

or to pray at a Bethel meeting, is the man who is found to be generally the most honoured and respected in the ship's company. Many causes have undoubtedly contributed to this altered state of things; and amongst the chief of them have been these Bethel meetings and other agencies employed by the friends of the sailor in Britain and in other countries.

I should perhaps have stated that the expense of the Genoa, harbour mission last year amounted to 9,753 lire, or a little over \$1,950, which is composed of grants from American and British Seamen's Societies, donations from ship captains and crews, and subscriptions from friends of the mission. T. H.

Torre Pellice, Italy, 10th July, 1883.

THAT LEAKAGE.

MR. EDITOR,—The leakage here referred to is found within the ubiquitous vacancies of our Church, and consists chiefly of these three things: loss of members and adherents, loss of contributions, and loss of spiritual tone and vigour. The total loss to our Church every year in these respects is simply appalling, and far exceeds what is known, save to those who have for years been collating facts and summing up the aggregate.

But without entering into particulars on this score, I pass on to the purpose of this communication—viz., to direct the attention of all whom it may concern to a remedy which in some fair measure may be at once practicable and prompt in good results.

A great mistake is being made, the writer would respectfully submit, in treating all vacancies as if they were on the same footing while they differ so widely in the inducements they are able to hold out to candidates.

Large and flourishing congregations, strong in money, strong in numbers, and in working forces, can secure during a vacancy the very best preaching talent in the Church, and can select from a wider circle a pastor, because able to hold out better inducements of usefulness and comfort than scores of able ministers possess where they now are. Consequently, while a year's vacancy does entail even on those not a little injury, it is for the most part much less than is sustained by weak and "undesirable" vacancies.

It is to the latter alone that attention is directed, and for them that the remedy is suggested; and indeed it might be advisable to apply the remedy, meantime, to only one section of our weak congregations—viz., those known as "supplemented charges."

The proposal is that Presbyteries limit the time to *three months* for such vacancies to secure a minister by call. Failing to do so within that time, the Presbytery should appoint a man to the field for a specified period—say two years, or three, as may be judged best—such person's relation to the congregation being that of an ordained missionary, and a seat in Presbytery accorded to him.

In support of this proposal the following points are respectfully submitted:

1. The right to call is not totally taken away. Three months are allowed the people, and, in nine cases in ten, congregations would make as good selection in twelve weeks as in twelve months.

Moreover, the fact that they had only a short time to do this in would act as a wholesome spur to be up and doing instead of waiting listlessly for a year or more for "something to turn up" that might result in giving them a pastor.

2. If objection be made to the right of Presbytery thus to limit to three months, or to any period, the opportunity to call, it is replied:—

(1) That already limitations are in force in other matters—e.g., a pastor is entirely denied to a supplemented charge unless a specified amount per family and per communicant be given. And now last Assembly goes further, and fixes a minimum stipend, up to which the poorest congregation must come. No additional infringement of principle takes place then, if a time-limit be set within which a call must be given.

(2) Then, further, let it be borne in mind that these supplemented charges are getting a money-grant to make up the required amount, and surely it is only fair that others, too, should have something to say in the matter of pastoral settlement, when the *ad extra* part proposed is so manifestly for their advantage, and to be exercised by so safe a party as a Presbytery.

3. But, the fact would be, few, very few, congregations would raise objection; on the contrary, most

would hail with delight a scheme which would deliver them from their present unsatisfactory condition.

4. In many cases the appointee of Presbytery would, on or before the expiry of his term, receive a call from these very people, or be petitioned to stay another term. Should he leave, however, the vacancy would be of short duration, and the loss to the congregation much less than under our present system.

To avoid misapprehension and opposition, a number of minutiae would have to be attended to—e.g., the plan and its benefits would need to be explained to the people; due care taken by the Presbytery that the person sent be suitable for the field, etc., etc.

There is another side to this question, which is passed over here, but which, with your permission, will be taken up again—viz., the benefits to many, many ministers.

At present attention is respectfully called to the evil and to the remedy proposed above. If it is good, may it receive a fair and full trial; if anyone has a better to offer, let the better have the preference.

Lindsay, August, 1883.

J. HASTIE.

MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.

MR. EDITOR,—Recently I had occasion to attend a meeting of one of the Presbyteries, and there heard a call read in favour of a certain minister, offering as stipend the munificent sum of \$700 per annum, and requiring in exchange only three services each Sabbath!

I could hardly believe my ears, and was not astonished when several members expressed strong dissatisfaction.

It is a disgrace that the Church, so stringent in the matter of training for the pulpit, demanding eight years of a collegiate course, should at last have her sons thrown on congregations who can so little appreciate merit as to offer such a pittance.

Is it not an insult to intelligence? Really churches so exacting in the performance of pastoral duty, at the same time doling out starvation stipends, deserve to be without a minister.

I could understand a case where some of our poor brethren had difficulty in providing suitable maintenance; but, even they, by a slight effort, could accomplish better things than the above.

