

The Probationers' Scheme.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—I know that any one touching upon this vexed question of our church, lays himself open at once to the charge that he has been long on the "list," has become cowed by his many wanderings to and fro, and thus his remarks deserve no attention. But my cause is just, as I shall show, and I will speak.

I. The present scheme is unjust to the Probationers.

We turn attention to the scheme for the present quarter, as published by the distribution committee. A glance at that leads the uninitiated to believe there are really fifty-nine vacancies, and only twenty-six probationers to supply them. What are the facts? At least twenty of these so-called vacancies are only mission stations, supplied for six months in summer by students, and for convenience sake called vacancies during the winter.

Now, most of the probationers during their college course of six years, did mission work for the Church six months every year of that time. Is it fair of the church to ask, to make them still continue to do the whole of the mission work that is done in the church during the winter? My own case is perhaps peculiar, still, many have very much the same experience. My appointments during the first nine weeks of this quarter were, in one real vacancy and eight mission stations. At least seven of them are going to apply for students, as missionaries for the coming summer.

Further, in regard to our remuneration from such places. Most of such stations pay only four dollars per Sabbath, and some only three, so that with having to wait, perhaps six months for the Presbytery to make up the deficiency, we have very often to use our own scanty store to pay bare travelling expenses.

II. There is great unfairness in the management of it.

When a minister is ordained he is asked whether he has used any undue means in obtaining this call; while perhaps the very minister who put the question—especially if he be distributor of probationers for the Presbytery—has been using his influence unduly during the whole quarter in behalf of friends. It would be highly interesting to know how many letters some of these men write recommending men for "desirable vacancies." They act on the principle that the scheme is well enough for supplying inferior stations with ministers but important ones must be manipulated. Now for proof of my assertion. Last September two probationers of Presbytery were kept four weeks each in stations, and a desirable vacancy was supplied for four weeks by a personal friend of the distributor though unasked by the congregation, and though the distributor knew he was neglecting regular work appointed by the church. Two probationers thus were hindered from preaching in that vacancy to, make room for a friend who had no right even to preach in a vacancy. Three other cases I could mention did space permit, of which I have personal knowledge. It is a notorious fact which many can testify to that appointments have been concealed to allow settled ministers to be heard, and other friends of the parties in power. Yet there are Presbyteries in which the distribution is fairly made, and appointments rigidly adhered to. And were it not for getting into such Presbyteries now and then, and having our hearts comforted, we could certainly openly rebel against this crying evil. In working this scheme however, there are some men who verily believe that Providence cannot select a suitable minister for certain places, unless they help largely. Such are one or two of the evils of the scheme. Let us see what remedy can be proposed.

1. Strike off all mission stations from the list of vacancies.

2. Let the appointments be for six Sabbaths instead of one or two as at present. Congregations, before calling a minister, have three questions to settle in their own minds: what are his qualifications as a minister, as a pastor, and as a man? That congregation must be insane, that would solemly call a man to take the oversight of their souls in the Lord, when all they know about him is that they heard him preach one or two sermons. By a six weeks' appointment the probationer gets to know something of the spiritual condition of the people he is preaching to, and so can address them with some effect. He is able to keep up his studies. His time and means are not all frittered away in travelling from Dan to Beersheba. The pastoral work of vacant congregations can be efficiently attended to.

3. Let it be a principle understood and acted upon that the intention of the scheme is really to supply the vacancies in the church with ministers, and not that it is a mere figure head, behind which scheming men pull the wires in behalf of friends.

It is certainly high time the church was waking up to the importance of this subject. As directed now the honesty and morality of its management by some men is fairly an open question, and dissatisfaction is universal. Yours sincerely,

ONE OF THE TWENTY-SIX.

Psalms V. Hymns.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—In offering a few remarks on the above subject, I have no desire to unduly prolong the discussion, but I consider it to be a subject of such great importance to our Church, that I hope you will not close it until all sides are fully heard.

All the arguments of the opponents of Hymns are based upon the assumption that those who desire to use Hymns in public worship, wish to give to them the same au-

thority as Holy Scripture; nay, to add thereto the very Canon of Scripture itself; rarely a most unwarrantable assumption, and one for which there is not the least support in anything that I have ever either read or heard on the subject. I would ask for what was Scripture given? Let the word answer on its own behalf. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for conviction, for instruction in righteousness." This plainly sets forth the purpose and design of the Scriptures, and who among the advocates of Hymns wish to put them to any of the purposes indicated above by the apostle? I will venture to say not any; on the contrary, the wish to employ them for the purpose to which many of them are so well suited, namely, as the means of conveying the pious thoughts of the soul in its approach to its Great Creator, whether in prayer or praise, whether in joy or sorrow, whether in prosperity or adversity, whether in life or in hour of death.

