

bitter the friendly intercourse of pastor and people.

Besides these evils the system of candidating now in vogue is really the perfection of absurdity. A church of influence becomes vacant. A committee is appointed to secure supply. Out of a considerable number of applicants the congregational committee select an indefinite number called in Scotland "the short leet." These unfortunates—for they are nothing else—have then to fill the vacant pulpit on successive Sundays, preach their pet sermon in their most taking manner, and that is all the evidence by which the voter arrives at his decision. No real attempt is made to ascertain, in most cases, the qualifications of the candidates with regard to the many other important duties which a minister is called upon to discharge. The candidate stands or falls by that one day's work, and may lose the charge, like Napoleon at the battle of Leipzig through the negligence of a cook. This system is entirely unworthy of the Presbyterian Church. It is degrading to the ministry, prejudicial to the people, and of no earthly good whatever. Our church leaders should give this matter their serious consideration, for some measure could surely be devised which, while it conserved liberty of choice to the people, should at the same time preserve the self-respect of the candidates. All professions and trades are suffering from overcrowding, and soon the Presbyterian Church in Canada, those of Europe, will

feel the self-same pressure. Then the evils which flow from elections, as presently conducted, will grow and multiply. Even as it is, whippers are rife of canvassing, of applications for the using of private influence, and other forms of working upon the minds of the electors. These things are bad enough in political contests, but they are doubly worse when practised in a religious sphere. To think that the election of a minister in a Presbyterian church should depend not on the unbiased and conscientious opinion of the voter, but on the personal consideration of what he will gain or lose by his conduct in the matter, is a grave scandal to the Church. Some Presbyteries have condemned the practice, and in Scotland the denunciation has been severe and unsparing, but even there no satisfactory solution has been found. None should know the evils and defects of preaching competitions better than those who have passed through the mill. It is for them to speak out and do what they can to secure the much needed reform.

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To the Auxiliaries of the W. F. M. S. of St. John Presbyterial.

GREETING:

It seems fitting at this season of the year, when our minds are so filled with thoughts of the great missionary, Christ Jesus, whose advent into our world was heralded by the angels with songs of "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,