There was no excuse in the instance cited, for it appeared a far more liberal salary had been paid when the church was no better off than now. What seemed to be the main object was a reduction in the former rate, because the gentleman called has now less, from a monetary point of view, than the \$700.

Out upon such miserable tactics! Honestly, I felt ashamed while listening, and could not have believed Presbyterians would resort to actions so mercenary.

Now, sir, is it not high time something was done to remedy this crying evil? Cannot the highest court in the Church insist on the minimum salary being provided, viz., \$750 a year? It should be \$1,000.

I have since made enquiry, and find the call mentioned is not singular, and ministers seem to be to blame in not bringing so deplorable a state of affairs prominently before the people.

Let an appeal be made to the whole Church, and, unless I read the times badly, I believe the very large majority would respond so liberally as to wipe out forever the present standing disgrace.

Aug. 3, 1883.

A PRESBYTERIAN.

STROME FERRY.

MR. EDITOR,—In your last number I find the following: "Dr. Kennedy, of Dingwall, has issued an appeal for funds to defend the men who are to be tried at Edinburgh for their protest against the breach of the Sabbath laws and the desecration of the Lord's day by the railway company at Strome Ferry."

I write to say that I feel such a deep and sympathetic interest in this event that I should be happy to act as a medium for receiving and transmitting to my old and valued friend, Dr. Kennedy any subscriptions that may be sent to me for that purpose.

I will publish the names of the subscribers—or such names as each subscriber may wish published—with the amount opposite, and will also publish Dr. Kennedy's acknowledgment of the amounts, in THE PRESBYTERIAN.

Port Hope, 4th Aug. 1883.

D. CHISHOLM,
Barrister-at-Law.

THE MISSION FIELD.

THE General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America at its late session in Philadelphia determined to take steps to re-enter the foreign mission field.

A LETTER from India says that the past year has been the most prosperous in the history of the United Presbyterian Mission in that country. The increase in membership has been over fifty per cent. More than two hundred have been baptized in the district of Sealkot alone.

THE Presbyterian Mission in Persia has been granted by the Shah a site for a chapel for the use of the Protestant community in Teheran on the condition that Mussulman children shall not be admitted to the chapel, or receive instruction therein, and that no other Mohammedan, of whatever age, will be allowed to attend the services held in the building, or receive religious instruction there.

THE Woman's Prayer Union for China, with headquarters in London, now has 316 members banded together to pray daily for the women in China, and to seek personal guidance as to how they may help them, and also to seek to interest others in the spiritual condition of the women of China. Twelve members of the Union have been led to devote their lives to missionary work, and are now in China.

THE German Evangelical Foreign Missionary Society is composed of German ministers of the Reformed and the Lutheran Churches in the United States. It is supporting the Chutteesburg Mission in India. The missionaries at Bisrampur are Rev. T. O. Lohr and wife, assisted by five native helpers. The missionaries at Raipur are Rev. A. Stoll and wife, assisted by a native helper. The Society is publishing a paper in New York in German, entitled "Der Deutsche Missionsfreund."

THE Southern Presbyterian Mission at Hangchow, China, has been rejoicing in a revival. Rev. A. Sydenstricker writes, May 12: "Last Sabbath seven persons were received into the communion of this church, one of them by letter from Soochow; and there are six more applicants. One very interesting feature in this work of grace is the number of teachers that have boldly come forward to confess Christ publicly. These are teachers in our schools and men of influence in society. Some of them are very zealous, and have already proved excellent helpers in the work."

A MISSIONARY writes from Japan: Our Christians have received a new measure of faith. Backsliders confess their sins and return to duty. The people have a mind to work, talk, preach, bring their friends to church and Sunday schools. Our chapels were never so full, our pastors never had so many inquirers before. God seems to have opened the eyes of the People. Said a Japanese minister to me yesterday: "People understand the truth better with one day's instruction than with a month's teaching heretofore." In country and city alike there is a great desire to hear the truth; and this too with high and low.

To previous notices of the revival in Turkey we are gratified by being able to add that, as a fruit of this work, fifty-seven were at first received into the Adona church and over a hundred others were applicants for admission. In the midst of the late conference at Constantinople Secretary Clark received a telegram from Adona announcing that there are manifest signs of a fresh awakening. At Hadjin, and at Tarsus also the work has been scarcely less remarkable; and two churches in Eastern Turkey have received, respectively, forty and fifty members as the fruit of revival. A noticeable feature of the work is the great numbers that crowd the prayer-meetings.

THE Rev. R. W. McAll, who is superintendent of the McAll Mission in France was born in England, in December, 1821. Its mission work is pledged to undenominationalism, and conducted in every respect with a most scrupulous avoidance of every clerical aspect. It is the John the Baptist of the evangelical movement in France, preparing the way for all Church work, and useful alike to every religious denomination. By the co-operative union of its method it is doing the work more economically than single denominations could do, and they receive a share of its fruits commensurate with the extent of their co-operation. There are now over eighty halls in use, and through the mission over 15,000 people are reached by Gospel truth each week.