If we are shut up to the use of the inspired word of God for the purpose of singing his praise, I contend we are equally debarred from the use of uninspired language in prayer, and I think much more so, for have we not in the Lord's Prayer a form of prayer given by our Lord himself in reply to a request on the part of his disciples that he would teach them to pray "as John taught his disciples;" and yet I have never heard that the opponents of hymns would confine us entirely to use of that prayer. I have often been led to wonder why that prayer is so little used in our Public worship as it is. I do not claim the merit of originality for the foregoing remarks, as they have already been set forth in your editorial in reply to the first communication in your paper on this subject; and I do not think that what is said there can be in any way improved, but as Mr. Ross, in his communication in your last issue, apparently overlooks the answer already given, I could not help thus bringing them forward again.

The first question of Paulus vs. Hymns, BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, Jan. 8, was, did God give a revelation to his people and the world? And if so, is that revelation complete, or is man at liberty to take from or add to it.

You reply very properly that God did give such a revelation, and that no man may add to it; and you also assert that Hymn singing is no addition to revelation; and until the opponents of Hymns prove that it is so, all their arguments against them based upon that assumption must fall to the ground.

There is just one more remark which I would make before closing, and that is we are all agreed, I am sure, in desiring to see revival of true religion in our midst; and there is one fact in connexion with revivals which cannot be disputed, viz., such revivals have in every instance been characterized by a free use of Hymns by those who have been brought to a clear view of their Saviour's love.

Yours truly,

J. K.

BOOK NOTICE.

POPERY DISSECTED: being a series of letters to the Rev. C. Bishop, of Artois, N.S., by Rev. ARCHIBALD C. GILLIES, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Shelburne, N.S. Sold by Willing & Williamson, Toronto. Price, post-paid, 25 cents.

This pamphlet, written in Mr. Gillies' usual slashing and vigorous style, is one fruit of the Antigonish riots. The shameful attempt of Nova Scotian Romanists to break up Mr. Chiniquy's meeting, in the Presbyterian Church, Antigonish, N.S., and the brutal manner in which he and Rev. Mr. Goodfellow were assailed with stones, when they left the Church, by the Rowish mob, acting under the eye of the priest and prominent public men of the sect, is not yet forgotten. It was only a now exhibition of the intolerant spirit which those familiar with the history of that body have always known was its characteristic. Mr. Gillies' pamphlet contains a large amount of useful information. He presents the truth, if not always suaviter in modo, at least ever fortiter in re. No one is likely to fall asleep over it.

Ministers and Churches.

THE congregation of Cote street Canada Presbyterian Church, Montreal, are now without a pastor. Since the Church was built they have been fortunate enough to secure the services of men as their spiritual directors, who were not only distinguished for piety, earnestness and consistent religious enthusiasm, but also for their eminent literary attainments. The first Minister who occupied the pulpit of this church, we believe, was the Rev. Dr. Fraser, now in London, England, who is well known as the author of several ably written religious works, as well as an eminent divine. His successor was the Rev. Dr. McVicar, who after a few years successful ministry was appointed professor of theology in McGill College. The Rev. Dr. Burns then received a unanimous call from the congregation, and all connected with the Cote street Church, know how earnestly and faithfully he has laboured for their welfare during the past four or five years. He has identified himself with all the charitable institutions in the city, and worked energetically, both publicly and privately, on their behalf. He has been an active officer beaker of the Young Men's Christian Association, the Quebec Temperance and Prohibitory

League, in addition to many other societies organized for the furtherance of moral, temperance and religious principles, and for the amelioration of human suffering. Strangers visiting the city have always found him a true friend and counsellor; and many of his young countrymen who have left the paternal roof to push their fortune in this country, and who have visited Montreal during Dr. Burns' stay, will always remember him with gratitude, and ever feel thankful for his encouragement and advice. By his removal we lose one of our most able preachers, and the congregation of which he was pastor feel, or, at least, ought to feel, that they lose the services of a conscientious and upright spiritual adviser. We wish Dr. Burns every success in his future sphere, and we are certain whenever he visits our city he shall meet with a hearty reception.—Montreal Witness.

