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THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH IN REGARD TO THE INCREASE
OF HER MINISTRY.

It is sometimes said that in Canada, taking all the religious denominations into account, we have too large a supply of ministers for our population. Regarding the general question thus raised, it is not, at present, necessary to make any affirmation; but certainly the *Canada Presbyterian Church* has not too many ministers,—not as many as she could well employ and as she urgently requires. For want of labourers many parts of her heritage are imperfectly cultivated, and much ground which she would wish to occupy has hardly been touched at all.

But had we a sufficient number of young men in training for the ministry, this great evil of which we complain, might soon be remedied. Here again, however, we have to note deficiency. The number of our candidates for the ministry is much too small both to fill the places of ministers who are being removed by death, and to extend the church in degree commensurate with the wants of an increasing population. We, in common with nearly all the churches, both in Britain and in America, which demand an educated ministry, are mourning our inability to find a sufficient number of students: for all who take an interest in this subject are aware that Presbyterians and Episcopalians are finding the same difficulty here; and that the Theological Seminaries of the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches in Scotland and of the great Presbyterian bodies in the United States are attended either by absolutely fewer students, or by fewer in proportion to the size and requirements of their respective denominations, than they were some years ago.

Were our object in this paper to show that the position and prospects of our own church, are not, in regard to the important interest spoken of, worse than those of other churches, a very good case might, we are satisfied, easily be made out. For while the churches referred to, on this and on the other side of the Atlantic, have been declining in the number of their students, ours has exhibited some measure of increase; and this in spite of circumstances which place us at a disadvantage as compared with those churches. There is no reason, therefore, why we should despair of our church as regards the object to which attention is being directed, even the securing of an adequate supply of students.

But we are not, at present, occupied in seeking material for self-congratulation or self-vindication; and these last sentences have been expressed chiefly in order to prevent that paralysis of hope in regard to our situation, which would hinder us from making any hearty effort to improve it.

With respect, then, to the general fact that the churches have so great