler, was once despised, not so now. The term "Methodist" was once one of reproach, not so now. Our Puritan Fathers were not called by the most pleasant names, and why? Our civil and political reformers had to struggle against great odds and had to do much thankless work, and do we think the less of them now? Our temperance reformers are not yet quite through the muddy stream of vituperation. Still, they are coming bravely to the front. Dram drinking is now not nearly so popular and respectable as it used to be. And no doubt the advanced agitators who are in favour of doing away with—putting it in very mild terms—the expensive and disgusting habit of tobacco smoking and chewing will have to pass through a similar experience. All boys and young men should scrupulously guard against acquiring such a habit. I have met men whom I have learned to respect and love who have told me that they wished they had never acquired the habit of smoking. I believe in the case of very many it becomes a master and not a servant. Mr. Editor, if you are spared to live fifty years longer (and I hope you may long be spared to direct public opinion upward in the moral scale) and have occasion to write an article on the use of tobacco, of one thing I may safely predict that the sentences I have just taken exception to will be entirely expunged.

H. MCKELLAR.

High Bluff, Nov., 1884.