On Friday evening, the Presbyterian congregation of Cannington surprised their minister, who lately returned from his marriage trip in the west, when the following address was presented, accompanied with \$76 from Cannington, and \$26 from Manilla, making in all a handsome purse of \$100:—"To the Rev. JOHN CAMPBELL, B.A., pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Cannington:—Dear Sir,—The members and adherents of your congregation, in the village and vicinity, being desirous of congratulating you on the recent change in your social life, and also of expressing the interest they feel in your welfare as a minister of the Gospel, have on the present occasion called on you, to evince the pleasure they feel in the fact of your being comfortably settled, in a home of your own; and that you have selected a partner whom they believe will be an efficient helpmeet in your arduous duties—in your going out and coming in among the people of your charge. They are very much pleased at the increase in the membership and adherents under your pastorate; and their earnest prayer is, that you may be encouraged by the work already begun, and that greater numbers may be added to the Church. In conclusion, they desire to express the sincere pleasure they experience this evening in meeting together, to present you with this purse, as a token of the interest they take in your worldly comfort; and hope that you may be long spared to preside over this portion of Christ's vineyard, to the glory of God and the advancement of his kingdom. With every good wish for your and Mrs. Campbell's welfare, we are yours sincerely, signed on behalf of the congregation, E. GILLESPIE, Secretary.—Cannington, 26th February, 1876." Mr. CAMPBELL acknowledged the address in suitable terms, and concluded by stating that the most direct way in which he could make a return to the congregation for their great kindness would be to increase his library by the amount of the presentation.

On Friday, Feb. 26th, about fifty of the members and adherents of the congregation of Mara, met at the Manse, Beaverton, and presented their pastor, Rev. J. McNabb, with a set of very superior robes, etc. In connection with presentation, an address was read by Rev. E. H. Bauld, in behalf of the people, expressive of their affection and esteem for him as their pastor, as well as their high appreciation of him in his pulpit ministrations, as a preacher of the gospel. Their esteem for Mrs. McNabb, and their hope that Mr. McNabb and family might ever enjoy the blessing of our Lord, that blessing which maketh truly rich and addeth no sorrow. Mr. McNabb replied in a few appropriate words, expressing his gratitude for the valuable and substantial tokens of their Christian affection and sympathy presented to him, and his appreciation of the generous and thoughtful spirit which prompted to such action; he would fain regard their expression of their esteem to him as their pastor, as an indication of their deep interest in the work of the Lord. He thanked them for the kindly reference made to Mrs. McNabb, who heartily reciprocated their sentiments of Christian regard. He hoped the Lord would abundantly reward them for their kindness, and that the relation of pastor and people might be a mutual blessing.

On entering Mitchell from the railway station the first thing that attracts the eye of the passing stranger is that elegant structure, the Presbyterian manse. It is situated on a bold bluff, overlooking the Whorl creek before its confluence with the Thames, and the river at this spot, to our eye, is highly picturesque; winding its way through a deep valley, till lost to view, it hides itself amid the undulating and fertile slopes of Fallerton. A better site could not have been chosen, at once for its great beauty and commanding position, and we only regret that funds are so limited that we cannot place a handsome Gothic church by its side, and so harmonize the general effect. But let us have faith in the future of Mitchell, and such may yet be achieved. That such faith is not lacking may be seen from the dimensions of the present building, it being without exception, the largest and handsomest mansion in town. We trust the congregation will not stop

short in this their generous efforts for their esteemed pastor, but will at the same time so augment his salary as to put him in a position to act upon the advice of the apostle—to use hospitality without grudging.—Com.

The annual meeting of the Bowmanville Canada Presbyterian Church was held to-day, Saturday March 6th, when a financial statement of the affairs of the church showed that in the past year they had raised for all purposes the sum of \$3,689.16; this sum includes a subscription for a floating debt, and which has been applied towards that object. The managers also reported that when the balance of the subscription list, about \$250.00 had been collected, and about \$200 due for rents, the church would be entirely free from debt. Votes of thanks were tendered, the managers and officers; and Messrs. M. Davis, J. McClellan, and M. Mayer were elected managers for the ensuing year, in addition to the Deacon's court. An addition of \$100 was added to the salary of Mr. Smith the pastor, making it \$1,300.00; Mr. Peter Murdoch was appointed treasurer, and Mr. Thomas Yellowless secretary.

On Sabbath last the Rev. Dr. Burns conducted the services in the Charles Street Church to crowded congregations. In the morning the reverend gentleman took for his text Jeremiah xii, and latter clause of the fifth verse—the subject doubtless suggested by the sudden demise of the late lamented Mrs. McKay. In the evening the text was Revelations xxi. and xxii. Both discourses were delivered in the Doctor's eloquent and impressive style. At the conclusion of the services Dr. Burns congratulated the congregation on the near prospect of having Mr. Fraser as their pastor, and from personal knowledge, spoke of him in the highest terms; and regretted that it was not in his power to introduce him to his new charge.—Com.

A TEA MEETING was held, on the evening of Wednesday last, in the Presbyterian Church at the Boyne, Trafalgar. The attendance was good, notwithstanding the almost impassable state of the roads. After tea, speeches were delivered by the Rev. G. Brown, Methodist minister, and by the Rev. J. Eadie, Presbyterian minister, of Milton. The Methodist choir, under the able leadership of Mr. Johnston Harrison, entertained the audience with several choice selections of sacred music; and at the close a sum of money was presented to the Rev. J. Eadie, by the congregation, as a token of their appreciation of the monthly service given by him during the past year. An excellent iced pyramidal cake was also presented to Mrs. Eadie, by the ladies of the congregation.

ZION CHURCH, Brantford, has contributed a scholarship of sixty dollars for the next Collegiate Year, to be competed for in the University of Toronto, by those students intending to study for the ministry in the theological classes at Knox College. The denomination with which Zion Church is connected realizes the benefits to be derived from a full University course being taken by those preparing for the ministry, and as an inducement to those who might find it difficult to devote seven years to study, before entering upon the profession several of the Presbyterian Churches in Canada have for some years been granting such scholarships to assist and encourage students desirous of a full course of preparation. The object is a worthy one, and recommends itself to those who appreciate a thoroughly educated ministry.

A NUMBER of the young people of Thames Road Congregation assembled at the manse, on Wednesday evening, March 3rd, quite unexpectedly; and after enjoying a few hours of pleasant social intercourse, they presented Mr. and Mrs. Gracey with an address, expressive of the most kindly feeling, and accompanied it with a purse of \$80. This was offered by the congregation as a token of good will, and as a mark of their appreciation of Mr. Gracey's labors as pastor during the last ten years. As this is not the first time this congregation has in the same way shown their esteem for their pastor, the act was specially gratifying to him, as an evidence that the people value his efforts among them for their spiritual welfare.

On the evening of the 24th ult., the Rev. Mr. Ross Lochiel, had been presented by a few of his numerous friends, with a valuable fur coat and an address, expressive of attachment and good will, to which he has returned a suitable reply. Mrs. Ross was also at the same time presented with a substantial token of esteem. This is only one of the many acts of kindness shown them by a kind and attached people.

The annual soiree of the congregation of Erskine Church, Montreal, was held last week. There was a very large attendance. Rev. J. S. Black presided, and addresses were delivered by Rev. Drs. Taylor and Jenkins, and Mr. Andrew Robertson. At the conclusion of the meeting, the company partook of refreshments in the basement, provided by the ladies of the congregation.

THE Rev. R. F. BARNES, D.D., will (D.V.) leave for Halifax in about two weeks.

At a meeting of the congregation of Nasareth Street Canada Presbyterian Church, Montreal, held on the evening of Thursday, 16th ult., presided over by Rev. James Wellwood, a unanimous call was given to Rev. James Elliott, late of Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Presbytery of Ontario.

The regular meeting of the above presbytery was held at Port Perry, on the 2nd inst. On account of the state of the roads the meeting was small. Owing to the removal by death of the late clerk, Rev. Dr. Thornton, Rev. Mr. Thum was appointed to take minutes of the Presbytery's proceedings. Rev. Mr. Smith and the Moderator, the Rev. J. B. Edmondson were appointed to draft a minute about the death of the late Dr. Thornton. The minutes were as follows:—"The death of the Rev. R. H. Thornton, D.D. of Oshawa, having taken place on the 11th of Feb., the Presbytery record their high estimation of his character, gifts and acquirements, decided piety, generous disposition, and of his singular activity and devotedness as a minister of the Gospel. They desire to express their high esteem for their departed brother as a Christian and as a fellow labourer in the work of the ministry, and their gratitude to the God of all grace for his unwearied labours, fidelity and usefulness during the long period of forty two years in the Lord's Vineyard. They would embrace this opportunity to bear testimony to the amiability and sustant 1 worth of their deceased brother, to his single-mindedness and devotion to his Master's work. While deeply regretting their own loss, they rejoice to feel assured that, though absent from them he is present with the Lord. The Presbytery instruct the clerk to transmit a copy of this minute to the mourning family, with the assurance of their sympathy, and fervent prayer to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He who was the God and Guide of their departed relative may guide them through life's chequered scenes, and give them to share at length in those heavenly joys on which they doubt not he has entered. Rev. Mr. Edmondson was appointed moderator of the session of the Church in Oshawa, with instructions to moderate in a call whenever the session shall signify the Churches readiness for the step. Rev. Mr. Roger was appointed to preach the church vacat on Sabbath 14th inst., and explain to the session the law of the church with respect to their being placed on the list of vacant congregations, and receiving supply through the assembly's committee for the distribution of preachers and probationers. Rev. Mr. Thom read the report of the committee upon Sabbath School statistics and conventions. The report was received; and the thanks of the Presbytery given to the committee, and especially to the convener, Mr. Thom. At this stage of the proceedings a letter to the Presbytery from the Rev. Mr. Thom was read, stating that on account of a change in his views upon the doctrines taught in the confession of Faith, he could no longer consistently continue his connection with the O. P. Church; resigning his pastoral charge, and craving such certificate of personal character and of conduct in the ministry as to the Presbytery it might appear just and right to give. After Mr. Thom had been heard in explanation, a committee consisting of the Rev. Messrs. Roger and McClung, was appointed to confer with him upon this matter. The committee subsequently reported that they found Mr. Thom's mind so fully made up on the points alluded to in his explanatory statement, that no course was left open, but with great regret and great esteem for their brother to accept his resignation, as it is not admissible to allow a position in the ministry of our church to one holding his views. It was accordingly moved and carried: "That whereas Mr. Thom has laid before the Presbytery his resignation of his pastoral charge, and intimated that he does not now adhere to the doctrines of our standards, the Presbytery declares him no longer a minister of the Canada Presbyterian Church, and that he be furnished with a certificate of honourable dismissal from the ministry of this church." Mr. Edmondson was appointed to preach at Port Perry and Prince Albert, to make such explanation as he considered necessary, and declare the pulpits vacant. The Rev. Mr. McClung was appointed moderator of the session, with power to moderate in a call when so requested. The next regular meeting of Presbytery was appointed to be held at Uxbridge, on Tuesday, the 23rd inst., at 11 o'clock a. m. The Rev. Mr. Ballantyne was appointed to act as clerk, until next meeting.—W. B. BALDANTYNE, Presbytery Clerk, pro tem.

Official Announcements.

BROCKVILLE.—At Prescott, on the 3rd Tuesday of March, at 2.30 p.m.
 SIMCOE.—Special meeting at Barrie, Tuesday, 16th February, to dispose of call from Charles Street Congregation, Toronto, to Mr. R. D. Fraser, M.A.
 LONDON.—Meeting of Knox Church, Ont. on Wednesday 17th February, at 8 o'clock, to select a minister in the charge of said Congregation. Regular meeting at Barrie, on Tuesday, 30th March, at 11 a.m.
 KINGSFORD.—At Kingston, in Brock Street Church, on 2nd Tuesday of April, at 7 p.m.
 LONDON.—An Adjourned Meeting at London, in St. Andrew's Church, on 14th Tuesday of February, at 11 a.m. Next Regular Meeting will be held at London, in First Presbyterian Church, on 3rd Tuesday of March.
 PARIS.—In Dumais Street Church, Paris, on the 2nd of March.
 CHATHAM.—In Adelaide Street Church, Chatham, on Tuesday 3rd March, at 11 a.m. Elder's communion will then be held for the first time.
 OTTAWA.—At Ottawa, on the 1st Monday of May, at 3 o'clock p.m.
 MONTREAL.—At Montreal, in the Presbyterian College, on first Monday of April, at 10 o'clock a. m. OTTAWA.—At Uxbridge, on Tuesday 2nd inst., at 11 o'clock, a.m.

ADDRESSES OF TREASURERS OF CHURCH FUNDS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN CONNECTION WITH CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Temporaries Board and Sustentation Fund—James Croil, Montreal.
 Ministers', Widows' and Orphans' Fund—Archibald Ferguson, Montreal.
 French Mission—James Croil, Montreal.
 Juvenile Mission—Miss Macfar, Kingston, Ont.
 Manitoba Mission—George L. Wilson, Toronto.
 For salaries and Discharge Fund—James Ferguson, Kingston.